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THE LIFE OF ELIZABETH FRY.



Oliver P. Key —

A MEMOIR
OF
ELIZABETH FRY:

BY HER DAUGHTER,
MRS. FRANCIS CRESSWELL.

ABRIDGED FROM THE LARGER MEMOIR, WITH ALTERATIONS
AND ADDITIONS.

'I was sick, and ye visited me :
I was in prison, and ye came unto me.'
MATTHEW xxv. 36.

NEW EDITION.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1730-1797.

	PAGE
Birth—Parentage—Descent—Her mother, her character—Removal to Earlham—Death of Mrs. Gurney—Recollections by Elizabeth Fry of her own Early Life—Circumstances of herself and her sisters,	1

CHAPTER II.

1797-1801.

Circumstances of Elizabeth Gurney and her sisters—Her character and habits—Absence of religious knowledge—William Savery comes to Norwich—Effects of his preaching—Goes to London to see the world—Gradual development of opinion—Journey into Wales and the south of England—Intercourse with Friends—Attention to the poor—Kindness to others—Appearance—Becomes a plain Friend—Married to Mr. Fry—First visit to Plashet—Settlement in London—Yearly meeting,	14
--	----

CHAPTER III.

1801-1811.

Journey into the North of England—Death of her mother-in-law—Death of Mrs. John Gurney—The Rev. Edward Edwards—Death of her father-in-law—Removal to Plashet, enjoyment of the country—Death of her father—Commencement of her public ministry—Journey into Gloucestershire—Acknowledged as a minister by Friends—Christian enlargement—Parochial objects,	30
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

1811-1816.

	PAGE
Norwich Bible Society—More extended intercourse with others— Effects upon her mind—Journey with Henry Hull and Priscilla Gurney—Death of a domestic servant—Removal to London for the winter—Newgate for the first time, February 1813—State of that prison—Many sorrows—Illness and death of John Gurney—Home life—Domestic duties—Death of one of her children,	46

CHAPTER V.

1816-1818.

Extract from Crabbe's poems—School in Newgate—Newgate Asso- ciation—Marriage of Joseph John Gurney—Winter in London— Examination before the House of Commons,	66
---	----

CHAPTER VI.

1818.

Summer at Plashet—Capital punishment—Case of Skelton—Duke of Gloucester and Lord Sidmouth—Queen Charlotte's visit to the Mansion House—'Maria,' female convict ship—Visitors to New- gate—Letter from Lady Mackintosh—Again at Plashet—Family cares,	82
--	----

CHAPTER VII.

1819-1823.

Broadstairs—Spends the winter in London—Affliction in her family— Female convicts in New South Wales—Journey into the north of England—Death of Priscilla Gurney—Letter to J. J. Gurney— Convict ships—Adventure on the Thames—Correspondence and occupation—Letter by Miss Edgeworth,	99
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

1824-1826.

Serious illness—British Ladies' Society—Establishment of Manor Hall —Asylum and School of Discipline at Chelsea—Brighton—Dis- trict Visiting Society there—Coast-Guard Libraries—Dagenham— Plashet—Hannah More—Convict ships, and Admiral Young,	124
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

1827-1830.

	PAGE
Irish Journey—Dublin—Illness at Waterford—Return home—Illness and death of Rachel Gurney—Journey with Mr. Fry—Ladies' British Society Meeting—Great and heavy sorrows—Leaves Plashet—Winter in London—A new dwelling—Summons to the sick-bed of a niece—Poor man by the road-side—Prepares her Text-book—Anecdote,	137

CHAPTER X.

1830-1832.

Brighton—Death of a grandchild—Of a nephew—Interview with the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria—Yearly meeting—Ladies' Prison Society meeting—Introduction to Queen Adelaide—Dagenham—Public meetings in that neighbourhood—Journey with Mr. Fry—Ilfracombe—History of Samuel Marshall—Welsh half-year's meeting—Crosses to Ireland—Visit to Norfolk, . . .	159
---	-----

CHAPTER XI.

1833-1836.

Sojourn in Jersey—Visits to Guernsey, Sark, and Herm—Objects in these islands—Recall to England—Nurses one of her daughters in severe illness—Attends the meetings in Dorset and Hants—Crosses to the Isle of Wight—Freshwater—Coast-Guard stations—Journey into Scotland—Death of the Duke of Gloucester—Coast-Guard Libraries completed—Examination before Committee of the House of Lords—Goes to Lynn—Journey along the southern coast—Crosses to Jersey and Guernsey—Libraries for packets at Falmouth—Library for shepherds of Salisbury Plain—Religious visit to Sussex and Kent—Sheerness—Visit to Dublin—Female Prison,	176
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

1836-1838.

Jersey prison—Illness of a sister—Voyage to Guernsey—Return home—Summons to Calais—Accompanies Joseph John Gurney to Liverpool—His departure for America—Philanthropic evenings—Visits France—Sojourn at Paris—Prisons—Schools—Return through Normandy,	200
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

1838-1839.

	PAGE
Birth-day reflections—Journey to Scotland—Visits to Friends, Prisons, etc. — Solitary system — Return home — Renewed prospect of visiting France—Applications—Sturdy beggars—Sale at Crosby Hall for the Ladies' British Society—Departs for the Continent—Paris,	214

CHAPTER XIV.

1839.

Lyons—Avignon—Nismes—Congenies, tarriance there — Marseilles—Toulon—Aix—Montpellier—Toulouse,	229
---	-----

CHAPTER XV.

1839-1840.

Bagnerès de Luchon—A look into Spain—Military hospital at Barèges — Pau—Grenoble—Geneva—Retreat at Bönigen—Return home—Journey into Norfolk—Audience of the Queen—Public meeting in London,	242
---	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

1840-1841.

Leaves home for the Continent—Brussels—Rotterdam—Prison at Gouda—Minden and Pymont—Friends there—Hanover—Berlin — Rest at Leipzig—Return home—Nursing-sisters—Niger Expedition—Alarming mistake,	256
--	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

1841.

Another journey—Rotterdam—The Hague—Amsterdam—Bremen—Hamburg — Copenhagen — Berlin — Silesia—Illness — Return to England — Ramsgate — Upton Lane — Lynn — Earham — Warley Lodge—Winter at home,	274
---	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

1842-1843.

	PAGE
Communications with the Continent—The King of Prussia in England—Sale at the Mansion House—Letter to her eldest son—Autumn at Cromer—Return by West Norfolk to Upton Lane—Last visit to France, 1843—Female prison at Clermont-en-Oise—Paris—Guizot—The Duchess of Orleans—Greeks—Return home, . . .	295

CHAPTER XIX.

1843-1845.

Last journey on religious service—Increased illness—Sandgate—Tunbridge Wells—Bath—Return to Upton Lane—Death of her sister Elizabeth Fry—Attends the meeting at Plaistow—Stay at Walmer—Death of a granddaughter—Of her son William Storrs Fry—Of another granddaughter—Deep affliction—Return from Walmer—Death of Sir T. F. Buxton—Visit to Earlham, North-repps, Runcton—Yearly meeting,	313
---	-----

CHAPTER XX.

1845.

Removal to Ramsgate—Preparation—The End,	332
--	-----



13

THE
LIFE OF ELIZABETH FRY.

CHAPTER I.

1780-1797.

Birth—Parentage—Descent—Her mother, her character—Removal to Earlham—Death of Mrs. Gurney—Recollections by Elizabeth Fry of her own Early Life—Circumstances of herself and her sisters.

ELIZABETH FRY was born in Norwich on the 21st of May 1780. She was the third daughter of John Gurney, Esq. of Earlham, in the county of Norfolk, and Catherine, daughter of Daniel Bell, a merchant in London; whose wife Catherine, daughter of David Barclay, was a descendant of the ancient family of the Barclays of Ury, in Kincardineshire, and granddaughter of Robert Barclay, the well-known apologist of the Quakers.

The name Gurney, or Gournay,¹ is of great antiquity in the county of Norfolk, and is derived from the town of Gournay en Brai in Normandy, the Norman lords of which place held fiefs in Norfolk, as early as the reign of William Rufus. Two

¹ See Burke's *History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. i. p. 484.

younger branches of this Norman race existed for some centuries. The one which was the most distinguished, was seated in Somersetshire; the other at Hingham Gurneys, and West Barsham, in Norfolk, where it continued till 1661; then it became extinct in the direct male line, and the estates devolved on co-heiresses.

John Gurney, or Gournay, of Norwich, merchant, descended from a younger son of the West Barsham branch, was the immediate ancestor of the present family of Gurney. He was born in 1655, and in early life embraced the tenets of the Society of Friends, on their first appearance under George Fox, their founder.

Joseph Gurney, his son, purchased Keswick, which continues to be the residence of the head of the family. John Gurney of Keswick, his son, died in 1770; leaving three sons, of whom John Gurney of Earlham, the father of Elizabeth Fry, was the second. She was thus by many generations of both descents an hereditary member of the Society of Friends.

John Gurney of Earlham, the father of the subject of this Memoir, was born in 1749, and was educated in the principles of the Society of Friends. As he advanced in life his pursuits led to intercourse with persons of various denominations; this, with a naturally social disposition, induced unusual liberality of sentiment towards others. He was a man of ready talent, of bright discerning mind, singularly warm-hearted and affectionate, very benevolent, and in manner courteous and popular.

His marriage with Catherine Bell took place in 1775.

Mr. and Mrs. John Gurney established themselves in a roomy quadrangular house in St. Clement's Parish, Norwich, which belonged to that branch of the family, where for some years they passed the winter months, spending the summer at Bramerton, a pretty village about four miles from Norwich, in an unpretending cheerful dwelling on the Common.

Mrs. Gurney was a person of excellent abilities, and of considerable attainments, as well as much personal beauty. She was disposed to scientific and intellectual pursuits, and singularly delighted in the charms and beauties of nature, imbuing her children, almost in infancy, with tastes that have remained with them through life.

She laboured faithfully for the good of her children, reading the Bible with them, and urging upon them the necessity of prayer and personal piety; and watched minutely over the formation of character and habit.

In the year 1786, Mr. and Mrs. Gurney removed to Earlham Hall, about two miles from Norwich. Mr. Gurney subsequently purchased an adjoining property, thus adding to the range and variety afforded to his large young party, by that pleasant home. Earlham has peculiar charms from its diversified scenery. The house is large, old, and irregular; placed in the centre of a well-wooded park. The river Wensum, a clear winding stream, flows by it. Its banks, overhung by an avenue of ancient timber

trees, formed a favourite resort of the young people ; there in the summer evenings, they would often meet to walk, read, or sketch. On the south front of the house extends a noble lawn, flanked by groves of trees growing from a carpet of wild-flowers, moss, and long grass. Every nook, every green path, at Earlham tells a tale of the past, and recalls to those who remember the time when they were peopled by that joyous party, the many loved ones of the number, who, having shared with one another the pleasures of youth, the cares of maturer age, and, above all, the hope of immortality, are now together at rest !

Of the twelve children of Mr. and Mrs. Gurney, nine were born before their removal to Earlham ; one of them died in infancy. The three youngest sons were born after their settlement there.

The mode of life at Bramerton was continued with little alteration at Earlham till November 1792, when it pleased God to remove from this large family the kind mistress—the loving wife—the devoted mother. She died after an illness of three weeks, leaving eleven children, the eldest scarcely seventeen, the youngest not two years old.

This loss fell heavily on all, but, probably, to not one amongst them was it so grievous as to Elizabeth. Her disposition was peculiar—prone to resist compulsion, but amenable to the slightest touch of tenderness or reason. She was not studious by nature, and though gentle and quiet in temper, self-willed and determined. In a letter, written

before she was three years old, her mother thus mentions her :—‘ My dove-like Betsey scarcely ever offends, and is, in every sense of the word, truly engaging.’ Her dislike to learning proved a serious disadvantage to her after she lost her mother, though, in natural talent, she was quick and penetrating, and had a depth of originality very uncommon.

Many years afterwards, during a period of comparative leisure, Elizabeth Fry occupied herself in perusing her early journals. She thought it well to destroy all that were written before the year 1797, and to substitute the following sketch of their contents, assisted by her own recollections :—

‘ *Dagenham, Eighth Month 23d, 1828.*—My earliest recollections are, I should think, soon after I was two years old. Our father at that time had two houses, one in Norwich, and one at Bramerton, a sweet country place, situated on a Common, near a pretty village ; here, I believe, many of my early tastes were formed, though we left it to reside at Earlham when I was about five years old. The impressions then received remain lively on my recollection ; the delight in the beauty and wild scenery in parts of the Common, the trees, the flowers, and the little rills that abounded on it, the farm-houses, the village school, and the different poor people and their cottages ; particularly a poor woman with one arm, whom we called one-armed Betty ; another neighbour, Greengrass, and her strawberry beds round a little pond ; our gardener, who lived near a large piece of water, and used to

bring fish from it ; here, I think, my great love for the country, the beauties of nature, and attention to the poor, began. My mother was most dear to me, and the walks she took with me in the old-fashioned garden are as fresh with me as if only just passed ; and her telling me about Adam and Eve being driven out of Paradise : I always considered it must be just like our garden at Bramerton. I remember that my spirits were not strong ; that I frequently cried if looked at, and used to say that my eyes were weak ; but I remember much pleasure and little suffering, or particular tendency to naughtiness, up to this period. Fear about this time began to show itself, of people and things : I remember being so much afraid of a gun, that I gave up an expedition of pleasure with my father and mother, because there was a gun in the carriage. I was also exceedingly afraid of the dark, and suffered so acutely from being left alone without a light after I went to bed, that I believe my nervous system was injured in consequence of it ; also, I had so great a dread of bathing (to which I was at times obliged to submit), that the first sight of the sea, when we were as a family going to stay by it, would make me cry ; indeed, fear was so strong a principle in my mind, as greatly to mar the natural pleasure of childhood. I am now of opinion, that it would have been much more subdued, and great suffering spared, by its having been still more yielded to ; by having a light left in my room ; not being long left alone ; and never forced to bathe ; for I do not at all doubt that

it partly arose from that nervous susceptible constitution, that has at times, throughout my life, caused me such real and deep suffering. I know not what would have been the consequence, had I had any other than a most careful and wise mother and judicious nurses; or had I been alarmed, as too many children are, by false threats of what might happen.

‘I had, as well as a fearful, rather a reserved mind, for I never remember telling of my many painful fears, though I must often have shown them by weeping when left in the dark, and on other occasions: this reserve made me little understood, and thought very little of, except by my mother and one or two others. I was considered and called very stupid and obstinate. I certainly did not like learning, nor did I, I believe, attend to my lessons, partly from a delicate state of health, that produced languor of mind as well as body; but, I think, having the name of being stupid really tended to make me so, and discouraged my efforts to learn. I remember having a poor, not to say low, opinion of myself, and thinking that I was very inferior to my sisters, Catherine and Rachel. I believe I had not a name only for being obstinate, for my nature had then a strong tendency that way; and I was disposed to a spirit of contradiction, always ready to see things a little differently from others, and not willing to yield my sentiments to theirs.

‘My natural affections were very strong from my early childhood, at times almost overwhelmingly so;

such was the love for my mother, that the thought that she might die and leave me used to make me weep after I went to bed, and for the rest of the family, that notwithstanding my fearful nature, my childlike wish was, that two large walls might crush us all together, that we might die at once, and thus avoid the misery of each other's death. I seldom, if I could help it, left my mother's side; I watched her when asleep in the day with exquisite anxiety, and used to go gently to her bedside to listen, from the awful fear that she did not breathe; in short, I may truly say, it amounted to deep reverence, that I felt for my father and mother. I never remember, as a little child, but once being punished by my mother; and she then mistook tears of sorrow—for tears of naughtiness, a thing that deeply impressed me, and I have never forgotten the pain it gave me. Although I do not imply that I had no faults, far from it, as some of the faults of my childhood are very lively in my recollection; yet from my extreme love and fear, many of these faults were known almost only to myself. My imagination was lively, and I once remember, and only once, telling a real untruth with one of my sisters and one of my brothers. We saw a bright light one morning, which we represented far above the reality, and upon the real thing being shown us that we had seen, we made it out not to be it.

'My remembrance is of the pleasure of my childhood being almost spoiled through fear; and my religious impressions, such as I then had, were

accompanied by gloom : on this account, I think the utmost care needed, in representing religious truth to children, that fearful views of it should be most carefully avoided, lest it should give a distaste for that which is most precious. First show them the love and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and the sweetness and blessedness of His service ; and such things in Scripture, for instance, as Abraham's sacrifice, should be carefully explained to them.

'I remember with pleasure my mother's beds for wild-flowers, which, with delight, I used, as a child, to attend to with her ; it gave me that pleasure in observing their beauties and varieties, that though I never have had time to become a botanist, few can imagine, in my many journeys, how I have been pleased and refreshed by observing and enjoying the wild-flowers on my way. Again, she collected shells, and had a cabinet, and bought one for Rachel and myself, where we placed our curiosities ; and I may truly say, in the midst even of deep trouble, and often most weighty engagements of a religious and philanthropic nature, I have derived advantage, refreshment, and pleasure, from my taste for these things, making collections of them, and various natural curiosities, although, as with flowers, I have not studied them scientifically.

'My mother also encouraged my most close friendship with my sister Rachel, and we had our pretty light closet, our books, our pictures, our curiosities, our tea things, all to ourselves ; and, as far as I can recollect, we unitedly partook of these pleasures,

without any of the little jealousies, or the quarrels of childhood.

‘My mother, as far as she knew, really trained us up in the fear and love of the Lord; my deep impression is, that she was a holy devoted follower of the Lord Jesus; but that her understanding was not fully enlightened as to the fulness of the gospel truth. She taught us as far as she knew, and I now remember the solemn religious feelings I had whilst sitting in silence with her after reading the Scriptures, or a Psalm before we went to bed. I have no doubt that her prayers were not in vain in the Lord.

‘She died when I was twelve years old; the remembrance of her illness and death is sad, even to the present day.’

The death of Mrs. Gurney had left her seven daughters, unprotected by a mother’s care, to pursue the difficult path of early womanhood. They appear to have been rich in attraction and talent, lively and original, possessing a peculiar freshness of character, with singular purity of purpose and warmth of affection. But their faith was obscure, and their principles necessarily unfixed and wavering. They appreciated the beauty and excellence of religion; but it was natural rather than revealed religion with which they were acquainted.

The family of Mr. Gurney, thus left to their own resources, unaccustomed to the study of the Scriptures, and with no other sources of information from which to learn, for a time were permitted to ‘stumble

upon the dark mountains, seeking rest and finding none.'

These remarks apply especially to the three elder daughters, as they gradually advanced into life. The four younger ones, sheltered in the schoolroom, were comparatively spared the difficulties through which their sisters were pioneering the way. Mr. Gurney's occupations, both public and private, and his naturally trustful disposition, prevented his seeing all the dangers to which they were exposed. They formed many acquaintances, and some friendships, with persons greatly gifted by nature, but fearfully tainted by the prevailing errors of the day. Great pain and bitter disappointment resulted from these connexions; but demanding only an allusion here, as they indirectly affected Elizabeth through the sufferings of others, and the experience gained to herself.

To the gaieties of the world, in the usual acceptation of the term, they were but little exposed. Music and dancing are not allowed by Friends; though a scruple, as to the former, is by no means universal. Mr. Gurney had no objection to music: they had all a taste for it, though almost uncultivated. The sweet and thrilling pathos of their native warblings are still remembered with pleasure by those who heard them, especially the duets of Rachel and Elizabeth. They danced occasionally in the large anteroom leading to the drawing-room, but with little of the spirit of display so often manifested on these occasions. It was more an effusion of

young joyous hearts, who thus sought and found an outlet for their mirth. When her health permitted it, no one of the party entered with more zest into these amusements than Elizabeth. Her figure, tall, and at that time slight and graceful, was peculiarly fitted for dancing. She was also an excellent horse-woman, and rode fearlessly and well; but her delicacy of constitution often impeded her joining her sisters in their different objects and pursuits. In countenance, she is described as having been as a young person very sweet and pleasing, with a profusion of soft flaxen hair, though, perhaps, not so glowing and handsome as some of her sisters.

She had much native grace, and to many people was very attractive. In contemplating her peculiar gifts, it is wonderful to observe the adaptation of her natural qualities to her future career; and how, through the transforming power of Divine grace, each one proved subservient to the highest purposes. Her natural timidity changed to the opposite virtue of courage, but with such holy moderation and nice discretion as never failed to direct it aright. The touch of obstinacy she displayed as a child became that finely tempered decision and firmness, which enabled her to execute her projects for the good of her fellow-creatures. That which was in childhood something not unlike cunning, ripened into the most uncommon penetration, long-sightedness, and skill in influencing the minds of those around her. She possessed more genius and ready quick comprehension than application or argument.

Such were the circumstances of Elizabeth Gurney and her sisters, after the death of their mother; and years passed on, with few changes, but such as necessarily came with the lapse of time, and their advance in age. But He who had purposes of mercy towards them, in His own way, and in His own good time, was preparing for them emancipation from their doubts, and light for darkness. Wonderful is it to mark how, by little and little, through various instruments, through mental conflicts, through bitter experience, He gradually led them, each one, into the meridian light of day—the glorious liberty of the children of God.

CHAPTER II.

1797-1801.

Circumstances of Elizabeth Gurney and her sisters—Her character and habits—Absence of religious knowledge—William Savery comes to Norwich—Effects of his preaching—Goes to London to see the world—Gradual development of opinion—Journey into Wales and the south of England—Intercourse with Friends—Attention to the poor—Kindness to others—Appearance—Becomes a plain Friend—Married to Mr. Fry—First visit to Plashet—Settlement in London—Yearly meeting.

AT a time when religion in a more gloomy form might not have gained a hearing, when the graver countenance of rebuke would probably have been unheeded, a gentleman became acquainted with the Earlham family, of high principle and cultivated mind. With Mr. Pitchford the sisters formed a strong and lasting friendship. He addressed himself to their understandings, on the grand doctrines of Christianity: he referred them to the written Word as the rule of life; he lent them, and read with them, books of a religious tendency. He treated religion, as such, with reverence; and although himself a Roman Catholic, he abstained from every controversial topic, nor ever used his influence, directly or indirectly, in favour of his own Church. There was another individual who proved an im-

portant instrument in leading the sisters to sound views of religion, though, when first acquainted with them, herself wandering in the wilderness of doubt, if not of error. This was Marianne Galton, afterwards Mrs. Schimmelpenninck.¹ Being a highly educated person, of great mental power, and accustomed to exercise her abilities in the use of her reason and an honest search after truth, she acquired considerable influence over them. As the truth of revelation opened upon her own understanding, and her heart became influenced by it, they shared in her advance, and profited by her experience.

They appear also to have derived advantage, at times, from the religious visits of Friends to Earlham. The family of Mr. Gurney were in the habit of attending no place of worship but the Friends' meeting. The attendance of Elizabeth was continually impeded by want of health, and it is difficult to know when the habit of absenting herself might have been broken through, but for her uncle, Joseph Gurney, who urged the duty upon her, and encouraged her to make the attempt. She was ready, indeed, to essay anything that might tend to satisfy her conscience, or meet the cravings of her heart for a something, which as yet she had not obtained. Her Journal is replete with desires after 'virtue,' and 'truth.' She seeks and finds God in His works, but as yet she had not found Him as He stands revealed in the page of inspiration.

¹ Authoress of a *Tour to Alet and the Grande Chartreuse*, and *Select Memoirs of Port-Royal*.

'*January 1797.*—My mind is in so dark a state, that I see everything through a black medium.

'*May 16th.*—There is a sort of luxury in giving way to the feelings! I love to feel for the sorrows of others, to pour wine and oil into the wounds of the afflicted; there is a luxury in feeling the heart glow, whether it be with joy or sorrow. I think the different periods of life may well be compared to the seasons. First, we are in the spring, only buds are to be seen; next our characters are blown, and it is summer; autumn follows, and there are then many remains of summer, and beautiful ones too; there springs also the best fruit from the summer flower. Winter must come, it will follow in its course; there is not much more pleasure then, than collecting a few solitary berries, and playing with the snow and ice.

'I like to think of everything, to look at mankind; I love to "look through Nature up to Nature's God." I have no more religion than that, and in the little I have I am not the least devotional; but when I admire the beauties of Nature, I cannot help thinking of the source from whence such beauties flow. I feel it a support. I believe firmly that all is guided for the best by an invisible power, therefore I do not fear the evils of life so much. I love to feel good—I do what I can to be kind to everybody, I have many faults which I hope in time to overcome.'

On the 4th of February 1798, William Savery, an American Friend, who had come to England on a

religious visit, in the course of his travels arrived at Norwich. He appears to have been sound in the Christian faith, and to have laid due stress on the great doctrine of the Atonement. He was earnest in urging a faithful obedience to the immediate guidings of the Spirit of God, and careful lest from any want of watchfulness and humility the youthful mind should be led into error.

Elizabeth's sister, Richenda,¹ thus describes this eventful day :—

‘On that day, we seven sisters sat as usual in a row, under the gallery, at Meeting. William Savery began to preach. His voice and manner were arresting, and we all liked the sound ; Betsey's attention became fixed, and I saw her begin to weep, and she became a good deal agitated. As soon as Meeting was over, I have a remembrance of her making her way to the men's side of the Meeting, and having found my father, she begged him if she might dine with William Savery at the Grove,² to which he soon consented, though rather surprised by the request ; we went home as usual, and, for a wonder, we wished to go again in the afternoon. I have not the same clear remembrance of this Meeting ; but the next scene that has fastened itself on my memory is our return home in the carriage. Betsey sat in the middle, and astonished us all by the great feeling she showed. She wept most of the way home.

¹ Afterwards Mrs. Francis Cunningham.

² The residence of her uncle, Joseph Gurney.

‘The next morning, William Savery came to breakfast, and preached to our dear sister after breakfast, prophesying of the high and important calling she would be led into. What she went through in her own mind I cannot say, but the results were most powerful, and most evident. From that day her love of pleasure and of the world seemed gone.’

How deep the impression made upon the mind of Elizabeth, her own journal portrays :—

‘*Sunday.*—This morning I went to Meeting, though but poorly, because I wished to hear an American Friend, named William Savery. Much passed there of a very interesting nature. I have had a faint light spread over my mind, at least I believe it is something of that kind, owing to having been much with, and heard much excellence from, one who appears to me to be a true Christian. It has caused me to feel a little religion. My imagination has been worked upon, and I fear all that I have felt will go off. I fear it now; though at first I was frightened, that a plain Quaker should have made so deep an impression upon me; but how truly prejudiced in me to think, that because good came from a Quaker, I should be led away by enthusiasm and folly. But I hope I am now free from such fears. I wish the state of enthusiasm I am now in may last, for to-day I have felt *that there is a God*; I have been devotional, and my mind has been led away from the follies that it is mostly wrapt up in. We had much serious conversation; in short, what he said and what I felt, was like a refreshing shower,

falling upon earth that had been dried up for ages. It has not made me unhappy; I have felt ever since humble. I have longed for virtue. I hope to be truly virtuous; to let sophistry fly from my mind, not to be enthusiastic and foolish, but only to be so far religious as will lead to virtue. There seems nothing so little understood as religion.

'Sunday, 11th.—It is very different from this day week (a day never to be forgotten whilst memory lasts). I have been to Meeting this morning. To-day I have felt all my old irreligious feelings—my object shall be to search, try to do right, and if I am mistaken, it is not my fault; but the state I am now in makes it difficult to act. What little religion I have felt has been owing to my giving way quietly and humbly to my feelings; but the more I reason upon it, the more I get into a labyrinth of uncertainty, and my mind is so much inclined to both scepticism and enthusiasm, that if I argue and doubt, I shall be a total sceptic; if, on the contrary, I give way to it, and, as it were, wait for religion, I may be led away. But I hope that will not be the case; at all events, religion, true and uncorrupted, is of all comforts the greatest; it is the first stimulus to virtue; it is a support under every affliction. I am sure it is better to be so in an enthusiastic degree, than not to be so at all, for it is a delightful enthusiasm.'

In this peculiar and awakened state of mind, Elizabeth, with the consent of Mr. Gurney, visited London, that she might become acquainted for her-

self with those amusements and fascinations that the world offers to its votaries; that she might have the opportunity of 'trying all things,' and choosing for herself that which appeared to her 'to be good.'

But it must be remembered, that this choice lay not between Religion in her various aspects, but between the gay and giddy world on the one hand, and religion in the garb of Quakerism on the other; the only form in which it had, as yet, been presented to her. Of real Christians of any other persuasion, she knew scarcely anything. She had never listened to the solemn exhortations of Walker of Truro, the earnestness of Wesley, or the impetuosity of Whitfield.

Thirty years afterwards, she thus reviews this eventful period of her life:—

'*Dagenham, Seventh Month, 1828.*—Here ended this important and interesting visit to London, where I learned much, and had much to digest. I saw and entered various scenes of gaiety; many of our first public places; attended balls and other places of amusement. I saw many interesting characters in the world, some of considerable eminence in that day; I was also cast among a great variety of persons of different descriptions. I had the high advantage of attending several most interesting meetings of William Savery, and having, at times, his company, and that of a few other Friends. It was like the casting die in my life; however, I believe it was in the ordering of Providence for me, and that

the lessons then learnt are to this day valuable to me. I consider one of the important results was, the conviction of these things being wrong, from seeing them and feeling their effects. I wholly gave up, on my own ground, attending all public places of amusement; I saw they tended to promote evil, therefore, even if I could attend them without being hurt myself, I felt in entering them, I lent my aid to promote that which, I am sure from what I saw, hurt others; led many from the paths of rectitude and chastity, and brought them into much sin, particularly those who had to act in plays and sing in concerts. I felt the vanity and folly of what are called the pleasures of this life, of which the tendency is not to satisfy, but eventually to enervate and injure the heart and mind; those are only real pleasures which are of an innocent nature, and are used as recreations, subjected to the cross of Christ. I was in my judgment much confirmed in the infinite importance of religion as the only real stay, guide, help, and comfort in this life, and the only means of our having a hope of partaking in a better. My understanding was increasingly opened to receive its truths; although the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ were little, very little, if at all understood by me: I was like the blind man, although I could hardly be said to have attained the state of seeing men as trees. I obtained in this expedition a valuable knowledge of human character, from the variety I met with; this, I think, was useful to me, though some were very dangerous associates for so young a

person; and the way in which I was protected among them is in my remembrance very striking, and leads me to acknowledge that at this most critical period of my life, the tender mercy of my God was marvellously displayed towards me, and that His all-powerful, though to me then almost unseen and unknown hand, held me up and protected me. Can any one doubt that it was His Spirit which manifested to me the evil in my own heart; as well as that which I perceived around me, leading me to abhor it, and to hunger and thirst after Himself, His righteousness, and that salvation which cometh by Christ?’

On her return to Earlham, and recommencing her home life, Elizabeth Gurney endeavoured so to order her occupations, as, with her new views of the duties of life, would satisfy her conscience and advance her own eternal interests.

‘*May 8, 1798.*—This morning, being alone, I think it a good opportunity to look into myself, to see my present state, and to regulate myself. At this time the first object of my mind is religion. It is the most constant subject of my thoughts and of my feelings; I am not yet on what I call a steady foundation. The next feeling that at this present fills my heart is benevolence and affection to many, but great want of charity, want of humility, want of activity; my inclinations lead me, I hope, to virtue; my passions are, I hope, in a pretty good state; I want to see myself in good order, for much time is lost and many evils committed by not having

some regular plan of conduct. I make these rules for myself :—

‘First.—Never lose any time ; I do not think that lost which is spent in amusement or recreation, some time every day ; but always be in the habit of being employed.

‘Second.—Never err the least in truth.

‘Third.—Never say an ill thing of a person when I can say a good thing of them ; not only speak charitably, but feel so.

‘Fourth.—Never be irritable nor unkind to anybody.

‘Fifth.—Never indulge myself in luxuries that are not necessary.

‘Sixth.—Do all things with consideration, and when my path to right is most difficult, feel confidence in that Power that alone is able to assist me, and exert my own powers as far as they go.’

‘19th.—Altogether I think I have had a satisfactory day. I had a good lesson of French this morning, and read much in Epictetus. I enjoyed the sweet beauties of nature, which now shine forth ; each day some new beauty arrives. I love the beauty of the country ; it does the mind good. I love retirement and quiet much more since my journey to London. How little I thought six months ago I should be so much altered ; I am since then, I hope, altered much for the better. My heart may rise in thankfulness to that Omnipotent Power that has allowed my eyes to be opened in some measure to see the light of truth, and to feel the comfort of religion.

I hope to be capable of giving up my all, if it be required of me, to serve the Almighty with my whole heart.

'*June 1st.*—I have been great part of this morning with poor Bob, who seems now dying. I read a long chapter in the Testament to him, the one upon death, and I sat with him for some time afterwards. Poor fellow ! I never saw death, or any of its symptoms before ; sad to see, it truly is ; I said a few words to him, and expressed to him how happy we should be in expectation of immortality and everlasting bliss. Father of mercies, wilt Thou bless him, and take him unto Thee !

'*13th.*—I have some thoughts of by degrees increasing my plan for Sunday evening ; and of having several poor children at least, to read in the Testament and religious books for an hour. I have begun with Billy ; but I hope to continue and increase one by one.

'*24th.*—I persevered in going to Meeting this afternoon. Coming home, I saw a scene that indeed interested me, my father jumping into the water at the New Mills, after a poor boy whom I thought drowned ; my feelings were great indeed, both for my father and the boy. I believe I should have leapt in afterwards, if my father had gone out of sight ; he did it delightfully, with such activity and spirit, it was charming to see him. Poor little boy ! I took him as soon as he was out of the water ; it agitated me extremely.'

During the summer, Mr. Gurney, with his seven

daughters, took a journey into Wales and the south of England. Elizabeth dwelt with pleasure on the beautiful scenery they passed through; but to the works of man, however imposing, she was comparatively indifferent. She visited cathedral cities; she saw scenes of high historic interest; castles, whose walls could reveal dark tales of bygone days; but she scarcely mentions them, and if she notices them at all, it is but to draw some moral inference.

But by far the greatest interest afforded her by this journey, was the prospect of seeing different members of the Society of Friends, and becoming better acquainted with them and their principles. The travellers paid a visit to Colebrook Dale, the residence of the Christian philanthropist, Richard Reynolds; there she was left for some days with her cousin, Priscilla Hannah Gurney.

Mr. Gurney returned home in September. Elizabeth resumed her usual habits of self-occupation and usefulness to others; visiting and relieving the poor, both at Earham and in Norwich, especially the sick; reading the Bible to them and instructing their children. Her school, too, gradually increased from the small beginning of one little boy, to so great a number, that her teaching them in the house became inconvenient, and a vacant laundry was given up to this purpose. She had at last above seventy scholars, without assistance, without monitors, without the countless books and pictures of the present day.

Nor was her attention confined to the poor; where

any little kindness seemed needed, there she delighted to offer it. A circumstance marking this trait in her character was related a few years ago to one of her family, by a lady, a widow of an officer, who was living alone in a small house near Norwich, about 1798, during her husband's absence. Her income was limited ; she was young, and had few acquaintances. It was during her confinement with her first child that she was surprised by a loud ring at the bell. Her servant came running up-stairs with a basket in her hand, and in the broad dialect peculiar to Norfolk, informed her mistress that it had been left by ' a beautiful lady on horseback, in a scarlet riding habit.' The basket contained some little delicacies ; and the same attentions were repeated, although personally a stranger to Elizabeth and her family.

We have no exact knowledge of the time when the scarlet riding habit was abandoned ; nor is it easy to ascertain by what gradations she became a Friend in outward appearance. She was slow in adopting the costume ; she first laid aside all ornament, then she chose quiet and inconspicuous colours, and had her dresses made with perfect simplicity. As late as the spring of 1799, an eye-witness describes her in a plain slate-coloured silk dress ; with a black lace veil twisted in the turban fashion of the day with her long blonde hair, the ends hanging on one side.

By the end of the year, however, Elizabeth Gurney had, with the close cap and handkerchief of

Friends, assumed their other peculiarities. Of their principles she had long been convinced, choosing Quakerism as the religion of her life. She was thus prepared to consider the proposal of marriage made to her at this time by Mr. Joseph Fry, then engaged with his elder brother, Mr. William Fry, in business in London.

Their marriage took place on the 19th of August 1800, at the Friends' Meeting House in Norwich. Although on her wedding morning she 'awoke in a sort of terror at the prospect before her,' and on driving through Norwich for the last time, 'the very stones of the streets seemed dear to her;' yet within a few days she writes cheerfully of her arrival at Plashet, the residence of her husband's parents, and the cordiality of her welcome there; she is 'much pleased with the place,' and 'admires the kindness of its inhabitants.'

It was common in those days for a junior partner to reside in the house of business; accordingly Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fry prepared to establish themselves at St. Mildred's Court in the City of London. The house was large, airy, commodious, and, what in the City is a still more rare advantage, quiet, and continued to be an occasional residence of different members of the family till it was pulled down.

Elizabeth Fry was, by her marriage, brought into completely new circumstances; her husband's family had been members of the Society of Friends from an early period. In this it resembled her own; but,

unlike her own parents, her father and mother-in-law were 'plain and consistent Friends:' she was surrounded by a large circle of new connexions and acquaintance, who differed from her own early associates in being almost exclusively strict Friends. Thus she found herself the 'gay instead of the plain and scrupulous one of the family.' For a time this brought her into occasional difficulty and trial; she often painfully felt the incongruity of the parties assembled at her house, formed of her own family, and nearest connexions, whom she so tenderly loved, and those with whom she was in strict religious communion, but whose habits and sentiments differed from theirs; and she feared for herself, lest in the 'desire to please all,' she should in any degree swerve from the line of conduct she believed right for herself.

As the spring advanced, the first that she passed in London, Elizabeth Fry greatly missed the range and expanse of Earlham. She writes with delight of the 'violets and primroses quite decorating the hedges' when she visited Norfolk in April, and the enjoyment of country scenes and country pleasures. She needed a little refreshment before preparing for the fatigues of the Friends' Yearly Meeting—a vast undertaking for a young housekeeper and an inexperienced hostess.

During the fortnight occupied by the Yearly Meeting, St. Mildred's Court was, according to a very general custom among the Society, an open house for the reception of the Friends assembled in

London on that occasion from all parts of the kingdom: some were inmates there during the time, whilst the parties at dinner were generally very numerous. And these dinner parties were no slight affairs—preparation was daily made for sixty; but so arranged, that if twenty more appeared, there was still enough and to spare. The company varied from the plainest Friends, to such as could scarcely be distinguished as belonging to the Society.

CHAPTER III.

1801-1811.

Journey into the North of England—Death of her mother-in-law—Death of Mrs. John Gurney—The Rev. Edward Edwards—Death of her father-in-law—Removal to Plashet, enjoyment of the country—Death of her father—Commencement of her public ministry—Journey into Gloucestershire—Acknowledged as a minister by Friends—Christian enlargement—Parochial objects.

WE have seen Elizabeth Gurney in her father's home, the dutiful and loving child, and as a wife anxiously endeavouring to fulfil her duties and adorn her allotted sphere. New hopes and fears, new cares and joys, now awaited her as a mother. Powerful, discerning, and self-possessed in fulfilling her vocation in the world and the church, in her own home she was pre-eminently the tender loving woman. There was a cheerful tenderness in her voice, and smile, and manner, which never failed to attract and soothe. How truly woman's weakness was mingled with her strength of character is very discernible in her journals.

Earlham, Ninth Month 21st, 1801.—We have had a comfortable journey. I entered this place in much agitation; our reception was delightful; my father and all so much admire our little darling, and seemed

to love her so dearly that it was delightful to me ! It was indeed a striking sight to see them all meet her, so much real interest was shown.'

In the October of the year following, Mrs. Fry travelled into the North of England with her husband. Soon after their return home, their family was increased by their brother, Samuel Gurney, coming to reside at St. Mildred's Court, that he might learn the details of business in London. In that great metropolis the advantage of his sister's watchful care was invaluable. She had been much attached to him when young ; and it was an interest and pleasure to have him for an inmate. Her labours were eminently blessed to him, and in his faithful love through life she reaped a rich reward.

In July 1803 she visited Earlham, where the whole family assembled, an unbroken band, Mr. Gurney and his eleven children, Mr. Fry and the two little grandchildren.

But the family gathering was not to be of long continuance, for the fear of a French invasion, and the daily expectation of their landing took such hold of people at this time, that Mr. Joseph Fry was summoned by his brother 'to be at his post.' On his return he found preparations had been made for flooding the marshes of the river Lee, and breaking down the bridges on the Essex road ; whilst his father-in-law was also prepared, so soon as the French should land, to convey his daughters into the Isle of Ely, still regarded by the East Anglian portion of England as a ' Camp of refuge.'

The following year opened with the clouded atmosphere to be felt in a family circle where any member of it appears approaching the confines of the eternal world.

‘*Upton, Third Month 15th, 1804.*—Since I last wrote, I have more closely witnessed the scene of death than I ever did before. Last First-day morning, about three o’clock, my mother-in-law died; I was with her at times on Seventh day, but although I have every reason to believe she died happily, I did not experience those awful, sweet feelings I should have looked for at so serious a time.’

At this period of her life, the poor occupied much of her attention, and notwithstanding the difficulties in a young delicate woman personally visiting them in London, she persevered until withdrawn from it by residence in the country, and the increase of more important duties. Her determination to ascertain the truth is well shown in the following anecdote:—

One cold winter day she was accosted by a woman asking charity in the street, with a half-naked little child in her arms, very ill with the hooping-cough. Grieved at the appearance of the child, and her suspicions excited by the evasive answers of the woman, Mrs. Fry offered to accompany her home, and there relieve her necessities. This the woman tried to elude, but, determined on her purpose, she succeeded in following her into a low back street, where, in a wretched, filthy house, the melancholy spectacle presented itself of a number of sick and neglected infants, not only without comforts, but with every

aggravation of misery. The next day, when the medical attendant of her own children went at her request to assist the little sufferers, he found the room empty, woman and children gone, nor any trace to be found of them. On inquiry among the neighbours, it was discovered that these poor little objects were parish children, put to this woman to nurse, and that she kept them in this condition, not merely to assist her purposes of mendicity, but that by shortening their lives, and then concealing their death, she might receive the pittance allotted for their maintenance.

So early as the year 1801, Elizabeth Fry's attention had been called to Joseph Lancaster, the founder of the Lancastrian or monitorial system of instruction. Struggling under difficulties and pecuniary embarrassments, he had, notwithstanding, assembled a large school around him in Southwark; she assisted him at this and subsequent periods, and whilst she regretted his eccentricities, never ceased to value the benefit his mode of teaching and exertions had conferred upon his country.

In July 1804 her health again seriously failed, and long and very gradual was her restoration. By experience in suffering, she was learning how to sympathize with the sufferings of others, and being prepared, unconsciously to herself, for the future history of her life.

Early in December 1806, Mr. and Mrs. Fry went to Earlham, to be present at the marriage of her sister Louisa to Samuel Hoare, Esq., of Hampstead,

Middlesex. The party gathering on that occasion in the old hall at Earlham formed a picture not to be forgotten after the lapse of almost fifty years; the bride surrounded by that lovely sisterhood, alike dressed in white muslin, with white chip hats (the fashion of the day); their father pleased, yet full-hearted; Catherine, their mother-sister, with the careful look which early responsibility had given her; and the old servants, tearfully happy, attending upon them.

In February 1807 Mrs. Fry again travelled into Norfolk to attend the wedding of her sister Hannah. She was married to Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq., afterwards Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart. Thus were individuals linked together, afterwards to be so closely united in similar objects and interests. It is difficult to dis sever Elizabeth Fry in her career of singular usefulness from her brothers, Samuel Gurney and Joseph John Gurney, or their brothers-in-law, Fowell Buxton and Samuel Hoare.

In May 1808, Elizabeth, wife of her eldest brother John, died after a lingering illness. She was cut off in the bloom of youth, and the height of human happiness; at a period when the large family, of which she was a member, were in the enjoyment of this world's brightest prosperity.

The Rev. Edward Edwards, who visited the bereaved husband in his affliction, proved a messenger of good to the Gurney family. He directed them in their affliction to the wisdom and the mercy of the Hand that had smitten them; and as time per-

mitted them to turn their attention to controversial subjects, he supplied them with books, and assisted them in becoming acquainted with the differences existing in the Christian Church; and by leading them to study these subjects upon scriptural grounds, enabled them to decide for themselves. It was not without pain, that she, who had so decidedly chosen the path of Friends, saw others so dear to her, as decidedly choosing another way, and uniting themselves with the Church of England; but, as each one became established in his own course, some one way, some the other, a wonderful union and communion sprang up among them.

In the autumn of this year, Mrs. Fry was called upon to partake personally in the solemn scene of the death of her father-in-law, William Storrs Fry. This event took place at St. Mildred's Court, where she had nursed him assiduously during some weeks' illness. To the latest period of her life, she dwelt with pleasure on the satisfaction and privilege of having been permitted to be a comfort and assistance to him, during his passage through the dark valley. He was a man of piety and amiability of disposition, and had endeared himself to her by gentleness and affectionate attention. He was in the habit of frequently driving to London from Plashet. The heavy coach with its bearskin hammercloth and black horses was a pleasant sight to all, to the nursery party especially, for he brought with him an atmosphere of kindness and love, and generally came laden with flowers or fruit, or some of those country

productions so welcome to dwellers in a city. His decease produced an important alteration in the circumstances of his daughter-in-law—the removal of the family to Plashet.

To one who was alive to every sound and every object in nature, it was indeed a change, from the smoke and din of a crowded city to the tranquillity of a country life. It was a renewal of early tastes and pleasures, not the less appreciated for the years that had passed over her, since she left her father's house. She had remarkably the talent of throwing aside graver objects, and for short intervals divesting herself of care. She would enjoy her garden and flowers, generally with some of her children about her, and then as quickly resume her employments. Although these occupations appeared different, there was unity of purpose in the whole. She desired to serve God in the fulfilment of her daily duties; she offered to Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, by the spirit in which she accepted and enjoyed His beauties in creation. Her brow would relax, and her countenance beam with intelligence, as she explained to her children the wonders of the heavenly bodies, the structure of an insect, or the growth and beauty of a flower.

Soon after their removal to Plashet, Mr. Fry made considerable alterations in the grounds. During her permitted intervals of relaxation, she gradually filled the plantations with wild-flowers. Followed by her little ones, with their baskets and trowels, their old Norfolk nurse, whose love of primroses almost

equalled her own, and Dennis Regan the Irish gardener, she would set forth to transplant seedlings, or deck fresh spots with that pale yellow flower, so profusely found in every copse, and on every green bank, not only at Earlham, but throughout her native county.

On the 26th of September 1809, at Tunbridge Wells, she received an express summoning her to the deathbed of her beloved father.

'Earlham, Tenth Month 30th.—I hardly know how to express myself: I have indeed passed through wonders. On the 26th, an express arrived, saying our most dear father was so ill, that they did not expect his life would be spared. Words fall short to describe what I felt, he was so tenderly near and dear to me; we soon believed it best to set off for this place, on some accounts under great discouragement, principally from my own bodily weakness, and also the fever in the house; but it did not appear as if we could omit it, feeling as we did; therefore, after a tender parting with my beloved flock, we set off. We arrived at Mildred's Court the first night, where our dear sister Chenda left us in hopes of seeing our beloved parent alive. In very great weakness I set off the next morning, and had at times great discouragements; but many hours were comforting and sweet. Hearing on the road at the different stages that my dearest father was living, we proceeded till we arrived at Earlham, about twelve o'clock that night. We got out of the carriage, and once more saw him, who has been so inexpressibly

dear to me through life, since I knew what love was ; he was asleep, but death was strongly marked on his sweet and to me beautiful face. While in his room all was sweetness, and I think nothing bitter, though how I feel his loss is hard to express : but indeed I have had abundant cause to rejoice on his account. He frequently expressed that he feared no evil, but believed that through the mercy of God in Christ, he should be received into glory.

‘The next morning he died quite easily : I was not with him ; but on entering his room soon after it was over, my soul was bowed within me, in love, not only for the deceased, but also for the living, and in humble thankfulness, so that I could hardly help uttering (which I did) my thanksgiving and praise, and also what I felt for the living as well as the dead. I cannot understand it ; but the power given was wonderful to myself, and the cross none ; my heart was so full that I could not hinder utterance.’

Her sister Rachel thus describes the scene :— ‘Dear Betsey uttered thanksgiving, and a song of rejoicing, for the mercy that had been so richly extended to our beloved father ; and a prayer that it might be continued to us all.’

‘*Eleventh Month 3d.*—We attended our beloved father’s funeral : before I went, I was so deeply impressed at times, with love to all and thanksgiving, that I doubted whether it might not possibly be my place to express it there ; but I did, the evening before, humbly crave not to be permitted to do so,

unless rightly called to it. Fear of man appeared greatly taken away. I sat in the Meeting under a solemn quietness, though there was preaching that neither disturbed nor enlivened me much; the same words still powerfully impressed me, that had done so ever since I first entered the room where the corpse was. Upon going to the grave, this still continued; under this solemn quiet calm, the fear of man appeared so much removed, that I believe my sole desire was that the will of God might be done in me. Though it was unpleasant to me what man might say; yet I most feared lest it was a temptation owing to my state of sorrow; but that, I fully believe, was not the case, as something of the kind had been on my mind so long. But it appeared more ripe the last few weeks, and even months, I had so often had to "rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the God of my salvation," that it had made me desire that others might partake and know how good He had been to my soul; and to encourage them to walk in those paths, that I had found to be paths of pleasantness and peace. However, after a solemn waiting, my dear uncle Joseph spoke, greatly to my encouragement and comfort, and I believe removal of some of my fears. I remained still, till dearest John began to move to go away, when it appeared as if it could not be omitted; and I fell on my knees, and began, not knowing how I should go on, with these words—"Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are all Thy ways, Thou King of Saints; be pleased to re-

ceive our thanksgiving." There I seemed stopped, though I thought that I should have had to express that I gave thanks on my beloved father's account. But not feeling the power continue, I arose directly; a quiet, calm, and invigorated state, mental and bodily, were my portion afterwards; and altogether a sweet day; but a very painful night—discouraged on every side, I could believe, by him who tries to deceive. The discouragement appeared to arise principally from what others would think, and nature flinched and sank, but I was enabled this morning to commit myself in prayer. May I be preserved in future, if my life be spared, from taking Thy holy name in vain; enable me, if Thou seest meet, to follow hard after Thee, that I may know Thy voice, Thou Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and be as one of Thy sheep.'

With this event commences a new era in the life of Elizabeth Fry. To discuss the question of woman's ministry would be irrelevant here. One thing, however, is obvious, that it was as a minister of the Society of Friends, and as such only, shielded by its discipline, and controlled by its supervision, that she could have carried out her peculiar vocation in the world and in the church.

'Plasht, First Month 1st, 1810.—It is rather awful to me entering a new year, more particularly when I look at the alterations the last has made. First, a child born; second, the loss of nurse, at Earlham; third, my beloved father's death; fourth, my mouth being opened in Meetings. My heart says, "What

can I render for having been so remarkably and mercifully carried through these various dispensations of Providence?" I think I never knew the Divine Arm so eminently extended for my comfort, help, and deliverance; and though of late I may in a degree have had to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, yet it has not lasted long at a time, and oh, the incomings of love, joy, and peace, that have at other periods arisen for my confirmation and consolation !'

It was early in 1811, that Elizabeth Fry was publicly acknowledged by the Society of Friends as one of their ministers.

An entry in her journal a few months afterwards denotes some enlargement in the bonds which had hitherto confined her; contrasted with the noble Christian liberality which adorned her later years, this extract is very curious:—

'*Plasnet, Eighth Month 23d.*—We had three clergymen and their wives, besides another neighbour and his wife, here yesterday; I believe good men, and I hope good women also; I felt love, and I think that sort of unity with them, that I have with good Friends. From a great fear of hurting others, I feel, though I believe it is not very apparent, a bowing to their opinions, and not openly professing my own, which tries me. There, no doubt, are advantages as well as disadvantages in associating with people of different descriptions, especially in being with the good; we are increasingly led to estimate the good in all, and also to observe how the

mercy of our heavenly Father is extended towards us, and how He sees meet to accept us in our different ways. But at the same time, there is safety in keeping within our narrow enclosure, more particularly for young people not established in principle.'

In establishing herself at Plashet, Mrs. Fry had formed various plans for the benefit of her poorer neighbours, which she gradually brought into action. One of her early endeavours was to establish a girls' school for the parish of East Ham, of which Plashet is a hamlet. Immediately opposite the gate of Plashet House, there stood a dilapidated dwelling, picturesque from its gable end and large projecting porch; it was inhabited by an aged man and his still more aged sister; they had seen better days, and eked out a narrow income with the help of the brother's labours in a small garden, and the sale of rabbits, of which they kept a vast quantity. Like persons fallen in life, they were reserved; the sister almost inaccessible. But by degrees Mrs. Fry won her way to the old lady's heart; she might be seen seated in an upper chamber, on one side of a fireplace lined with blue Dutch tiles, opposite the invalid, who, propped by cushions, leaned back in an easy-chair, in a short white dressing-gown over a quilted petticoat, her thin wrinkled hands resting on her knees, and her emaciated refined countenance brightening under the gentle cheering influence of her guest, as she endeavoured to raise her hopes and stimulate her desires after that country, where it shall be no more said, 'I am sick.' Annexed to this

old building was a spacious and comparatively modern room, which appeared suitable for a school-room, and Mrs. Fry's persuasions succeeded in obtaining the consent of the old people to use it as such.

A young woman, named Harriet Howell, who was much occupied at that time in organizing schools on the Lancastrian system, came to Plashet. The excellent clergyman of East Ham, Mr. Anlezark, with his lady, united with her in the object. A school of about seventy girls was established, and, although afterwards removed to a more central situation, continues to the present day.

The bodily wants of the poor, especially in cases of sickness or accident, claimed her careful attention. There was a depot of calico and flannels always ready, besides outer garments, and a roomy closet well supplied with drugs. In very hard winters, she had soup boiled in an outhouse, in such quantities as to supply hundreds of poor people with a nourishing meal. Nor was her interest confined to the English poor in East Ham. About half a mile from Plashet, on the high road between Stratford and Ilford, the passer-by will find two long rows of houses, with one larger one in the centre, if possible more dingy than the rest. At that time they were squalid and dirty. Windows stuffed with old rags, or pasted over with brown paper, and the few remaining panes of glass refusing to perform their intended office from the accumulated dust of years; puddles of thick black water before the doors;

children without shoe or stocking ; mothers, whose matted locks escaped from remnants of caps which looked as though they never could have been white ; pigs, on terms of most comfortable familiarity with the family ; poultry, sharing the children's potatoes—all bespoke an Irish colony.

It was a pleasant thing to observe the influence obtained by Mrs. Fry over these wild but warm-hearted people. She had in her nature a touch of poetry, and a quick sense of the droll—the Irish character furnished matter for both. Their power of deep love and bitter grief excited her sympathy ; almost against her judgment, she would grant the linen shirt and the boughs of evergreen to array the departed, and ornament the bed of death.

Mrs. Fry made relieving the poor a pleasure to her children, by the cheerful spirit in which she did it ; she employed them as almoners when very young, but expected a minute account of their giving, and their reasons for it. After the establishment of the Tract Society, she always kept a large supply of such tracts as she approved for distribution. It was her desire never to relieve the bodily wants of any one without endeavouring in some way, more or less directly, to benefit their souls. She was a warm advocate for vaccination, and very successful in performing the operation ; she had acquired this art from Dr. Willan, one of its earliest advocates and most skilful practitioners. At intervals, she made a sort of investigation of the state of the parish, with a view to vaccinating the children. The result was,

that small-pox was scarcely known in the villages over which her influence extended.

In a green lane, near Plashet, it has been the annual custom of the Gipsies to pitch their tents for a few days in their way to Fairlop fair. The sickness of a gipsy child, inducing the mother to apply for relief, led Mrs. Fry to visit their camp. From that time, from year to year, she cared for them whenever they came into her neighbourhood; clothing for the children and people, and a little medical advice, she invariably bestowed; but, more than that, she sought to influence their minds aright; she pleaded with them on the bitter fruits of sin, and furnished them with Bibles, and books the most likely to arouse their attention.

But though thus abounding in labours for the good of all around her, she was liable to deep inward discouragements, undoubtedly increased by her sensitive nature and delicate frame, but arising chiefly from her intense desire in nothing to offend Him whom her soul loved and whom she so entirely desired to serve.

CHAPTER IV.

1811-1816.

Norwich Bible Society—More extended intercourse with others—
Effects upon her mind—Journey with Henry Hull and Priscilla
Gurney—Death of a domestic servant—Removal to London for the
winter—Newgate for the first time, February 1813—State of that
prison—Many sorrows—Illness and death of John Gurney—Home
life—Domestic duties—Death of one of her children.

IN September 1811, Mrs. Fry visited Earham. On the 10th of that month was held the first meeting of the Norwich Bible Society; it was very largely attended. Mrs. Fry, who was warmly interested in the Institution from its commencement to the close of her life, was present with her brother, Joseph John Gurney, and other members of the family. Mr. Gurney, then in the prime of early manhood, on this occasion first took his stand in public life as an advocate for the general circulation of that sacred volume which he chose as the guide of his youth, which proved the stay of his advancing years, and his best consolation in the hour of death.

'Earham, Ninth Month 10th.—I think a more deeply exercised state, that has at times bordered on distress of soul, I hardly ever remember, than I feel this morning going to Meeting; in the first place,

with the Edwardses and my own family, in their various states; in the next place, my prospect of going into the men's Monthly Meeting; and in the last, an idea having passed my mind, whether I may not have, amongst the very large companies who are likely to be here, consisting of many clergymen and others, to say something, either before meals or at some other time. The words that (I believe) have arisen for my encouragement, are these, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Yes, I will try not to fear, for, if God be with me, who can be against me?'

'*Earlham, 12th.*—What can I render for all His benefits? In the first place, I went to the Meeting of worship with the Edwardses. I had not been long there before I felt something of a power accompanying me, and words arose, but my exercise of mind was so great, that it seemed like being "baptized for the dead;" though not that I know of from any particular fear of man; I was helped (I believe I may say) as to power, tongue, and utterance.

'Yesterday was a day indeed; one that may be called a mark of the times. We first attended a General Meeting of the Bible Society, where it was sweet to observe so many of various sentiments all uniting in the one great object, from the good Bishop of Norwich (Bathurst), for so, I believe, he may be called, to the Dissenting minister and young Quaker (my brother Joseph). We afterwards, about thirty-four of us, dined here; I think there were six clergymen of the Establishment; three Dissenting

ministers ; and Richard Phillips, besides numbers of others. A very little before the cloth was removed, such a power came over me of love, I believe I may say, life, that I thought I must ask for silence after Edward Edwards had said grace, and then supplicate the Father of mercies for His blessing, both of the fatness of the earth and the dew of Heaven, upon those who thus desired to promote His cause by spreading the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures ; and that He would bless their endeavours that the knowledge of God and His glory might cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Also for the preservation of all present, that through the assistance of His grace we might so follow Him and our blessed Lord in time that we might eventually enter into a glorious eternity, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. The power and solemnity were very great. Richard Phillips asked for silence ; I soon knelt down ; it was like having our High Priest amongst us ; independently of this power His poor instruments are nothing, and with His power how much is effected ! I understood many were in tears ; I believe all were bowed down spiritually. Soon after I took my seat, the Baptist minister said, " This is an act of worship ;" adding, that it reminded him of that which the disciples said, " when he walked with us, did not our hearts burn within us ?" A clergyman said, " We want no wine, for there is that amongst us that does instead." A Lutheran minister, Dr. Steinkoff, remarked that, although he could not always understand the words,

being a foreigner, he felt the Spirit of Prayer, and went on to enlarge in a striking manner. Another clergyman spoke to this effect—How the Almighty visited us, and that neither sex nor anything else stood in the way of His grace. I do not exactly remember the words of any one, but it was a most striking circumstance for so many of such different opinions thus all to be united in one spirit; and for a poor woman to be made the means, amongst so many, great, wise, and, I believe, good men, of showing forth the praise of the great “I AM.”’

The personal and particular providence of God in His dealings with men, is never more proved than in the varied and apparently contrary means by which He brings them to a saving knowledge of Himself. In the case of Mrs. Fry we observe results consonant to her peculiar circumstances, and to the instruments used to awaken her from the sleep of death to a life of righteousness. It is impossible to doubt but that God Himself, by His Holy Spirit, opened her heart to receive the glad tidings of salvation; although, at that time, her knowledge of the great scheme of man’s Redemption appears to have been obscure and indistinct. She was like a mariner who, not fully acquainted with the chart and compass by which to pursue the voyage, is yet guided by an invisible hand into the Harbour of Refuge. Her heart was dedicated with that reverential love so conspicuous in her character. Her becoming a minister, awful to her nature, terrible to her as a delicate and timid woman, she yet received with

thankfulness, inasmuch as she considered it a token of being owned by Him, and employed in His service. The time had, however, arrived when He who had great things for her to perform in the world and the church, so willed it that this devoted servant should be furnished with 'all knowledge,' as well as 'spiritual understanding;' and having proved the grounds of her confidence, should be able, from the great treasury of Biblical Truth, to give a reason for the hope that was in her.

Some of her sisters having joined the Church of England from conviction, and at the same time adorning their profession by an eminently spiritual and self-denying life, had its effect upon her, and prepared the way for further intercourse and union with others, who differed from herself in the externals of religion.

With Mr. Edwards, Mr. Simeon, Mr. Francis Cunningham (afterwards her brother-in-law), and many persons of similar sentiments, she had frequent intercourse. Whilst in some things they differed, as the stream from which they drank diverged into various channels—she learned to acknowledge that it flowed from the same fountain of everlasting truth. The Bible Society, bringing her into contact with many excellent and devoted Christians of other denominations, tended to the same result, and to induce those liberal and expansive feelings towards all whom she believed to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, which, from that time, became marked and growing features in her character.

In December 1811, Elizabeth Fry for the first time undertook a journey in the capacity of a minister amongst Friends; she was accompanied by Henry Hull from America, at this time on a religious visit to England, and a frequent guest at Plashet. Her youngest sister, Priscilla Gurney, then turning towards the opinions and practices of Friends, went with them.

The summer abounded in engagements; family guests; visits from the sick and afflicted; many home cares; so as to weigh down her natural spirits, causing her 'to pant for rest,' and crave power to subdue the 'irritability excited by her very numerous interests and bodily infirmities.' Her own accounts exemplify the state of her religious mind, her earnest desire to do the thing that was right, and yet the difficulty she experienced in knowing in what her duty consisted.

'Ninth Month 2d, 1812.—This morning our poor servant, who has for some weeks kept his bed very seriously ill, died. I feel that I have cause for humble gratitude, in having been at the awful time strengthened by faith; and I believe, I may say, having experienced the Divine presence near; I have often sat and watched by his bedside, desiring to know whether I had anything to do or say, as to his soul's welfare. I found neither feeling, faith, nor ability, to say or do much more than endeavour to turn his mind towards his Maker, but I think never more than once in anything of the anointing power. Yesterday morning I found him much worse,

a struggle upon him, that appeared breaking the thread of life, and his sufferings great, mentally and bodily. The first thing I found in myself was, that a willing mind was granted me, and in sitting by him, the power and spirit of supplication and intercession for him arose, to which I gave way ; it immediately appeared to bring a solemn tranquillity ; his pains and restlessness were quieted ; his understanding I believe was quite clear ; he thanked me, and said once or twice, " God bless you, ma'am," as if he felt much comfort in what had passed. Faith, love, and calmness, were the covering of my mind. He had, I believe, only one or two more slight struggles after I left him ; after that I was sent for, and found that the conflict appeared over, and he breathed his last in about a quarter of an hour.' .

It will be difficult for those who knew Mrs. Fry only in later life, and her zealous endeavours to obtain for all within her reach religious instruction, and the hearing or reading of the Bible, to comprehend her not affording a member of her own household, under serious protracted illness, more regular instruction on matters of such vast importance. The dispensation into which she had been brought, acting upon her timid nature, induced extreme fear of 'running before she was sent,' or treading 'unbidden upon holy ground ;' when, on the contrary, she believed that it was the Master's voice which called, there was neither place nor circumstance that could arrest her steps.

After a time, it pleased Him, who was guiding

His servant according to the purposes of His own will, by an increased acquaintance with human nature, and more general association with all sorts of men, to teach her that the Omnipotent works by outward providences and second causes; and that whilst the Holy Spirit can alone bless and fructify, it is none the less the duty of man, in simple obedience to the written Word, to use every opportunity in his power to sow the good seed, trusting to God to give the increase.

At the funeral of the servant she addressed those assembled in a manner suited to their different conditions. After offering the word of consolation to the weeping relatives and friends, unflinchingly did she impress upon others, that the 'way of transgressors is hard.' The occasion was long remembered by individuals who were there, and who attributed their permanent improvement to the solemn truths they then heard, and for the first time effectually received into their hearts.

Dated St. Mildred's Court, February 16, 1813, we read in her journal:—'Yesterday we were some hours at Newgate with the poor female felons, attending to their outward necessities; we had been twice previously. Before we went away, dear Anna Buxton uttered a few words in supplication, and very unexpectedly to myself I did also. I heard weeping, and I thought they appeared much tendered; a very solemn quiet was observed; it was a striking scene, the poor people on their knees around us, in their deplorable condition.'

Thus simply and incidentally is recorded Elizabeth Fry's first entrance upon the scene of her future labours. The seed was sown, but it took time to germinate, and four years were to elapse before the way should be made clear for her to put forth her hand to the great work of her life.

In January of this year, four members of the Society of Friends, all well known to Elizabeth Fry, had visited some persons in Newgate who were about to be executed. Although no mention is made of the circumstance in the journal, it has always been understood that the representations of these gentlemen, particularly those of William Forster, one of their number, first induced her personally to inspect the state of the women, with the view of alleviating sufferings occasioned them by the inclemency of a very cold winter.

At that time, all the female prisoners in Newgate were confined in the part now known as the untried side. The larger portion of the quadrangle was then used as a state-prison. The partition wall was not of sufficient height to prevent the state-prisoners overlooking the narrow yard, and the windows of the two wards and two cells, of which the women's division consisted. These four rooms comprised about one hundred and ninety superficial yards, into which, at the time of these visits, nearly three hundred women with their numerous children were crowded; tried and untried misdemeanants and felons, without classification, without employment, and with no other superintendence than that given

by a man and his son, who had charge of them by night and by day. Destitute of sufficient clothing, for which there was no provision ; in rags and dirt, without bedding, they slept on the floor, the boards of which were in part raised to supply a sort of pillow. In the same rooms they lived, cooked, and washed.

With the proceeds of their clamorous begging, when any stranger appeared amongst them, the prisoners purchased liquors from a regular tap in the prison. Spirits were openly drunk, and the ear was assailed by the most terrible language. Beyond the restraint necessary for safe custody, there was little check over their communication with the world without.

Although military sentinels were posted on the leads of the prison, such was the lawlessness prevailing, that Mr. Newman, the Governor, entered this portion of it with reluctance. Fearful that their watches should be snatched from their sides, he advised the ladies (though without avail) to leave them in his house.

Into this scene Mrs. Fry entered, accompanied only by one lady, a sister of Mr. T. F. Buxton. The sorrowful and neglected condition of these depraved women and their miserable children, dwelling in such a vortex of corruption, deeply sank into her heart, although at this time nothing more was done than to supply the most destitute with clothes. A vivid recollection of the green baize garments, and the pleasure of assisting in their preparation for this

purpose, is still retained in her family. She carried back to her home, and into the midst of other interests and avocations, a lively remembrance of all that she had witnessed in Newgate, which, within four years, induced that systematic effort for ameliorating the condition of these poor outcasts, which, by the blessing of God, in the end proved eminently successful.

Not only did a considerable space of time elapse after Elizabeth Fry's first visits to Newgate before she renewed them, but in the interim many events occurred of deep import to herself. He who 'sits as a Refiner and Purifier of silver,' saw well to exercise her in the school of affliction, before raising her up for the remarkable work she had to do. Long and distressing indisposition, the death of her brother, John Gurney, that of her paternal friend, Joseph Gurney Bevan, the loss of a tenderly-beloved child; considerable loss of property, separation for a time from all her elder children, were among the means used by Him who cannot err, to teach her the utter instability of every human possession, to draw her heart more entirely to Himself, and to prepare her for His service. The rare combination in her natural character of the extremes of courage and timidity, were not more remarkable than in her spiritual course, where her holy boldness and confiding love contrasted with her dread of in anything offending her 'Holy Helper,' as she loved to designate Him to whom her heart was given.

* *Eleventh Month 25th, 1813.*—On Third day, my

beloved husband, with our children, attended the Monthly Meeting.

‘I should say that the day was begun by returning thanks in my own family, amongst my children, husband, and servants, for my peace ; the rest of the day passed in much domestic comfort with my husband at home. This was one of the very bright days of life ; blessings are abundantly granted, and sometimes even a blessing upon the blessings, that makes all feel sweet and lovely !’

In September 1814, Mrs. Fry was summoned into Norfolk, to the dying bed of her brother. The scene closed the following day ; she describes it in a letter to her family at home :—

‘EARLHAM, *Ninth Month 8th*, 1814.
(*by the remains of my dearly beloved brother.*)

‘MY MUCH-LOVED HUSBAND AND CHILDREN,—
Believing you will feel with me in what so nearly concerns me, and not only me, but you also, I sit down to tell you, as nearly as I can, what has happened since I came here. I believe you know I arrived about four o’clock yesterday morning. I was then led into the room where my tenderly-beloved brother lay in bed ; he was awake, but some feared he would not know me, instead of which, upon seeing me, his words were—“ My dear sister, come and kiss me ;” then he expressed his great pleasure at our being together ; he looked very sweet—quite easy, may I not say like one redeemed ? After staying some time by him I went to bed ;

but I did not rest much, feeling low, burdened, and rather poorly. My dear sister, Priscilla, came to me a little past nine o'clock, and advised me to come, he was so very bright, his powers of mind appearing much clearer than any dying man I ever witnessed, except our poor servant John. Upon going into his room, he kissed us each again, and again said he wished for all his sisters together, appearing clearly to recollect each ; for upon one saying—" Now there is no exception, all the sisters are with thee ;" he at first misunderstood, and said—" Did you say there is one exception, for there is not," or to that effect : he said it was delightful how we loved one another. It appeared my place to return thanks for such unspeakable blessings. He then said—" What a sweet prayer !" and afterwards, " I never passed so happy a morning ; how delightful being together, and loving one another as we do." As the day further advanced, he said—" What a beautiful day this has been !" My dear uncle and aunt Joseph Gurney came a little before dinner ; the Rev. W. Wilkinson of Norwich, the Rev. Charles Brereton, Hannah Scarnell (who had lived as servant or retainer on the Gurney property for above fifty years), nurse Norman, and his own man, were our companions. Dr. Alderson called in the morning, and D. Dalrymple, each much affected ; he expressed himself so kindly to them ; he desired his love to Amelia Opie. He enjoyed our dear sister Richenda singing hymns to him ; he took leave of most of the old servants ; to one whom he used not much to like, he spoke the most kindly,

said he was glad to see him, and shook him warmly by the hand, and bade him "farewell!" He appeared deeply impressed with his many blessings and the mercy shown him. About half-an-hour after it was over, we had once more to approach the sacred footstool (for ability) to bless the Sacred Name, both for His giving and taking away. Thus closed such a day as I never passed. May we not say, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord"? Oh, my beloved children and husband, may we not only feel, but profit by this striking event!

Mrs. Fry was always very jealous over herself, lest her avocations as the head of a family should be neglected, from her time and attention being so greatly occupied by those duties which she believed herself called to perform in the Church; but she was even more alive to the danger of carrying on the business of life, in dependence upon her own strength and power. Her heart's prayer was—

‘Whate’er I do in any thing,
To do it as to Thee.’

In a letter to one of her sisters in Norfolk, on the subject of hiring a cook, she says:—

‘My late letters savour much of the Martha, but whilst here, cooks appear a very important, if not a necessary part of our comfort, as our food must be dressed. I am, and have been for many weeks past, in my best health; what a comfort is this! may I not be unmindful of it; but how prone we are to cleave to the things of the earth, rather than in heart to cleave to a better spirit! I sometimes feel

like an earth-worm, though at times raised above it, which is an unmerited mercy ; but I find we may be employed in arranging laundries, kitchens, and such things, until our heart is too much in them. Does not it call for watchfulness, that even in the performance of our duties, however small, they become not a temptation, and we go not astray, lest the seed become choked, and no fruit brought to perfection ?'

It would not be true to say, that Mrs. Fry naturally cared much for outward appearance, or that she took pleasure in domestic concerns. She loved a simple liberality, and unostentatious comfort ; her element was hospitality, and whilst Christian moderation was observed, her taste was gratified by an open generous mode of living ; but she would not have chosen for her own pleasure, the oversight of either house or table ; and when in later life circumstances rendered care and economy a duty, it was a great relief to her to be able to depute the charge of household affairs to her eldest daughter. As the mistress of a family, if she erred, it was upon the side of indulgence ; scarcely liking to exert that power over the wills and feelings of others, which is so conducive to their good ; but she was aware of this herself, and 'a firm hand with a household' was among the maxims she impressed upon her daughters as they advanced in life.

During the infancy of her children, she was singularly devoted to them, by night as well as day. She attended to their minutest ailments, and was

distressed by their sufferings ; in health and happiness they refreshed her by their smiles. As her children grew older, her love was undiminished ; but she had not a talent for education, if that word be used for imparting knowledge, probably because her own had been interrupted and unfinished ; nor did she appreciate, till the experience of life had taught her, the necessity of exerting minute, continued, and personal influence over the minds of children.

Sunday was the golden day of the week. Their mother's very aspect bore the impress of the day. To her it was not alone 'holy' but 'honourable.' After family reading and breakfast, a little walk in the garden was succeeded by a short reading with her children, suited to their age, or circumstances, 'something pithy,' as was her wont to call it. Then some of them in the carriage with her, others walking with their father, the party adjourned to the Friends' Meeting at Plaistow. She had a custom of bringing home to the Sunday's early dinner any one she knew, to whom, from the length of distance to their own dwelling, from decayed circumstances, or feeble health, rest and indulgence were particularly acceptable.

Then came a pause and resting time, followed by the afternoon Meeting. The evenings in summer were generally passed in the gardens, in winter around the bright fireside, and the day concluded with repeating hymns and portions of Scripture.

Mrs. Fry had known many trials during the two

preceding years, but now an acute sorrow, and unlike any which she had hitherto experienced, awaited her—the death of one of her children, Elizabeth, the seventh child, nearly five years of age. She was lovely, and of much promise; with her mother's name she possessed much of her nature, and more of her general appearance, effect, and manner, than any of her other children. Her disposition was tender and affectionate, but like her mother's in early life, inclined to resist authority, though amenable to gentleness and love. The seeds of piety had appeared to take strong root in her heart, and she delighted in religious instruction adapted to her tender years.

'Plashet, Eleventh Month.—It has pleased Almighty and Infinite Wisdom, to take from us our most dear and tenderly-beloved child, little Betsey—between four and five years old. In receiving her, as well as giving her back again, we have, I believe, been enabled to bless the Sacred Name. She was a very precious child, of much wisdom for her years, and I can hardly help believing, much grace; liable to the frailty of childhood, at times she would differ with the little ones, and rather loved her own way; but she was very easy to lead, though not one to be driven. She had most tender affections, a good understanding, for her years, a remarkably staid and solid mind. Her love very strong, and her little attentions great to those she loved, and remarkable in her kindness to servants, poor people, and all animals; she had much feeling for them; but what

was more, the bent of her mind was remarkably towards serious things. It was a subject she loved to dwell upon ; she would often talk of ‘Almighty,’ and almost everything that had connexion with Him. On Third day, the 21st, after some suffering of body from great sickness, she appeared wonderfully relieved, and, I may say, raised in spirit ; she began by telling me how many hymns and stories she knew, with her countenance greatly animated, a flush on her cheeks, and her eyes very bright, a smile of inexpressible content, almost joy : I think she first said with a powerful voice—

“ How glorious is our Heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky,”

and then expressed how beautiful it was, and how the little children that die stand before Him, but she did not remember all the words of the hymn, nor could I help her ; she then mentioned other hymns, and many sweet things ; she spoke with delight of how she could nurse the little ones and take care of them, etc. ; her heart appeared inexpressibly to overflow with love. Afterwards she told me one or two droll stories, and made clear and bright comments as she went along ; then stopped a little while and said (as in the fulness of her heart, and the joy of a little innocent child who feels very good, for she indeed appeared under the influence of her Redeemer), “ Mamma, I love everybody better than myself, and I love thee better than everybody, and I love Almighty much better than thee, and I hope thee loves Almighty much better than me.” I believe my

answer was, "I hope, or believe I do," which she took up and said, "I hope thee does; if not, thee are wicked." Afterwards I appeared to satisfy her that it was so. This was expressed on the Third day morning, and she was a corpse on the Fifth day evening; but in her death, there was abundant cause for thanksgiving; prayer appeared indeed to be answered, as very little, if any, suffering seemed to attend her, and no struggle at last; but her breath grew more and more seldom and gentle, till she ceased to breathe. During the day, being from time to time strengthened in prayer, in heart, and in word, I found myself only led to ask for her, that she might be for ever with her God, whether she remained much longer in time or not; but that if it pleased Infinite Wisdom her sufferings might be mitigated, and as far as it was needful for her to suffer, that she might be sustained. This was marvellously answered beyond anything we could expect, from the nature of the complaint; which the doctors thought would terminate in water in the head. I desire never to forget this favour, but if it pleases Infinite Wisdom, to be preserved from repining, or unduly giving way to lamentation, for losing so sweet, so kind a child; for her little attentions were great, and her love strong to her father, to me, and to all near to her.'

'30th.—Once more my supplications were answered—the bitter conflict that I was permitted to feel during the night, and the morning previous to the funeral of my beloved child, was in the needful time

mitigated, and strength granted to give up her remains to the grave, I hope without a murmur. . . . But I may indeed return thanks unto Him who has "given us the victory," through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This I have been permitted to feel, for my child's death at the time had lost its sting, and the grave its victory; and my soul was upheld in the needful time, though my dread had been so great. I was enabled to pray for help before I left the house, and also to return thanks at the grave for the tender mercy shown to her, and to me, and to all; and afterwards, in the room at the Meeting-house, to encourage others to serve the Most High, seeing how great was His loving-kindness and tender mercy; and that the uncertainty of time called for standing prepared. This morning my poor soul has felt refreshed, in once more being enabled, before my household, to cast my care upon my Holy Helper, and to pray for fresh ability in performing the duties of life, and indeed that this event may be sanctified to us all.'

CHAPTER V.

1816-1818.

Extract from Crabbe's poems—School in Newgate—Newgate Association—Marriage of Joseph John Gurney—Winter in London—Examination before the House of Commons.

' ONE, I beheld ! a wife, a mother, go
 To gloomy scenes of wickedness and woe ;
 She sought her way through all things vile and base
 And made a prison a religious place :
 Fighting her way—the way that angels fight
 With powers of darkness—to let in the light.
 Tell me, my heart, hast thou such victory won,
 As this, a sinner of thy sex, has done,
 And calls herself a sinner ? what art thou ?
 And where thy praise and exaltation now ?
 Yet is she tender, delicate, and nice,
 And shrinks from all depravity and vice ;
 Shrinks from the ruffian gaze, the savage gloom,
 That reign where guilt and misery find a home ;
 Guilt chained, and misery purchased, and with them
 All we abhor, abominate, condemn—
 The look of scorn, the scowl, th' insulting leer,
 Of shame, all fixed on her who ventures here ;
 Yet all she braved ! she kept her steadfast eye
 On the dear cause, and brushed the baseness by.—
 So would a mother press her darling child
 Close to her breast, with tainted rags defiled.'¹

These lines, written by Crabbe in allusion to Mrs. Fry, show that although his acquaintance with her was slight, his deep reading of the human heart

¹ *The Maid's Story* ('Tales of the Hall') by the Rev. George Crabbe.

enabled him to appreciate her undertakings, and the personal sacrifices at which they were made.

*'Mildred's Court, Second Month 24th, 1816.—*I have lately been much occupied in forming a school in Newgate, for the children of the poor prisoners, as well as the young criminals, which has brought much peace and satisfaction with it; but my mind has also been deeply affected in attending a poor woman who was executed this morning. I visited her twice; this event has brought me into much feeling, attended by some distressingly nervous sensations in the night, so that this has been a time of deep humiliation to me, thus witnessing the effect and consequences of sin. This poor creature murdered her baby; and how inexpressibly awful now to have her life taken away! The whole affair has been truly affecting to me; to see what poor mortals may be driven to, through sin and transgression, and how hard the heart becomes, even to the most tender affections.'

At the suggestion of her brother-in-law, Mr. Hoare, Mrs. Fry had, in the interval between 1813 and 1816, accompanied him on a visit to the women in Cold Bath Fields House of Correction, whose neglected state had much impressed him. Mr. Hoare, Mr. T. F. Buxton, and some of her personal friends, were at this time occupied in forming a society for the reformation of the juvenile depredators who infested London in gangs. This object led them into different prisons, where their attention was soon attracted to the subject of prison discipline.

Although not originating in this cause, it may be presumed that the conversation and influence of these gentlemen would tend to keep alive in the mind of Mrs. Fry, the interest awakened in 1813 for the female prisoners in Newgate. As in that instance, so at this time, her journal fails to convey any explicit information respecting her visits there. We are indebted to other sources for the fact that they were recommenced about Christmas 1816.

On her second visit she was, at her own request, left alone amongst the women for some hours; and on that occasion she read to them the parable of the Lord of the Vineyard, in the 20th chapter of St. Matthew, and made a few observations on the eleventh hour, and on Christ having come to save sinners, even those who might be said to have wasted the greater part of their lives estranged from Him. Some asked who Christ was; others feared that their day of salvation was past.

Their children, who were almost naked, were pining for want of proper food, air and exercise. Mrs. Fry, on this occasion, particularly addressed herself to the mothers, and pointed out to them the grievous consequences to their children, of living in such a scene of depravity; she proposed to establish a school for them, to which they acceded with tears of joy. She desired them to consider the plan, for without their steady co-operation she would not undertake it; leaving it to them to select a governess from amongst themselves. On her next visit they had chosen as schoolmistress a young woman,

named Mary Connor, recently committed for stealing a watch. She proved eminently qualified for the task, and became one of the first-fruits of Christian labour in that place; she was assiduous in her duties, and was never known to infringe one of the rules. A free pardon was granted her about fifteen months afterwards; but it was an unavailing gift, for a cough, which had attacked her a short time before, ended in consumption. She displayed during her illness much patience and quietness of spirit; and having, as she humbly believed, obtained everlasting pardon and peace, through the merits of her Lord and Saviour, in this hope, 'full of immortality,' she died.

Mrs. Fry's views were received with cordial approbation by the Sheriffs of London, the Ordinary, and the Governor of Newgate; although they looked upon the experiment as almost hopeless. An unoccupied cell was, by their permission, appropriated for the schoolroom. On the day following this arrangement, Mrs. Fry, accompanied by her friend Miss Sanderson, and with the poor prisoner, Mary Connor, as mistress, opened the school for the children and young persons under twenty-five years of age; but from the small size of the room, they had the pain of being obliged to refuse admission to many of the women, who earnestly entreated to be allowed to share in their instructions. Mary Sanderson then visited a prison for the first time, and her feelings were thus described by herself to Sir T. F. Buxton:—

‘The railing was crowded with half-naked women, struggling together for the front situations with the most boisterous violence, and begging with the utmost vociferation. She felt as if she were going into a den of wild beasts, and she well recollects quite shuddering when the door closed upon her, and she was locked in with such a herd of novel and desperate companions.’

Something similar must have been the effect on that faithful coadjutor in this work, Elizabeth Pryor, at rather a later period, upon seeing the women, ‘squalid in attire and ferocious in countenance, seated about the yard.’ From the prison door one issued, ‘yelling like a wild beast;’ she rushed round the area, with her arm extended, tearing everything of the nature of a cap from the heads of the other women. The sequel too is important; for this very woman, through the grace and mercy of God, became humanized under the instruction of the ladies. After having obtained her liberty, she married; and for years came occasionally to see Mrs. Pryor, who considered her a well-conducted person, her appearance being always most respectable.

A few other ladies gradually united themselves to those already engaged in the work, and the little school in the cell of Newgate continued for many weeks their daily occupation.

‘It was in our visits to the school, where some of us attended almost every day, that we were witnesses to the dreadful proceedings that went forward on the female side of the prison; the begging, swearing,

gaming, fighting, singing, dancing, dressing up in men's clothes; scenes too bad to be described, so that we did not think it suitable to admit young persons with us.'¹

The ladies thought some of the existing evils could be remedied by proper regulations; but in the commencement of the undertaking, the reformation of the women, sunk as they were in every species of depravity, was scarcely thought of, much less anticipated. By degrees, however, the heroic little band became convinced that good might be effected even amongst these, for intercourse with the prisoners had inspired them with confidence. The poor women were earnest in their entreaties not to be excluded from the benefits, which they began to perceive would result to themselves, from improved habits. But whilst thus encouraged on the one side, every sort of discouragement presented itself on the other. The officers of the prison, as well as the private friends of these ladies, treated the idea of introducing industry and order into Newgate as visionary. Even some the most interested in the attempt apprehended that it would fail, from the character of those for whose good it was intended, from the unfavourable locality in the midst of a great metropolis, and from the difficulty of obtaining a sufficiency of labourers for such a work. It was also urged that even if employment could be procured, the necessary materials for work would be destroyed or stolen. In recalling this period, one of those engaged in it thus

¹ Mrs. Fry's evidence before the House of Commons.

writes : 'But amidst these discouraging views, our benevolent friend evinced that her heart was fixed ; and trusting in the Lord, she commenced her work of faith and labour of love.'

'*Fourth Month 12th.*—I have found in my late attention to Newgate, a peace and prosperity in the undertaking, that I seldom, if ever, remember to have done before. A way has very remarkably been opened for us, beyond all expectations, to bring into order the poor prisoners ; those who are in power are so very willing to help us ; in short, the time appears come to work amongst them. Already, from being like wild beasts, they appear harmless and kind. I am ready to say, in the fulness of my heart, surely "it is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes ;" so many are the providential openings of various kinds. Oh ! if good should result, may the praise and glory of the whole be entirely given where it is due by us, and by all, in deep humiliation and prostration of spirit.'

In the month of April 1817, Mrs. Fry, with the wife of a clergyman, and eleven members of the Society of Friends, formed themselves into 'An Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners in Newgate.' The object they had in view is stated to have been, 'To provide for the clothing, the instruction, and the employment 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 may render them docile and peaceable whilst in

prison, and respectable when they leave it.' On comparing these intentions with the existing state of things, it is easy to believe that the scheme was viewed by those in authority as highly desirable, but almost impracticable. Still, to their honour be it spoken, they promised and gave their warmest co-operation.

The concurrence of the Sheriffs and City Magistrates was asked and obtained. But the doubt still remained, how far the women would submit to the restraints, which it would be needful to impose upon them, in order to effect this change. To ascertain this, the Sheriffs met the ladies one Sunday afternoon at Newgate; the women were assembled, and in their presence, as well as that of the Ordinary and Governor, they were asked by Mrs. Fry, whether they were willing to abide by the rules which it would be indispensable to establish amongst them, for the accomplishment of the object so much desired by them all. The women, fully and unanimously, assured her of their determination to obey them strictly. The Sheriffs also addressed them, giving the plan the countenance of their approbation; and then turning to Mrs. Fry and her companions, one of them said, 'Well, ladies, you see your materials.'

The remainder of the history will be better told in the words of Sir T. F. Buxton :¹—

'Having succeeded so far, the next business was

¹ *An Inquiry whether Crime and Misery are produced or prevented by our Present System of Prison Discipline.* Third Edition, 1818, page 109.

to provide employment. It struck one of the ladies, that Botany Bay might be supplied with stockings, and, indeed, all articles of clothing, of the prisoners' manufacture. She therefore called upon Messrs. Richard Dixon and Co., of Fenchurch Street, and candidly told them, that she was desirous of depriving them of this branch of their trade, and stating her views, begged their advice. They said at once, that they should not in any way obstruct such laudable designs, and that no further trouble need be taken to provide work, for they would engage to do it. Nothing now remained but to prepare the room; and this difficulty was obviated by the Sheriffs sending their carpenters. The former laundry speedily underwent the necessary alterations, was cleaned and whitewashed; and in a very few days, the Ladies' Committee assembled in it all the tried female prisoners. One of the ladies, Mrs. Fry, began by describing to them the comforts to be derived from industry and sobriety, the pleasure and profit of doing right: and contrasted the happiness and peace of those who are dedicated to a course of virtue and religion, with that experienced in their former life, and its present consequences; and describing their awful guilt in the sight of God, appealed to themselves, whether its wages, even here, were not utter misery and ruin. She then dwelt upon the motives which had brought the ladies into Newgate; they had left their homes and their families, to mingle amongst those from whom all others fled; animated by an ardent and affectionate desire to rescue their

fellow-creatures from evil, and to impart to them that knowledge, which they, from their education and circumstances, had been so happy as to receive.

‘She then told them, that the ladies did not come with any absolute and authoritative pretensions; that it was not intended they should command, and the prisoners obey, but that it was to be understood, all were to act in concert; that not a rule should be made, or a monitor appointed, without their full and unanimous concurrence; that for this purpose, each of the rules should be read and put to the vote; and she invited those who might feel any disinclination to any particular freely to state their opinion.

‘As each rule was proposed, every hand was held up in token of their approbation. In the same manner, and with the same formalities, each of the monitors was proposed, and all were unanimously approved. When this business was concluded, one of the visitors read aloud the twenty-first chapter of St. Matthew, the parable of the barren fig-tree seeming applicable to the state of the audience; after a period of silence, according to the custom of the Society of Friends, the monitors with their classes withdrew to their respective wards in the most orderly manner. During the first month the ladies were anxious that the attempt should be secret that it might meet with no interruption; at the end of that time, as the experiment had been tried, and had exceeded even their expectations, it was deemed expedient to apply to the Corporation of London. It was considered that the school

would be more permanent if it were made a part of the prison system of the City, than if it merely depended on individuals. In consequence, a short letter descriptive of the progress already made was written to the Sheriffs.

‘The next day an answer was received, proposing a meeting with the ladies at Newgate.

‘In compliance with this appointment, the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, and several of the Aldermen attended. The prisoners were assembled together, and it being requested that no alteration in their usual practice might take place, one of the ladies read a chapter in the Bible, and then the females proceeded to their various avocations. Their attention during the time of reading, their orderly and sober deportment, their decent dress, the absence of everything like tumult, noise, or contention, the obedience and respect shown by them, and the cheerfulness visible in their countenance and manners, conspired to excite the astonishment and admiration of their visitors. Many of these knew Newgate, had visited it a few months before, and had not forgotten the painful impressions made by a scene exhibiting perhaps the very utmost limits of misery and guilt.

‘The Magistrates, to evince their sense of the importance of the alterations which had been effected, immediately adopted the whole plan as a part of the system of Newgate, empowered the ladies to punish the refractory by short confinement, and undertook part of the expenses.’

Encouraged by many concurring circumstances, the newly-formed Ladies' Committee now for the first time introduced a matron into Newgate; the prisoners were divided into classes, and placed under her superintendence. The Ladies' Association furnished the rooms appropriated to her, and she was regarded as their servant. Previous to her appointment, and until she was thoroughly established in her office, some of the ladies spent the whole day in the prison amongst the women, taking something to eat in a basket, or remaining without anything; and for a long time afterwards one or two of them never failed to spend some hours daily in this important field of labour.

The purchase of clothing for the prisoners, with other expenses, proved beyond their private resources; a subscription was therefore opened, to which the Sheriffs gave the sum of eighty pounds. But far beyond any other assistance was that she received from her own brothers, who not only entered warmly into her objects of interest, but were unflinching in the generous support they afforded them. Thus did He, who had called her to this work, open the hearts of persons in various circumstances, each to contribute of that which he had, some in personal exertion and cheerful consecration of time and strength, some the countenance of their authority and official dignity, whilst others poured in the needful supply of silver and gold.

A year had elapsed since her daughters had left Plashet, the greater part of which time they had

been the guests of their uncle Daniel Gurney, at North Runcton, under the maternal care of their aunt Rachel. It was joy to be at home again; but home was altered; the nursery party was changed and scattered; the brothers were gone to school; their mother's mind and time were greatly occupied. Life had to them been play before, but now it became earnest.

'Sixth Month 28th, 1817.—I am alone at home with my nine children, a great and very precious charge; at times they appear too much for me, at others I greatly enjoy them; I desire that the anxiety for their welfare, and to have them in order, should not prevent my enjoying thankfully the blessing of being surrounded by so sweet a flock. How I delight to see the springings of goodness in them, the blessed seed appearing, as well as mourn when the evil shows itself. Most gracious Lord, be pleased to be with them and bless them; strengthen the good, I beseech Thee, and weaken the evil in their hearts!

'Mildred's Court, Twelfth Month 17th, 1817.—A remarkable blessing still appears to accompany my prison concerns; perhaps the greatest apparent blessing on my deeds that ever attended me. How have the spirits of both those in power and the poor afflicted prisoners appeared to be subjected, and how has the work gone on! Most assuredly the power and the glory is alone due to the Author and Finisher of every good work; things in this way thus prosper beyond my most sanguine expectations, but there are also deep humiliations for me. My humble

trust and strong confidence is, that He who hears and answers prayer, listens to my cry, hearkens to my deep inward supplications for myself, my husband, children, brothers, sisters, and household, my poor prisoners, and all things upon which I crave a blessing; and that being breathed in the faith, and I humbly trust through the power of the Redeemer, access will be granted them, and that He who has been with me, will be with me even unto the end. Amen, and Amen, saith my unworthy, sorrowful, and yet, in another sense, rejoicing, soul; as I do at seasons through all, in a marvellous manner, in all my sorrows and cares, greatly and unspeakably rejoice in God my Saviour, my Redeemer, and my only hope of glory.'

During this winter Mrs. Fry's time was occupied to an extent of which none but those who lived with her can form an idea. The letters she received from all parts of the country to inquire the particulars of the system pursued in Newgate, were numerous. Ladies wished to form associations to visit the prisons, or magistrates to improve the state of the prisoners under their control; these letters required long and careful answers; too much was at stake to send them off without seriously considering their contents. Some of the most distinguished and influential people in the kingdom were anxious to witness for themselves what had been done in the prison; and there was rarely a morning, part of which was not spent in accompanying such parties there. Poor people, thinking her purse as boundless as her

goodwill, wrote innumerable petitions, 'humbly praying' for assistance; others sought for counsel, or desired employment, which they imagined she could obtain for them; these letters required to be read and considered, and, although far the greater number were laid aside, others were of a nature that she could not feel satisfied to pass unnoticed. Time was necessary to do any real good in extricating deserving families from difficulties. Her benevolence was of that cast that she hardly could endure to know that others wanted the necessaries of life whilst she was herself surrounded by superfluities and luxuries; and it was always with pain that she refused the request of any of these applicants. The cases of many of the prisoners, also, demanded much time and attention. The whole of this press of business was accomplished with no other help than that of her two daughters, who, constantly employed under her directions, were able to prevent its greatly accumulating; and in general the communications of each day were attended to as they were presented.

Comparatively small as her knowledge of prison discipline was at this time, Mrs. Fry had already arrived at conclusions with respect to this important subject which future observation and more enlarged experience tended only to confirm. The idea of a prison exclusively for women, the necessity of female officers being placed over female prisoners, with other similar points, are clearly developed in the minutes of her evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons 'On the Prisons of the

Metropolis.' This examination took place on the 27th February 1818, and the results of the efforts of the Ladies' Association, up to that date, are there recorded.

In the Report of the Committee this sentence occurs:—'The benevolent exertions of Mrs. Fry and her friends, in the female department of the prison, have indeed, by the establishment of a school, by providing work and encouraging industrious habits, produced the most gratifying change.'

CHAPTER VI.

1818.

Summer at Plashet—Capital punishment—Case of Skelton—Duke of Gloucester and Lord Sidmouth—Queen Charlotte's visit to the Mansion House—'Maria,' female convict ship—Visitors to Newgate—Letter from Lady Mackintosh—Again at Plashet—Family cares.

AFTER the arduous exertions and interests of the winter of 1817-18, it was no small relief to Mrs. Fry and her family to find themselves once again in the retirement of Plashet.

'*Plashet, Fourth Month 29th.*—I desire thankfully to acknowledge our return to this sweet place, and all the dear children alive and well. May we more evidently *live* in the best sense, even unto God. Since I last wrote, I have led a rather remarkable life in my Newgate concerns; my own standing appears critical in many ways. In the first place, the extreme importance of my walking strictly and circumspectly, amongst all men, in all things; and not bringing discredit upon the cause of truth and righteousness. In the next place, after our readings there, the ministry is a most awful calling, thus publicly amongst men to be "in season and out of season." I desire to live (more particularly in these

things) in the fear of God rather than of men, and that neither good report nor evil report, the approbation nor disapprobation of men, should move me the least, but that my eye should be kept quite single to the great and good Shepherd and Bishop of souls; this is my continual prayer for myself.'

It was about this time that a very distressing misunderstanding arose between Mrs. Fry and Lord Sidmouth, then Secretary for the Home Department. The strange uncertainty in executing the law for forgery produced anomalies apparently so utterly unjust as to draw much attention to the subject. Mrs. Fry became deeply interested in the question, and in one case was induced to use whatever influence she possessed to prevent the extreme sentence of the law being carried into execution.

In the choice of condemned criminals for execution there were no data from which to form any conclusion. Among the rest was a woman named Harriett Skelton; a very child might have read her countenance,—open, confiding, expressing strong feeling, but neither hardened in depravity nor capable of cunning. Her story bore out this impression. Under the influence of the man she loved, she had passed forged notes; adding one more to the melancholy list of those who, by the finest impulses of our nature, uncontrolled by religion, have been lured to their own destruction.

She was ordered for execution—the sentence was unlooked for—her deportment in the prison had been good,—amenable to regulations, quiet and

orderly. Some of her companions in guilt were heard to say that they supposed she was chosen for death, because she was better prepared than the rest of them.

Her case excited the strongest compassion. Mrs. Fry was urged to exert herself in behalf of the unfortunate woman; there were circumstances of extenuation, though not of a nature to alter the letter of the law. Amongst other attempts, she made one through the Duke of Gloucester. They had not seen each other for many years; not since the days of the scarlet riding habit and the military band at Norwich. The Duke of Gloucester came to Newgate, and his former companion in the dance led him through the gloom and darkness of that most gloomy of prisons. He made a noble effort to save Skelton by an application to Lord Sidmouth; he accompanied Mrs. Fry to the Bank Directors; but all was in vain—the law took its course, and she was hanged.

Mrs. Fry had strongly expressed herself with respect to the Bank of England cases, and probably had insisted on circumstances which, though true in fact, were difficult distinctly to prove. She had herself, and through others, applied to Lord Sidmouth, and had been the indirect means of causing much excitement on the subject of Capital Punishment. Government was becoming embarrassed. To touch so complicated a machine as the criminal code of England appeared an undertaking too vast and dangerous to attempt; and yet, such was the pres-

sure from without, that something must be yielded to popular feeling. Lord Sidmouth was seriously annoyed, and expressed his annoyance in a manner very distressing to her.

Here terminated their intercourse, deeply to her regret, after the kindness and consideration with which Lord Sidmouth had treated her, and, until that period, listened to her suggestions. Mrs. Fry did not abandon all hope of reconciliation, without endeavouring, by a personal interview, to remove his impressions, and to convince him that although he might consider her mistaken, her intentions had been upright. The Countess Harcourt, who proved herself a kind and faithful friend on this, as on many other occasions, accompanied her. Nothing but pain resulted from the visit. Wounded and grieved, Mrs. Fry quitted the Home Office, to go, by command of Queen Charlotte, to the Mansion House, still under the escort of Lady Harcourt. They were conducted to the Egyptian Hall, and placed on the side of the platform to await the arrival of the royal party. After a time, the Queen perceived Mrs. Fry, and, at the close of the examination, advanced to address her. It was a subject for Hayter—the diminutive stature of the Queen, covered with diamonds, but her countenance lighted up with an expression of the kindest benevolence; Mrs. Fry, her simple Quaker's dress adding to the height of her figure, though a little flushed, preserving her wonted calmness of look and manner; several of the Bishops standing near her; the platform crowded

with waving feathers, jewels, and orders; the noble hall lined with spectators; and, in the centre, hundreds of poor children brought there to be examined, from their different schools. The English nation may be slow in perceiving the beauty of a moral sentiment, but when perceived, none appreciate it more highly. A murmur of applause ran through the assembly, followed by a simultaneous clap, and a shout, which was taken up by the multitude without, and died away in the distance. They hailed the scene before them; they saw in it not so much the Queen and the Philanthropist, as royalty offering its meed of approval at the shrine of mercy and good works.

A fresh object of interest now opened upon the attention of the Ladies' Newgate Association—the mode of removing female convicts for transportation from the various prisons whence they came, and the circumstances under which they were to pass the long and dreary months of confinement on ship-board.

It was a practice amongst the female transports to have a sort of saturnalia or riot before leaving Newgate, breaking windows, furniture, or whatever came within their reach. They were generally conveyed from the prison to the water side in open waggons, went off shouting amidst assembled crowds, and were noisy and disorderly on the road and in the boats. Mrs. Fry prevailed on the Governor to consent to their being moved in hackney coaches.

She then promised the women, if they would be quiet and orderly, that she and other ladies would accompany them to Deptford, and see them on board; accordingly, when the time came, no disturbance took place; the women in hackney coaches, with turnkeys in attendance, formed a procession closed by her carriage, and they behaved well upon the road.

On board ship the ladies were distressed to find so many women and children herded together below deck; but as they were to be divided into messes of six, and as each woman must of necessity associate the most with those of her own mess, there appeared the opportunity for something like classification. This was no sooner proposed, than accepted by all concerned in the arrangement; they were divided into classes of twelve, including the monitor, chosen from the number by the women themselves. As far as possible, those whose ages or criminality were similar were placed together; each class contained two messes. The superintendence thus became as complete as the nature of the case would permit. There were one hundred and twenty-eight convicts, besides their unhappy children.

Employment and instruction were still wanting; and the women complained of having nothing to do. The ladies being told that patch-work and fancy-work found a ready sale in New South Wales, obtained various materials, which not only occupied the women's time on board ship, but from the pro-

ceeds of which they were enabled to obtain shelter, until they were engaged as servants, or found other employment.

Bibles, prayer-books, and religious tracts, were placed under the care of each monitor, for the use of her class ; arrangements were also made, that those who could not read, and wished to learn, should have the opportunity of doing so.

With some difficulty, a small space towards the after part of the vessel was set apart for a school ; there, during the greater part of the day, the children were taught to read, knit and sew. One of the convicts undertook to be schoolmistress, for whom a reward was placed in the hands of the captain, provided she persevered in her duties to the end of the voyage.

The last time that Mrs. Fry was on board the 'Maria,' whilst she lay at Deptford, was a solemn and interesting occasion. There was great uncertainty whether the poor convicts would see their benefactress again. She stood at the door of the cabin, attended by her friends and the captain ; the women on the quarter-deck facing them. The sailors, anxious to see what was going on, clambered into the rigging, upon the capstan, or mingled in the outskirts of the group. The silence was profound—when Mrs. Fry opened her Bible, and in a clear audible voice read a portion from it ; whilst the crews of the other vessels in the tier, attracted by the novelty of the scene, leaned over the ships on either side, and listened apparently with great attention :

she closed the Bible, and after a short pause, knelt down on the deck, and implored a blessing on this work of Christian charity from that God, who though one may 'sow and another water,' can alone 'give the increase.' Many of the women wept bitterly, all seemed touched; when she left the ship they followed her with their eyes and their blessings, until, her boat having passed within another tier of vessels, they could see her no more.

It is needful now to revert to the excitement produced in the public mind, when the knowledge of the remarkable transformation effected in Newgate began to be spread abroad. A letter, written at this time, is so descriptive, that we are grateful to the surviving members of the writer's family for their concurrence in its insertion here :—

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LADY MACKINTOSH TO
MRS. FRY.

'I have had a note from Sir James, in which is the following passage; I cannot resist copying it, in the hope of your pardon for doing so,—“I dined, Saturday, June 3d, at Devonshire House: the company consisted of the Duke of Norfolk, Lords Lansdowne, Lauderdale, Albemarle, Cowper, Hardwicke, Carnarvon, Sefton, Ossulston, Milton, and Duncannon, etc. The subject was Mrs. Fry's exhortation to forty-five female convicts, at which Lord —— had been present on Friday. He could hardly refrain from tears in speaking of it. He called it the deepest tragedy he had ever witnessed. What

she read and expounded to the convicts, with almost miraculous effect, was the fourth chapter to the Ephesians. Coke (of Norfolk) begged me to go with him next Friday; I doubt whether, as that is the day of my motion, I shall be able to go, and whether it be prudent to expose myself to the danger of being too much warmed by the scene, just before a speech in which I shall need all my discretion."

'As the above extract was only intended for my eye, I am sure you will so consider it. My motive for submitting it to you is, that you may not be ignorant how much your great work of mercy contributes to inspire good feelings, and to supply pure and edifying subjects of conversation at the tables of the most illustrious persons in the country, for rank and talents.'

The pointed pen of Sydney Smith must complete the sketch :—

'There is a spectacle which this town exhibits, that I will venture to call the most solemn, the most Christian, the most affecting, which any human being ever witnessed. To see that holy woman in the midst of the wretched prisoners,—to see them all calling earnestly upon God, soothed by her voice, animated by her look, clinging to the hem of her garment, and worshipping her as the only being who has ever loved them, or taught them, or noticed them, or spoke to them of God,—this is the sight which breaks down the pageant of the world, which tells us that the short hour of life is passing away,

and that we must prepare by some good deeds to meet God ; that it is time to give, to pray, to comfort, to go, like this blessed woman, and do the work of our heavenly Saviour, Jesus, among the guilty, among the broken-hearted and the sick, and to labour in the deepest and darkest wretchedness of life !'

Among the visitors were to be found persons who, as friends of humanity, came to ascertain the truth of all that they had heard : actuated by the same motives, bishops, clergymen, and other ministers of religion resorted thither. It will be at once seen how the concurring testimony of individuals, distinguished in such various ways, must have influenced public opinion in favour of a mode of treatment, which, in the course of a few weeks, had struck at the root of the more glaring evils, so lately existing in the principal metropolitan prison of England. Nor can it be doubted that the influx of visitors, objectionable as it must be considered in itself, and injurious as it would be, in a well-ordered prison, was then an important means of spreading knowledge and exciting interest, and thus assisting to prepare the way for the improvements in prison discipline subsequently effected. The rapidity and ease with which legislative enactments on these subjects were afterwards carried, may be in part attributed to what had been seen and learnt in Newgate.

And now once more the scene changes, and Elizabeth Fry, the anxious mother, is devoting herself

in the retirement of Plashet to the care of her children ; and in her difficulties and anxieties, pouring out her heart to Him who had hitherto helped her.

‘ *Plashet, Seventh Month 24th, 1818.*—I have many causes of deep anxiety at this time. What to do with our boys, for the best, has occupied much of my consideration, and at present I see no other way than continuing them at school ; but I do not acknowledge too much if I say that it is the prayer of my heart that a kind Providence may open the way for their going to the best place for them, wherever it may be ; and deep is the craving of my spirit, that they may in the end go on well. O Lord ! I beseech Thee, whatsoever Thou mayst be pleased to do with them, whether to grant them health or sickness, riches or poverty, long life or short life, oh, for Thy beloved Son’s sake, give them not over to the will of their enemies, but establish their goings in Thy paths ; put a new song into their mouths, even praises to Thee their God. And seeing, gracious Lord, that in a very marvellous manner Thou hast been pleased to make a way for Thy child and servant, where she could see no way—how in a wonderful manner Thou restored her in early life, showed Thyself to be on her side, when spiritually her enemies appeared ready to overcome and destroy her, and how also in many and various seasons, “Thou hast made darkness light before her, and crooked paths straight”—how Thou hast been pleased to raise her from season to season, from the bed of languishing—

how Thou hast temporally cared for her, and answered her prayer, when it appeared likely even that she would be scarcely provided for—how Thou hast helped her in spirit at seasons to do Thy will, to see into the glorious mysteries of Thy kingdom—how Thou hast aided her in her weakness, and enabled her to overcome the extreme fear of man, and to declare Thy doings amongst the people, and to show Thy marvellous works to the children of men, even from princes and prelates to the poorest, lowest, and most destitute—and seeing, gracious Lord and Almighty God and Saviour, how Thou hast been pleased to deal with Thy unworthy servant, to increase in her even at seasons, mightily and powerfully, the knowledge of Thee her God, and Christ Jesus her Lord—be pleased to help her in the like precious faith, and preserve her from the many snares of the enemy. Let not the spirit of the world or its applause ever again entangle her; nor the reproach of any, not even of the good, unduly discourage her, but let her be increasingly Thine own, and at all times, at all seasons, and in every place, by whomsoever surrounded, give unto Thee the glory due unto Thy name, and worship Thee in the beauty of holiness. And let neither heights, nor depths, life nor death, nor any other thing, ever separate her from Thy love; but enable her, O Lord, at all times, and at all seasons, and in every place, and by whomsoever surrounded, to glorify Thy great and ever-excellent name, with Thy beloved Son Christ Jesus our Lord. And with regard to her beloved

family, be unto them what Thou hast been unto her; even their Guide and their Guard; their God and their Saviour; and make a way for them where their poor mother sees no way for them. Amen, says my unworthy soul, cast down but not destroyed, afflicted but not in despair, at times almost comfortless, but not forsaken; at other times abounding in the joy and blessing of my God.'

The holidays over, and the schoolroom party again settled to work, Elizabeth Fry believed it her duty to accompany her brother, Joseph John Gurney, into Scotland, partly in the character of a minister to visit the Meetings of Friends, and partly to investigate the condition of the prisons of that country.

Mr. Gurney subsequently published an account of their journey, which proved that, with two exceptions, the state of the Scotch prisons was of the worst description—small, foul, and ill-ventilated. Debtors and lunatics were mixed with the most hardened criminals.

At Aberdeen, she writes, August 29, 1818.—'I have felt low upon arriving here, five hundred miles from my beloved husband and children! but a good account of them is cause for thankfulness; still it is a deeply-weighty thing, and I have to try my ground again and again. In almost every new place, the language of my spirit is—Why am I here? At this place we find several Friends, also travelling in the ministry, which makes me feel it the more; but as my coming is not of my own choice, or my own

ordering, I desire to leave it, and to commit myself, my spirit and body, and all that is dear to me, absent and present, to Christ my Redeemer. We visited the old Barclay seat at Ury, where our mother's forefathers once lived. How great the change from what it once was !'

From the pleasant dwelling of her old and faithful friends, the Benson family, in the outskirts of Liverpool, she and her party went to Knowsley at the 'pressing invitation' of the late Countess of Derby, for many years a warm and admiring friend of Mrs. Fry. Lady Derby was one who, whilst she fulfilled in private life its gentler charities and domestic duties, adorned it with the grace and talent of her earlier years.

The next visit after Knowsley, was a call upon two ancient Friends, who with their one sturdy maid-servant to wait upon and take care of them, abode very peacefully in their cottage dwelling, awaiting the time when their lengthened pilgrimage should be ended. Curious was the variety in three days—from the finished villa residence of the Benson family, to the lordly halls of the descendants of the defender of Man and Charlotte de la Tremouille, and the 'keeping room' of the worthy Friends, whose dinner, a small joint and fruit pudding, gave the travellers a welcome luncheon.

In the early part of 1819, Mrs. Fry's health suddenly gave way. She had taken a fatiguing journey to Darlington, to place her two eldest boys at school there ; and had returned to many cares and anxieties.

The end of March she records another 'deep plunge of illness, and much lowness of spirits,' but goes on to say—'Help and a little strength has been granted, and considerable relief from great faintness and illness, so that I have yet sweet hope and belief that my Redeemer, who has shown Himself on every side, will not give me over to the will of mine enemies; but will, more and more, arise for my help spiritually and naturally. Oh most gracious Lord, still help me; keep me near to Thyself; send health and cure when consistent with Thine holy and ever blessed will; and grant Thy poor child a humble, quiet, and resigned spirit.' A journey into Kent and Surrey was at last resolved upon. She travelled by easy stages on a bed in the carriage. The lovely scenery and change of air greatly revived her, and she returned to London in May comparatively well.

At Brighton Mrs. Fry had the pleasure of receiving two letters from the female prisoners of Newgate, expressing much humility and gratitude and affectionate feeling towards herself and the other ladies. Very characteristic is her reply:—

'BRIGHTON, *Fourth Month 4th*, 1819.

'To the female prisoners in Newgate, more particularly to those who are likely to leave their native land, perhaps never to return to it:

'Although it has pleased the Almighty, that for some time I should be separated from you by illness, yet you have often been in my affectionate remembrance, accompanied with anxious desires for your

good. I am fully sensible that many of you claim our pity and most tender compassion—that many have been your temptations, many your afflictions, and, what we may most pity you for, is that in the time of temptation you have yielded to what is wrong, and so given yourselves over to the will of the enemy of your souls! But, mournful as your state is, yet you may have hope, and that abundantly, if you only seek to repent, to return from the error of your ways, and live unto God. Remember these words—“Christ came into the world to save sinners,” and that “He is able to save to the very uttermost those who come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Therefore let me entreat you, before it is too late, to come unto Christ—to seek Him with your heart—and to submit yourselves unto Him and His righteous law; for He knows all your thoughts and all your desires, and is willing and ready to receive you, to heal your backslidings, and to love you freely. He was said to be the Friend of sinners, and those will indeed find Him their friend, who look to Him and obey Him: He will enable such to forsake the evil of their ways, and to do that which is acceptable in His sight. Do you not remember in the parable of the Prodigal Son, that when he was yet *afar off*, the father saw him, had compassion on him, and even went out to meet him? So, I doubt not, you will find it, even some of you who are now *afar off* from what is good; if you are only willing to return, you would find yourselves met by your Lord,

even with great compassion, and He would do more for you than you can ask or think. . . . That you may grow in these and every other Christian virtue and grace, is the sincere desire and prayer of your affectionate friend and sincere well-wisher,

‘ELIZABETH FRY.’

CHAPTER VII.

1819-1823.

Broadstairs—Spends the winter in London—Affliction in her family—
Female convicts in New South Wales—Journey into the north of
England—Death of Priscilla Gurney—Letter to J. J. Gurney—
Convict Ships—Adventure on the Thames—Correspondence and
occupation—Letter by Miss Edgeworth.

THE summer of 1819 glided pleasantly by at Plashet, with all her family around her. In the autumn a happy month was passed at Broadstairs; then it was Mrs. Fry began her collection of English shells: pleasant is the remembrance of those sunny days—long rambles after an early dinner—expeditions in search of shells or sea-weed—then sorting and arranging them—the children's enjoyment scarcely surpassing their mother's in their mutual pursuits, and their deliverance from extraneous objects.

But with the winter again came London, its absorbing interests and harass of occupations, becoming almost greater than could be endured, without the sacrifice of even stronger claims and higher duties; and on the return of spring it was no small relief to Mrs. Fry to find herself again with

her family in the retirement of Plashet; but her enjoyment there was soon clouded by peculiar and most touching family sorrow. It pleased Him, whose ways are past finding out, to lay His heavy hand on the family of Mr. Buxton and her sister, four of their little ones being called hence in the short space of three weeks.

*'Plashet House, Fourth Month 26th, 1820.—*My time has been so exceedingly occupied as to prevent my writing, but I have gone through a great deal. My dearest brother and sister being so heavily afflicted, has brought me into very deep conflict, in short almost inexpressible; still, through all, we may acknowledge that we have found the Lord to be gracious, for assuredly He has been very near to help and support. Dearest Lord, we pray Thee continue to have mercy upon us all, and at this time of great sorrow to regard us in our low estate, and to increase our faith according to its trial. Amen.'

*'Fifth Month 3d.—*Hard, very hard, as this trial has been, and is, yet there is abundant cause to bless, praise, and magnify the great and excellent name of our Lord, both for having given these precious children, and then taking them through His redeeming love into His Kingdom of Light, Life, Peace, and Glory. But what a proof that our hearts must not be set upon any temporal things!'

In pursuing her labours at Newgate, Mrs. Fry had gradually learned many particulars of the penal colony of New South Wales. She found, that in

point of fact, all the labours of her coadjutors, and her own, all systems of prison discipline, all efforts to reform the offender, were absolutely null and void, and but a wasteful expenditure both of time and money, so long as the female convicts were without shelter, without resource, and without protection, on their arrival in the land of exile. Rations, or a small allowance of provisions, sufficient to maintain life, they certainly had allotted them daily; but a place to sleep in, or the means to obtain one, or necessary clothing for themselves, and, when mothers, for their children, they were absolutely without. It was worse than useless, it was only an aggravation of their misery, to inculcate morality, and to raise the tone, and improve the tastes of these unhappy ones, and above all, to prove to them that 'without holiness no man can see the Lord,' whilst they were placed in circumstances where existence could only be maintained at the price of virtue. Much of this was learned from the prisoners themselves, but every inquiry made upon the subject confirmed their accounts; still, data were required, and more detailed information was wanted, when Mrs. Fry received a letter from the Rev. Samuel Marsden, Chaplain at New South Wales, dated Paramatta, Feb. 23, 1819, more than confirming all that they had heard before of the miserable evils existing there. Here was a new field for exertion opened to her. Personally she was powerless to check this most impolitic and unchristian state of affairs; but once knowing the facts, she rested

not till they were brought before the proper authorities, and urged from time to time, until the iniquitous system was brought to an end.

This work of prison-visiting was meanwhile steadily advancing in England. A Corresponding Committee was formed in London to answer inquiries and communicate information, whilst Ladies' Associations were established in several places.

As applications for information became more numerous, and her interest in the subject increased, with her husband and her two elder daughters she undertook a journey in the autumn of 1820, which would include visits to many of the principal jails and houses of correction in England.

Her method in visiting prisons was much the same in every instance. She had generally letters from official persons, or private friends, to the Visiting Magistrates of the prison she desired to see. Accompanied by the officers of the prison, any magistrates disposed to accompany her, or private individuals interested in it, she would go from yard to yard, from one ward to another, addressing the most minute inquiries to the jailer or turnkey; and calculating the capabilities of the building for the greatest possible degree of improvement. The result of her observations she almost always stated afterwards, in a letter addressed to those of local authority. Besides this, she endeavoured to form a Committee of Ladies to visit the female prisoners, or she strove to induce

at least one or two to undertake this Christian duty. She convinced the judgment of some—she touched the feelings of others—but seldom failed to bring to her purpose such of her own sex as she had selected, from being, in her opinion, suitable for the undertaking.

Mrs. Fry visited the prisons at Nottingham, Lincoln, Wakefield, Doncaster, Sheffield, Leeds, York, Durham, Newcastle, Carlisle, Lancaster, and Liverpool, besides many others; and in the greater number established Ladies' Committees for visiting the female prisoners. This journey led to important results, from the increased experience and knowledge it gave her, and also tended to the diffusion of both interest and information on the subject of prison discipline. Overburdened as she already was with correspondence, the increase of letter-writing which resulted from it became a serious evil, notwithstanding the valuable assistance she received from the Corresponding Committee of the Ladies' Newgate Association.

But neither duty nor pleasure had power to withdraw the mother's heart from her absent children. Amidst her onerous occupations she writes from Kendal to her little ones at home:—

'We are now nearly three hundred miles from you. It would make me very sorrowful, did I not know that there is everywhere the same kind Providence to take care of us, and I hope He will permit us to meet again. We much enjoyed the

dear boys' company from Darlington, and had them with us for a little while by the sea-side. I have a large basket of shells, which I mean to divide amongst our collections when I come home, and now I am trying to make a beautiful collection of spars, which I think will delight you.'

Once more Mr. and Mrs. Fry concluded to spend the winter at St. Mildred's Court.

Again she was plunged into a vortex of incessant occupation, both personally and by letter. Various communications, from time to time, reached her from the Continent, relating to the condition of different prisons there, or requesting information on matters connected with prison discipline. About this time she opened a correspondence on this subject with St. Petersburg, through the medium of the late Walter Venning, Esq. The Princess Sophia Mestchersky and other ladies formed themselves into a committee, with the best success, to visit the women confined in the five prisons of that capital.

Nor was St. Petersburg the only continental city with which communication on the subject of ladies visiting prisoners had now been opened.

At Turin, La Marquise de Barol, *née* Colbert, was assiduously occupied in this important work. Letters were also received from Amsterdam, where those interested in the reformation of prisoners were endeavouring to form a Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline and Committees to visit the prisoners.

But although burdened, she was not overwhelmed;

and the opening of another year finds her 'watching unto prayer,' and casting her cares upon her God.

'*Mildred's Court, First Month 1st, 1821.*—Having poured forth my soul in prayer, and having exhorted my household to live in the love and fear of the Lord, I have obtained some relief upon entering a new year, and finishing another. I opened my Bible at these words, so consonant with the feelings of my heart I quote them here, "Hear my prayer, and be merciful unto thine inheritance; turn our sorrow into joy, that we may live, O Lord, and praise Thy name."'

There are few things more sad than to enter a new year with coming sorrow on the heart, to see an affliction that appears inevitable casting its dark shadow on the future. From 1792, the year of Mrs. Gurney's death, her daughters had continued an unbroken band; but the time was approaching when a breach was to be made amongst them. Priscilla, the youngest of the seven sisters, had been long in declining health, and the rapid increase of consumptive symptoms now foreboded that 'the silver cord was about to be loosed, and the bowl to be broken at the cistern.'

To Mrs. Fry's nature, the loss of those she loved was peculiarly sorrowful. Had her faith not been proportionably strong, she could hardly have endured the trial. Her sister Priscilla, having, like herself, become a Friend from conviction, and, like herself, being involved in the solemn and arduous calling of

the ministry, had added another link to their close natural tie.

Beautifully descriptive are some lines written by a young lady in Ireland, upon becoming acquainted with her, when she visited that island in the character of a Minister amongst Friends—

‘ Did such a mind beam through a homely face,
 Beauty were not required to lend a grace ;
 Did such a face veil an unworthy mind,
 Our partial eyes would be to error blind ;
 Sweet minist’ring spirit, with delight we see
 Inward and outward graces joined in thee !’

From the Isle of Wight, where Priscilla Gurney had passed the winter preceding, on account of her declining health, she wrote in 1820 to her sister a letter, which claims here a place, as being so descriptive of the influence maintained by Elizabeth Fry over others, and the gift of helping so remarkably possessed by her :—

‘ Thou has been much in my thoughts lately, my beloved sister, and I can hardly describe to thee the flow of love and of deep interest which sometimes arises towards thee ; there is a certain understanding which I feel with thee, that I can hardly feel in the same way with any other mortal, except, perhaps, it may be with our dearest brother Joseph. We three do, I believe, intimately understand one another’s paths—we know one another’s conflicts—we have partaken in the same depths—we have been mercifully permitted, according to our different measures (for I feel my

measure small indeed compared with thine), to partake of the same kind of spiritual consolations, and of the same deliverance from depths into heights. What a support, and stay, and refreshment—in short, what a mother hast thou been to us both! I must confess my heart often turns towards thee with joy and with thankfulness, though thy path has been strewed with many crosses and many afflictions, yet so in proportion has I firmly believe been the victory which has been given thee through Christ our Saviour, to the great comfort and encouragement of many, as well as to thy own present, and may we not humbly trust, eternal peace and salvation! How fervently do I desire, that the blessing which has so eminently attended thee, may be in all things thy crown, thy rejoicing—that it may prosper thee in all thy ways.'

The summer of that year Priscilla Gurney passed at Earham. As the autumn advanced, she was removed to Cromer Hall, then the abode of her brother-in-law, Mr. Buxton; and there she passed the few remaining months of her life, nursed with assiduous care by her sisters Hannah and Rachel, and latterly also by Mrs. Fry. After her death, Mrs. Fry writes to her family at home:—

'CROMER HALL, *Third Month 25th*, 1821.

'About nine o'clock this morning the scene closed, and our most tenderly beloved sister went to sleep in Jesus. The conflict of death was long upon her; I think it may be said from Third or Fourth

day, to this morning. She has been sensible, evidently so, till late last evening, and her calm, quiet and patient state continued. I think every day her conflict diminished; she had nearly lost the power of speech; but when we were all collected round her last evening, she was heard to say, "Farewell, farewell," several times; and to add, "My love is with you," and the last thing we could hear was, "O Lord!" In the morning she appeared very full of love—put out her hand to us—showed much pleasure in your uncle Buxton's being here, and tried to speak to him, but could not be understood—expressed her wish, as we believed, for the thirteenth of 1 Corinthians, and we had a very animating time together, and afterwards he spoke very sweetly to her. Besides the Bible, she appeared to have some satisfaction in hearing other books read, as it has been her habit during her illness, just like mine when ill. She appeared to have finished her work, and had nothing to do but to die. We were all by her when her prepared spirit left the body. After commending her to her Lord, and for His name's sake into glory, my brother Joseph in a little while quoted these words:—

“ One gentle sigh the fetters breaks,
We scarce can say they 're gone,
Before the willing spirit takes
Its mansion near the throne.”

E. F.’

The following passages from her journal show something of the winter's occupation, which was

passed at Plashet, from whence Mrs. Fry visited London once, frequently twice, in the week :—

‘*First Month 9th, 1822.*—My brother Buxton, Patty Smith,¹ and I, went to town. She and I visited Cold Bath Fields and Clerkenwell Prisons, with the magistrates, and applied for a matron to be appointed.

‘*Second Month 8th.*—A very busy town morning ; visited Newgate, Milbank Penitentiary, and Tothill Fields Prison ; our friends the Vennings, and William Allen, dined here.

‘*15th.*—I went early to town, visited Newgate, Giltspur Street Compter, and Clerkenwell Prison.

‘*Hampstead, Fourth Month 11th.*—We have been staying here a few days with my beloved brother and sister Hoare, as I wish to cultivate that love which is so precious between our two families. The excellent order of her children I rejoice to see, but it makes me low about mine ; I fear that I am not equally doing my part towards them. Lord, make up my many deficiencies !

‘*16th.*—The day to me rather disturbed. I attended Newgate. Visited Sophia Vansittart, and came home by four, to be ready to receive Lord and Lady Torrington and the Benjamin Shaws, also my brother Buxton.’

With May came the Friends’ yearly meeting, occupying and fatiguing in no small measure ; this was followed by the ladies’ annual prison meeting ;

¹ An early friend in the days of her girlhood, daughter to William Smith, for many years M.P. for Norwich.

but she acknowledges 'help being granted,' and, to her own feelings, 'way marvellously made for her in things she exceedingly dreaded.'

There was an admixture of much enjoyment at times attendant on her peculiar vocation—nothing greater than the intercourse it led to with the excellent of the earth, from the highest to the lowest, of different countries and various denominations.

During the visit to England of the Prince and Princess Royal of Denmark, they inspected many of the public institutions and charities, and took a lively interest in objects that conduced to the moral and religious welfare of the people. It was therefore a particularly gratifying circumstance to Mrs. Fry, that one morning, when paying her respects at Gloucester House, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester presented her to the Princess, who was also there. A few days afterwards, the family at Plashet were surprised by an intimation, that the Princess would that morning honour them with her company at breakfast. She came, and remained some hours. This occasion was the commencement of that intercourse which continued at intervals till the close of Mrs. Fry's life.

'*Plashet, Eighth Month 20th, 1822.*—Yesterday was our wedding-day; we have been married twenty-two years. How many dispensations have I passed through since that time! how have I been raised up and cast down! How has a way been made in the depths, and a path in the mighty waters; I have known much of good health, and real sickness; great

bodily suffering, particularly in my confinements, and deep depression of spirits.

‘I have known the ease of abundance of riches, and the sorrow and perplexity of comparative deprivation ; I have known to the full, I think, the enjoyment of domestic life ; even what might be called the fulness of blessing, and also some of its most sorrowful and most painful reverses. I have known the aboundings of the unspeakable, soul-satisfying, and abounding joy of the Lord ; and I have been brought into states when the depths had well-nigh swallowed me up. I have known great exaltation amongst my fellow-mortals, also deep humiliation. I have known the sorrow of some most tenderly beloved, being taken from me by death ; and others given me—hitherto more given than taken.

‘What is the result of all this experience ? It is even, that the Lord is gracious and very merciful, that His compassions fail not, but are renewed every morning ; and may I not say that His goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life ? Though He has at times permitted me amidst many and unspeakable blessings to pass through unutterable sorrows, known only to the full extent by Him and my own soul, yet He hath been an All-sufficient helper ; His right hand hath sustained me and held me up, blessed be His name for ever ! He hath never forgotten to be gracious, nor hath He shut up His tender mercies from me. May I not indeed raise up my Ebenezer, and acknowledge that there is “no God like our God,” and that it is indeed a most

blessed thing to serve Him, even if it be by the way of the cross, for He is indeed worthy to be served, worshipped, and obeyed, now and for ever. Above all, I pray for myself, that, whatever dispensations I may yet pass through, nothing may separate me from His love, or hinder me from His service, but that I may be increasingly and entirely devoted to Him in heart, mind, and spirit, through the help of my most dear and blessed Redeemer.'

Among the strongest interests of the opening year was the marriage of Mrs. Fry's youngest brother, Daniel Gurney, of North Runcton, to the Lady Harriet Hay.¹ The contrast of his circumstances of prosperity, with those of her brother Joseph John Gurney, treading the lonely path of widowhood, touched her closely; and after writing to one brother, she thus addressed the other:—

' PLASHET, *First Month 8th*, 1823.

' MY DEAREST JOSEPH,—Having just written to one dear brother, feeling and expressing my sympathy in his joys, I think I shall better conclude my morning's work, by also telling thee how much I have been with thee in mind in thy low estate. I feel for thee and sympathize with thee; but if a poor fellow-mortal feels so tenderly for another, how must it be with Him, whose love, pity, and tender compassion are unbounded! Surely thy Lord and His Comforter will be found very near to thee, in His own time healing thy wounds. I believe, as we may rejoice and return thanks for our dear brother's present

¹ Daughter of William, fifteenth Earl of Erroll.

fulness of enjoyment, so we may also for thee in thy privations ; because all is permitted in tender mercy and loving-kindness. I doubt not that thou hast many pains to bear, by night and by day, as the desolation produced by thy loss would naturally occasion ; but I trust patience will have its perfect work, and so tend further to purify and redeem and fit thee for thy Master's work. I wish in any way we could help or comfort thee ; wouldest thou like Kate to pay thee a visit for two or three weeks ? or is there anything we could do to cheer thee ?

‘ We are going on comfortably here. I am once more moderately launched in public as well as private life ; I am therefore much engaged, and although often fagged, yet not really overdone, I take so much care of myself. There has been a feeling of peace in entering Meetings and the prison cause again, as if the calling to these things was continued. How I desire a simple, faithful, watchful walking, with my eye single to the Lord. My path calls for cautious steppings, and peculiarly needs the best light—may it be granted me !

‘ Many begin to come here after me, as I cannot leave my babe to go to them.—Farewell, my much-loved brother, thy nearly attached sister,

‘E. FRY.’

Since the ‘ Maria ’ had been visited in 1818, as each successive season brought the sailing of a female convict ship, the subject obtained a large share of Mrs. Fry's attention. Amongst those who assisted

her in her efforts to improve the condition of these ships, the late Mrs. Pryor was one most especially devoted to the work ; with the exception of one ship (the unfortunate 'Amphitrite'), she visited every transport which sailed from England with female convicts, until prevented by the sickness which terminated in her death in 1841.

This was not done without much fatigue and inconvenience. On one occasion Mrs. Pryor and Mrs. Fry were placed in a situation of considerable alarm, from which they were relieved by the interposition of the present Harbour-Master at Ramsgate. Both the objects of his kind consideration having passed hence, and the particulars of the circumstance being imperfectly retained in the memory of those to whom they related it, we are indebted to him for the following account :—

' It was on a fine sultry day in the summer of 1821, that I was racing up the river Thames in the command of the Ramsgate steam-packet "Eagle," hoping to overtake our Margate competitors, the "Victory" and "Favourite" steamers, and bringing them nearer to view as we rounded the points of the reach of the river. It was in the midst of this excitement that we encountered one of those sudden thunder squalls so common in this country, and which, passing rapidly off with heavy rain, leave behind them a strong and increasing northerly gale. I was looking out ahead, pleasing myself with the reflection that we were the fastest vessel against a head wind, and would certainly overtake our Margate

friends, when upon entering Long Reach, about two miles below Purfleet, I saw a boat labouring with very little effect against the gale, and with a whole ebb-tide just making, to add to their difficulties. In this boat were two ladies in the close habit of the Society of Friends, evidently drenched with the heavy shower which had overtaken them. I was then a dashing, high-spirited sailor; but I had always a secret admiration of the quiet demeanour of that Society, and occasionally had some of them passengers with me, always intelligent and inquiring, and always pleased with any information a seaman could extend to them. Well, here was a dilemma! To stop would spoil my chase, in which most of my passengers were as eager as myself, but to go on, and pass two ladies in such a situation: I passed the word softly to the engineer; desired the mate to sheer alongside the boat carefully; threw the delighted rowers a rope; and before the passengers were fully aware that we had stopped the engines, the ladies were on board, the boat made fast astern, and the "Eagle" again flying up the Thames. I have those two persons strongly, nay, indelibly stamped upon my mind's eye. The one I had last assisted on board, still held my hand as she thanked me, with dignified but beautiful expression—"It is kind of thee, captain, and we thank thee. We made no sign to thee; having held up our handkerchiefs to the other packets, we did not think we should succeed with thee." I assured them that I could not have passed them under such circumstances,

and called the stewardess to take them below into the ladies' cabin and see to their comfort. They had been well cloaked, and had not suffered so much as I had anticipated.

'The gale had cleared away the rain, and in a very short time they came upon deck again; one of them was Mrs. Fry, and she never lost an opportunity of doing good. I saw her speaking to some of my crew who were looking very serious as she offered them tracts, and some of them cast a side glance at me for my approval or otherwise. I had some little dislike to sects then, which I thank God left me in riper years—but who could resist this beautiful, persuasive, and heavenly-minded woman? To see her was to love her; to hear her was to feel as if a guardian angel had bid you follow that teaching which could alone subdue the temptations and evils of this life, and secure a Redeemer's love in eternity! In her you saw all that was attractive in woman, lit up by the bright beams of philanthropy; devoting the prime of life, and health, and personal graces to her Divine Master's service; and I feel assured that much of the success which attended her missions of mercy was based upon that awe which such a presence inspired. It was something to possess a countenance which portrayed in every look the overflowings of such a heart, and was thus a humble instrument in the hands of Divine Providence; she was indeed highly favoured among women.

'She told me that her companion, Mrs. Pryor, and

herself had been down to Gravesend to take leave of the unfortunate women (convicts) on board a ship bound to the settlements, and gave me so touching a description of their behaviour that I volunteered to take charge of anything for her at any time, or render her any service in my power in my voyages. When about to land her anxiety to make some pecuniary recompense was very great, but I would not allow her to do so. Mrs. Fry never forgot me when she came near our locality; I saw her from time to time, the earthly tabernacle failing, but the same spirit lighting up with animation her untiring energies. It was an honour to know her in this world. May we follow her to the society of the accepted and blessed in that which is to come!

‘K. B. MARTIN.’

‘RAMSGATE, *February* 1847.’

Soon after the ladies first visited these ships, the women ceased to be received on board at Deptford, the ships being moored in a less frequented part of the river below Woolwich. The mode in which they were brought on board long continued to be highly objectionable; they arrived from the country in small parties, at irregular intervals, having been conveyed on the outside of stage coaches, by smacks, or hoys, or any conveyance that offered, under the care of a turnkey. Often have the ladies, when engaged in their interesting occupation, seen a person of this description come alongside in a wherry, with a group of unfortunate creatures under his charge, wayworn and ill, or perhaps a solitary out-

cast brought upon deck, lamenting her misfortunes in the broad dialect of some far distant county—a small bundle of insufficient clothing being frequently the only preparation for the long voyage before her. In some instances their children, equally destitute as themselves, accompanied them; in others, their sufferings were increased by sudden separation from their young infants. Often did Mrs. Pryor and her friend and companion, Lydia Irving, quit these scenes, in which they had passed nearly the whole day, not to return to their homes, but to go to Whitehall, to represent such cases, that the necessary letters should be despatched without the loss of a post, ordering the restoration of these poor nurslings to their mothers before the ships should sail. In addition to these evils the women were almost invariably more or less ironed, sometimes cruelly so.

Mrs. Fry had frequent communication with Admiral Sir Byam Martin, Comptroller of the Navy from 1813 to 1832. The first advances towards improvement in the female convict ships were made under his direction, and very much was accomplished during the time he continued in office.

Her efforts to ameliorate the condition of these objects of her care were not confined to the period of the voyage. She urged upon Lord Bathurst, the Secretary for Home Affairs, through the medium of the Right Honourable Wilmot Horton, the importance of a place of shelter for female convicts on arriving in Van Diemen's Land.

Her proposal was, that a building should be raised

by the labour of male convicts, of such material as the country should afford, to receive the women—that a matron should be appointed under Government control, an adult and children's school be established; and that from this asylum, according to their conduct, they should be passed into domestic service. Mrs. Fry, moreover, urged the necessity of furnishing decent clothing (not parti-coloured) for the voyage, their own raiment to be restored upon their entering service.

To these, and similar communications, prompt and polite consideration was almost invariably paid; and, in many instances, the suggestions they contained met with the cordial co-operation of those to whom they were addressed. She had remarkably the talent to find the right person for the right thing: this led to many valuable appointments, both at home and abroad, and to placing numerous persons in situations exactly suited to their talents. This happy faculty pervaded all her arrangements—from the recommendation of a Government officer, to choosing collectors for the Bible Association, of which, after a short time, she effected the establishment at East Ham and Plashet.

We conclude this portion of Mrs. Fry's history with a letter written by Miss Edgeworth to Mrs. Edgeworth:—

‘ 8 HOLLES STREET, *March* 1822.

‘ Yesterday we went the moment we had swallowed our breakfast, by appointment, to Newgate. The private door opened at sight of our tickets, and the

great doors, and the little doors, and the thick doors, and doors of all sorts, were unbolted and unlocked, and on we went through dreary but clean passages, till we came to a room where rows of empty benches fronted us, and a table on which lay a large Bible. Several ladies and gentlemen entered and took their seats on benches at either side of the table in silence.

‘Enter Mrs. Fry in a drab-coloured silk cloak, and plain borderless Quaker cap; a most benevolent countenance,—Guido-Madonna face—calm, benign. “I must make an inquiry,—Is Maria Edgeworth here? and where?” I went forward; she bade us come and sit beside her. Her first smile as she looked upon me I can never forget.

‘The prisoners came in, and in an orderly manner ranged themselves on the benches; all quite clean faces, hair, caps, and hands. On a very low bench in front little children were seated, and were *settled* by their mothers. Almost all these women, about thirty, were under sentence of transportation,—some few only were for imprisonment. One who did not appear was under sentence of death,—frequently women when sentenced to death become ill, and unable to attend Mrs. Fry; the others come regularly and voluntarily.

‘She opened the Bible and read in the most sweetly solemn voice I ever heard, slowly and distinctly, without anything in the manner that could distract attention from the matter. Sometimes she paused to explain, which she did with great judg-

ment, addressing the convicts, "*We* have felt; *we* are convinced." They were very attentive, unaffectedly interested, I thought, in all she said, and touched by her manner. There was nothing put on in their countenances, not any appearance of hypocrisy. I studied their countenances carefully, but I could not see any which, without knowing to whom they belonged, I should have decided were bad; yet Mrs. Fry assured me that all those women had been of the worst sort. She confirmed what we have read and heard, that it was by their love of their children that she first obtained influence over these abandoned women. When she first took notice of one or two of their fine children, the mothers said that if she could but save their children from the misery they had gone through in vice, they would do anything she bid them. And when they saw the change made in their children by her schooling, they begged to attend themselves. I could not have conceived that the love of their children should have remained so strong in hearts in which every other feeling of virtue had so long been dead. The Vicar of Wakefield's sermon in prison is, it seems, founded on a deep and true knowledge of human nature,—“the spark of good is often smothered, never wholly extinguished.” Mrs. Fry often says an extempore prayer; but this day she was quite silent, while she covered her face with her hands for some minutes: the women were perfectly silent, with their eyes fixed upon her, and when she said, “You may go,” they went

away *slowly*. The children sat quite still the whole time,—when one *leaned*, the mother behind set her upright.

‘Mrs. Fry told us that the dividing the women into classes has been of the greatest advantage, and putting them under the care of monitors. There is some little pecuniary advantage attached to the office of monitor, which makes them emulous to obtain it.

‘We went through the female wards with Mrs. Fry, and saw the women at various works,—knitting, rug-making, etc. They have done a great deal of needlework very neatly, and some very ingenious. When I expressed my foolish wonder at this to Mrs. Fry’s sister, she replied, “We have to do, recollect, not with fools, but with rogues.”

‘There is only one being among all those upon whom she has tried to make salutary impressions, on whom she could make none,—an old Jewess. She is so depraved, and so odiously dirty, that she cannot be purified, body or mind; wash her, and put clean clothes on, she tears and dirties them, and swarms with vermin again in twenty-four hours. I saw her in the kitchen, where they were served with broth—a horrible spectacle, which haunted me the whole day and night afterwards. One eye had been put out and closed up, and the other glared with malignant passion. I asked her if she was not happier since Mrs. Fry had come to Newgate. She made no direct reply, but said—“It is hard to be happy in a jail; if you tasted *that* broth you’d

find it is nothing but dish-water." I did taste it, and found it was very good.

'Far from being disappointed with the sight of what Mrs. Fry has effected, I was delighted. We emerged again from the thick, dark, silent walls of Newgate to the bustling City, and thence to the elegant part of the town; and, before we had time to arrange our ideas, and while the mild Quaker face and voice, and wonderful resolution and successful exertions of this admirable woman were fresh in our minds, morning visitors flowed in, and common life again went on.'

' April 24.

'Mrs. Fry's place at Plashet is beautiful, and she is delightful at home as at Newgate.'

CHAPTER VIII.

1824-1826.

Serious illness—British Ladies' Society—Establishment of Manor Hall Asylum and School of Discipline at Chelsea—Brighton—District Visiting Society there—Coast-Guard Libraries—Dagenham—Plasbet—Hannah More—Convict ships, and Admiral Young.

THROUGH the early spring of 1824 Mrs. Fry's health greatly failed, but she persevered to the utmost extent of her power in the various duties she had undertaken.

'First day, 15th.—Yesterday, after a very weak and faint morning, I attended our British Ladies' Society Meeting; it was surprising, even to myself, to find what had been accomplished. How many prisons are now visited by ladies, and how much is done for the inhabitants of the prison-house, and what a way is made for their return from evil.'

The Meeting alluded to was the third anniversary of the "Ladies' British Society for Promoting the Reformation of Female Prisoners." It had been formed as a central point for communication, and for mutual assistance between the various associations engaged in visiting female prisoners in different parts of England; also for the purpose of corre-

sponding with those persons on the Continent, who interested themselves in these subjects.

The Duchess of Gloucester honoured the Society with her patronage; many distinguished names were found amongst its vice-patronesses—some of these ladies had visited the prisons in their own neighbourhoods. On the present occasion, Mrs. Fry and her friends were encouraged by the fact, that some of the arrangements which had been adopted by them, and found to be peculiarly useful, had become the law of the land, and were enforced in the principal prisons of the kingdom, in consequence of an Act of Parliament passed during the preceding session. The most important of these regulations was the appointment of female officers, increased means afforded for religious instruction, and compulsory employment.

The necessity of asylums for the reception of discharged prisoners claimed at this time the attention of the Ladies' Association. The report of the year 1824 mentions the Shelter for this purpose at Dublin, and a Refuge at Liverpool. The establishment of similar institutions quickly followed in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe.

In 1822, a small house for sheltering some of the most hopeful cases of discharged prisoners, was opened in Westminster, under the name of Tothill Fields Asylum. It owed its existence to the Christian benevolence of one lady—Miss Neave. She had consecrated her time and purse to this important object, which was first suggested to her mind during

a drive with Mrs. Fry, thus related by herself:—
'A morning's expedition with dear Mrs. Fry made me at once resolve to add my help, if ever so feebly, to the good cause. I distinctly remember the one observation made. I can call to mind at this moment the look and tone so peculiar, so exclusively hers who spoke—"Often have I known the career of a promising young woman, charged with a first offence, to end in a condemned cell! Was there but a Refuge for the young offender, my work would be less painful." That one day's conversation upon these subjects, and in this strain, laid the foundation of our prisoners' home.'

The inmates, at first, were only four in number; in 1824, they had increased to nine; at the present time, under the name of 'The Royal Manor Hall Asylum,' it contains about fifty young women, and since its first establishment many hundreds, destitute and homeless, have been received within its walls.

There was another class of persons who claimed the attention of the ladies of the British Society at this meeting—the vicious and neglected little girls, so numerous in London, early hardened in crime, who, whether they had or had not been imprisoned, had no chance of reformation at home, yet were too young to be placed with advantage in any existing asylum. Before the next anniversary, a School of Discipline for the reception of such children was opened at Chelsea, where, withdrawn from their former associates, they might be trained to orderly

and virtuous habits. The idea first occurred to Mrs. Fry, when conversing in the yard of Newgate with her friend, Mrs. Benjamin Shaw, on the extreme difficulty of disposing of some very juvenile prisoners about to be discharged. She then begged Mrs. Shaw to consider the subject, and to draw up some plan for the purpose. This lady immediately applied herself to the important work, nor did she relax in her exertions until she had seen the School of Discipline firmly established, and its value tested by the experience of years.

Mrs. Fry was anxious that Government should adopt this Institution for receiving abandoned female children, and addressing Sir Robert Peel, then Secretary of State on the subject, he warmly encouraged the design as one 'capable of effecting much good.' He recommended its being supported by the subscriptions of individuals unconnected with public establishments, and enclosed a liberal donation from himself.

Both these Institutions continue to be very important auxiliaries of the British Ladies' Society, receiving considerable pecuniary assistance from its funds, in consideration of the many individuals placed in them, by its sub-committee for the Patronage of Discharged Female Prisoners.

Mrs. Fry becoming more and more of an invalid, she was removed to Brighton, where she gradually regained her strength. It was during this period, that the important and difficult subject of assisting the poorer inhabitants of towns wisely and well,

forced itself upon her attention. She was often distressed at Brighton by the multitude of applicants for relief. This was not confined to beggars by profession, who infested the streets, following carriages and foot-passengers with clamorous importunity, but extended to the resident poor, many of whom had acquired the habit of asking assistance at the houses, not only of the inhabitants, but the visitors to the place.

Not long before, she had made the acquaintance of Dr. Chalmers, and learned something of his views as to the best method of assisting the lower classes, and encouraging them in habits of self-dependence, industry, and forethought. She saw that very much might be done by arousing them to exertion, and teaching them how to assist themselves. But whilst she perceived all the advantages that would arise from such a system, she was not prepared to yield one point to those political economists who theorized on the wants of the poor as a mechanical principle which should be left to find its own level. Her heart was solemnly impressed with the duty of almsgiving—of ‘providing for the sick and needy,’ in the literal acceptation of the words. ‘The poor’ were, to her feelings, a sacred trust committed to the faithful and obedient, to receive at their hands tenderness, consideration, and relief, as the case might be. She considered the commands of Scripture to be imperative; and the privilege to be a high one, which permitted him to whom the Lord had given more abundantly, ‘to do good, and to

communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'

Brighton appeared exactly the field for working a District Visiting Society. There was no lack of benevolent feeling, and abounding affluence was to be found there; but the former was frequently misdirected and the latter misapplied.

A subscription was raised for assisting cases of distress, and for the purpose of adding something to the savings of the depositors. This premium upon the saving of the poor must be considered as a very doubtful measure, and only to be tolerated in the outset, to induce them to begin the habit; as, to be permanent, any institution of this nature must be self-supporting; and the lesson is not taught, unless the depositor finds the advantages of his own saving and economy, without help or assistance from others.

From this period, District Societies and the benefits they confer, became a subject of great interest to Mrs. Fry; she assisted in their formation in many places, and, as opportunity offered, recommended them as useful and desirable in towns and populous districts.

In Mrs. Fry's illness at Brighton she was liable to distressing attacks of faintness during the night and early morning, when it was frequently necessary to take her to an open window for the refreshment of the air. Whether through the quiet grey dawn of the summer's morning, or by the fitful gleams of a tempestuous sky, one living object always presented

itself to her view on these occasions—the solitary blockade man¹ pacing the shingle beach. It first attracted her attention, and soon excited her sympathy, for the service was one of hardship and of danger.

In the course of a drive, passing near a station, she stopped the carriage and spoke to one of the men; he civilly informed her they were not allowed to hold any communication with strangers, and declined further conversation. Afraid that by having spoken to him she might inadvertently be the means of bringing him into difficulty, she gave him her card for his commanding officer, desiring that he might be informed she had spoken to the man, in order to inquire a few particulars respecting the state of the men, and of their wives and children, whom she saw about their dwellings. This little occurrence had almost passed from her mind, when, a few days afterwards, the subject was renewed by a visit from the naval lieutenant in command of the station where she had stopped. He came to answer her inquiries in person. The service was one that entailed much privation, both on officers and men; the stations were often placed in dreary and inaccessible places. From the very nature of the service they were precluded from communication with the inhabitants, amongst whom it was exceedingly unpopular; constantly harassed with nocturnal watching, exposed to danger, both from weather and

¹ Now called the 'Coast Guard,' or 'Preventive Service,' for the prevention of Smuggling.

affrays with smugglers, they might almost be said to be in a state of blockade themselves. What Mrs. Fry heard only confirmed her desire to do something for their moral and religious good. The officers in command of several of the neighbouring posts warmly seconded her views. Considering the nature and regulations of the coast blockade, almost the only thing that could be done was to supply the people with Bibles and useful books. In furtherance of this purpose, she applied to the Bible Society, and obtained a liberal grant of Bibles and Testaments.

Thus from the vigils of her sick-chamber may be traced Mrs. Fry's exertions for supplying the coast-guard stations with libraries, which she afterwards successfully carried out.

We have seen Mrs. Fry for many years pressed by domestic duties, and by cares from without, seldom for more than a few hours enjoying rest or mental repose enough to recruit her for coming exertion. We are now to look upon a different scene, and find her enjoying a lengthened period of comparative leisure. Between the river Thames and a large piece of contiguous water, called Dagenham Breach, stand two cottages surrounded by trees, mostly willows, on an open space of lawn, with beds of reeds behind them and on either side, covering the river bank. They are open to the south-west, and are only to be attained by a rough and circuitous cart-road, or by crossing the water in front of the cottages. A narrow dyke led from the Tilbury Fort

Road to the Breach waters. There a boat would meet the comer, and convey him to that secluded watery world. Before this year, Dagenham had been but an occasional resort for fishing; now, repairs of the house at Plashet induced the family to try it as a temporary abode. The experiment answered, and for some years many summer weeks were passed by them in that singular retreat.

The life led there was one of rare enjoyment; boating, the beautiful views of the Thames, and its opposite banks of Erith and Belvidere, the absence of form, the almost living in the open air, were pleasant and refreshing. Mrs. Fry delighted in the repose it afforded—her exquisite love of nature was indulged—her children lived around her—the busy world seemed left behind. Oh, how deeply are some of those summer evenings graven on the memory of the survivors! The glorious sunsets, the shipping on the river, the water sounds, the freshness of the air, the happy groups of childhood, the pleasure of the parents, but, above all, the calm bright look and spirit with which she enjoyed the whole. How pleased she was at the happiness around her, how entertained at the little adventures incident to boats and boating, how ready to unite in expeditions amongst the upland lanes and heaths of Beacontree and Hornchurch, and to encourage that gladness of heart which has its origin in the beautiful and the true!

'Dagenham, Eighth Month 27th.—Our dear son and daughter Cresswell are likely to live in Norfolk.

I much feel parting from them and my sweet grandchildren. I think all our bonds of love strengthen. My sister Rachel's continued indisposition is, perhaps, my greatest outward trial at present, but as it respects her, in the most important things, 'all is well;' therefore my anxiety about her is not of the deepest or most sorrowful kind. In short, at this time, it seems as if in everything I must return thanks, and, like the disciple formerly, might answer to the query, "Lackest thou any thing?" Nothing, Lord, except more of Thy grace and good Spirit in all our hearts, to make us thankful receivers of Thy unmerited, innumerable, unspeakable gifts.'

In the autumn Mrs. Fry travelled as a minister amongst Friends into the south and west of England. She had visited these meetings before, and on one of her journeys had made the acquaintance of that gifted Christian lady, Hannah More. The following spring, in reply to a slight request she had addressed to Mrs. More, she received this gratifying reply:—

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—Any request of yours, if within my very limited power, cannot fail to be immediately complied with. In your kind note, I wish you had mentioned something of your own health and that of your family.

'I look back with no small pleasure to the too-short visit with which you once indulged me,—a repetition of it would be no little gratification to me.

Whether Divine Providence may grant it or not, I trust, through Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, that we may hereafter meet in that blessed country, where there is neither sin, sorrow, nor separation.

‘ Believe me, my dear friend, with true esteem and warm affection, to remain yours sincerely,

‘ H. MORE.

‘ BARLEY WOOD, 15th of April 1826.’

Mrs. Fry entertained the highest appreciation of this lady’s character, and of the benefits she had conferred upon her country, especially upon her countrywomen. She always referred with great pleasure to her visit to Barley Wood, and the impression made upon her by the mingled sweetness and dignity of Mrs. More’s countenance and manner.

In a letter to a friend, Mrs. More thus mentions the circumstance :—

‘ Yesterday the long-desired meeting took place between Mrs. Newgate (oh that that name should ever become an honour!) Fry, and myself; we were ready to eat one another up. Her appearance and manner reminded me of what I have often said, that I should like to have her picture as Deborah judging Israel under the palm-tree! She is indeed delightful. At parting she knelt down, and put up a feeling prayer for unworthy me.’

In a copy of her *Practical Piety*, given some years before by Mrs. More to Mrs. Fry, is this inscription :—

' TO MRS. FRY.

Presented by HANNAH MORE,
 As a token of veneration
 Of her heroic zeal,
 Christian charity,
 And persevering kindness,
 To the most forlorn
 Of human beings.
 They were naked, and she
 Clothed them ;
 In prison, and she visited them ;
 Ignorant, and she taught them,
 For *His* sake,
 In *His* name, and by *His* word,
 Who went about doing good.

' BARLEY WOOD, *June 17th*, 1818.'

The return of the season had brought with it the interest of the annual transportation of female convicts. Mrs. Fry and the ladies who acted with her met with much kindness from Admiral (then Captain) Young, Principal Resident Agent of Transports on the river Thames, and his family.

Miss Young thus records the circumstance of accompanying her father, Captain Young, to the female convict ship lying off Woolwich, to meet Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Fry :—' On board one of them between two and three hundred women were assembled, in order to listen to the exhortations and prayers of perhaps the two brightest personifications of Christian philanthropy that the age could boast. Scarcely could two voices, even so distinguished for beauty and power, be imagined united in a more touching engagement—as indeed was testified by the breathless attention, the tears, and the suppressed

sobs of the gathered listeners. All of man's word, however, there heard, heart-stirring as it was at the time, has faded from my memory ; but no lapse of time can ever efface the impression of the 107th Psalm, as read by Mrs. Fry, with such extraordinary emphasis and intonation, that it seemed to make the simple reading a commentary ; and, as she passed on from passage to passage, each one struck my youthful mind as if the whole series of allusions might have been written by the pen of inspiration in view of such a scene as was then before us. At an interval of twenty years, it is recalled to me as often as that Psalm is brought to my notice.

‘Never, in this world, can it be known to how many hearts its solemn appeals were that day carried home by that potent voice.’

CHAPTER IX.

1827-1830.

Irish journey—Dublin—Illness at Waterford—Return home—Illness and death of Rachel Gurney—Journey with Mr. Fry—Ladies' British Society meeting—Great and heavy sorrows—Leaves Plashet—Winter in London—A new dwelling—Summons to the sick-bed of a niece—Poor man by the road-side—Prepares her text-book—Anecdote.

AMONGST the numerous applications to Mrs. Fry for information on subjects connected with prisons and the reformation of prisoners, many inquiries reached her from Ireland. She had had it on her mind for years, that it might be her duty, in the capacity of a minister amongst Friends, to visit that country; now the way appeared to open for it. Her eldest daughter had gradually taken the weight of domestic care from her mother, and was entirely competent to the conduct of even her more public business. In the spring of 1827 her brother Joseph John Gurney proposed uniting with her in a journey to Ireland, for the combined purpose of visiting Friends, holding public meetings for persons of other persuasions, and inspecting the state of prisons and various asylums. Her husband's sister, Elizabeth Fry, agreed to accompany her.

Of her last Sabbath at home she says :—

‘The First-day preceding my leaving home was most interesting. In the first place, I had all the servants collected at the morning reading, and expressed very fully my desires for them, and their preservation in the right way, which they appeared to feel a good deal, and it was a heart-tendering time. My beloved John and his Rachel were staying with us, and their sweet babe. Before meeting, I had the children a little while alone, and the meeting was in no common degree solemn. The afternoon meeting, if anything, was still more so, the ministry very lively and refreshing. My dearest sister Louisa Hoare was with us, to my real comfort ; my brother William Fry and his children were at both meetings. In the evening, we had a large number to tea, and at our evening reading. It was very interesting taking leave of my most dearly beloved family. The presence of the Most High appeared to overshadow us ; prayer was offered again and again, and testimony upon testimony was given. One Friend expressed his full belief that ~~we~~ we should return in peace and safety, and that no harm would come nigh my dwelling ; a general feeling of the rectitude of our going was no small comfort. The next morning I bade my darling children farewell in their beds. I left home about six o’clock, accompanied by my sons William and Joseph. My natural pain in parting with those most tenderly beloved was mitigated by a portion of that peace the world cannot

give, in making what I trust was a sacrifice well pleasing to the best of Masters.'

Extracts from her own letters furnish not merely the history of her journey, but an account of her natural fears and her spiritual consolations—the difficulties that appeared before her, and the power by which she was enabled to surmount them.

She was attracted by the Irish character; her mission excited their enthusiasm, and she saw them under the most favourable circumstances. The travellers had not been a week in Dublin before both Mrs. Fry's companions became ill. She tells her family at home, that with her 'brother in the next house, and her sister up high flights of steps,' and 'many guests,' she was 'rather overpowered,' and hopes that it was 'not a want of resignation anxiously to desire their recovery;' she was reminded of Paul, 'how much he wished for his companion's revival, lest he should have sorrow upon sorrow.' A few days later, after speaking of a large dinner, and a crowded week-day meeting, she adds:—

'I forgot to say that when visiting the prisoners the day before, the judges were sitting in the court, and sent for us to go to them there. Picture your uncle, myself, and some other Friends, in a crowded court, sitting beside the judges. I could but be reminded of the difference of our situation from that of Friends formerly, taken into the courts in time of persecution, and so cruelly treated; but my belief is, that their standing their ground as they did,

prepared the way for even these services—"They laboured, and we have entered into their labours." May the same power preserve us, in what may appear heights, as it did them in depths !'

The House of Industry she considered almost the most interesting institution she ever saw, but being accompanied by nearly a hundred persons, added to her fatigue and lessened her comfort. The state of the lunatics gave her 'real pleasure.' Other prisons were visited, still larger meetings held, and then she acknowledges to their 'leaving Dublin with thankful and peaceful hearts,' under a 'deep feeling,' that 'hitherto the Lord had helped them,' and 'out of weakness they had been made strong.' Armagh and Lisburn were visited. Of the former place she says :

'We began our morning with some Friends to breakfast at the inn, and after reading, we set off to the prison. It was a fine day, and we had a pleasant walk to it. Several were waiting for us, both gentlemen and ladies. We had, for the first time, a religious opportunity with the prisoners ; first, Elizabeth and myself with the women, then all of us with the men. The Roman Catholics appear very hard to reach ; but with the poor men, I think, the power of truth reigned over all, and their spirits appeared brought down. We then went to the Lunatic Asylum, which was in delightful order.'

A meeting at Lisburn proved a service of some danger. On their arrival at the place appointed, a large schoolroom at the top of a high building, the crowd and press were so great, they at first thought

the attempt to enter must be given up; however, after 'great pressing,' they were 'driven into such an assembly,' that her 'poor heart almost sunk.' She feared the floor giving way—she feared the surging crowd before her, and shrank from the noise and excitement. But a short time sufficed to establish silence, and peace reigned in that large and mixed assembly, to be followed by solemn exhortation and prayer.

At Londonderry their arrival was greeted by a merry peal of bells. At Coleraine they determined to have one day for recreation to visit the Giant's Causeway. She longs for her 'beloved family,' is wet and weary, 'spoils' her 'cloak and bonnet,' but is 'glad' that she 'saw it,' as a 'fresh proof of the wonderful and various works of God.' By Enniskillen and Sligo they made their way to Boyle, thence to Roscommon and Moate, visiting prisons, holding meetings, and distributing tracts as they went. Her last letter was from Galway, 'in the midst of what appears gross darkness.' At one meeting about one thousand persons, almost all Roman Catholics, were present; it began with confusion, subsided into tranquillity, but ended with many of the auditors marking their satisfaction by knocking with their feet and clapping their hands!

Elizabeth Fry was becoming worn and over-fatigued; every day added to the difficulty with which she accomplished the work allotted to it. Happily they reached the hospitable dwelling of John Strangman, at Waterford, on Friday the 12th April,

before her powers completely failed her. For more than a week she needed all the care and close nursing which she experienced : then she gradually began to rally, and they pursued their onerous work.

Through great fatigue, through consolations and discouragements, they passed on their way. They attended the Yearly Meeting at Dublin, which, to use her own expression, 'crowned all, as to our ministerial services in our own Society ;' arriving at Plashet the latter end of May.

Mrs. Fry's return from Ireland was clouded by the illness of her sister, Rachel Gurney, who was then at Brighton for change of air. Thither she soon followed her, and remained for a few days with her and one of her own daughters, who was staying there to be near her aunt. Threatening as had been the symptoms attending the illness of this most beloved sister, it was on this occasion that the sorrowful conviction was first driven home to her heart, that the case was becoming so alarming, that but one termination could be expected. From childhood, from the happy days of Bramerton and Earlham, when 'one cabinet, one little set of tea-things, one small light closet,' had been shared between them, their love had flowed on, deepening and strengthening with life and its vicissitudes. The depth and fidelity of Rachel Gurney's attachment to her sister had in truth been 'wonderful,' self-sacrificing, considerate, and protecting—most sensitively alive to her interests, her cares, and her joys ; but there were distresses approaching from which this devoted friend

and sister could not have shielded her ; and the mercy was apparent, when little more than a year had passed by of her having been taken hence, without seeing one so tenderly beloved, borne down by many sorrows.

The end of August found Mrs. Fry at Earlham in close attendance upon her sister. There, impressed with the high Christian attainments of her brothers and sisters, in deep humility of spirit, she writes :—

‘ I think I never am brought into contact with many of my beloved brothers and sisters without a very humbling feeling of my own infirmity and shortcomings ; I find them such examples to me, and am ready to say within my heart—though I have come so publicly forward—though I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, what will become of me and my house ? and where is there amongst us the same fruits of the Spirit ?

‘ My merciful Father has helped me, cared for me, sustained and provided for me, and in many ways blessed me ; but I still see many hidden evils in my heart, and as for my family, fears often get hold of me, and for myself also, lest I should not walk worthy of my high and holy calling. I can only intercede for us all, that for the sake of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost, our gracious God would have mercy on us. Oh, dearest Lord, Thou hast granted the petition of Thine hand-maid, for her brothers and sisters ; she now sees in them, in a great measure, the travail of her soul, and is satisfied. Reject not her prayers for her husband

and children ; bring them by any ways, or by any paths, that Thou mayest see meet, but let them also come to the knowledge of the ever-blessed truth as it is in Jesus, that they may be saved with an everlasting salvation. And oh, gracious Lord, be with Thy poor servant to the end ; and through the continued extension of Thy grace, Thy help, and Thy mercy, let nothing ever be permitted to separate her soul from Thy love in Christ Jesus, her beloved Lord, and all-sufficient Saviour.'

'By any ways, or by any paths, that Thou mayest see meet ; but let them come to the knowledge of the ever-blessed truth, as it is in Jesus.'—Such had become the language of her heart.

More than twenty-five years had passed, of deepening experience and growing dedication, since the ministry of William Savery had been the means of producing so marvellous a change in her. Religion, for the first time presented to her view through the medium and under the aspect of Quakerism, was for a length of time associated in her mind too exclusively with the peculiar form in which she then had known it, and which had been so eminently blessed to herself. She appears now to have attained to the conviction that the peculiar forms and scruples of sects may be mistaken, and substituted for the cross of Christ, and that there may be faithful and devoted Cross-bearers, who adopt none of these peculiarities. She had learned to recognise the vast distinction between the diversities of forms in religious worship, and the mighty mystery of religion

itself; even the being renewed in the spirit of the mind, and born again from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.'

Still she clave to the peculiar form of Christianity which she had adopted for herself; and for her children, it was long the craving of her heart that they might become 'Friends' from conviction; but even this strong desire of her heart was to be in great measure disappointed. We now find her fully and unreservedly petitioning Him who had eminently proved to her a 'prayer-hearing, answering God,' 'by any ways, or by any paths, that He might see meet,' but that they might 'come to the knowledge of the ever-blessed truth as it is in Jesus.' Here is no reserve, no holding back; the surrender of will is entire, and the spirit of submission complete. Very blessed it is to those of her children, who have been unable to see as she saw, and to receive the views which she entertained, to know that it was given her by degrees, without any wavering in her own opinions, without any diminution of her entire love for the principles of Friends, 'to recognise no distinction,' provided 'the narrow path was chosen, and the cross of Christ borne.'

'*Earlham, 9th Month 15th.*—Sitting opposite to my most beloved sister in the Blue-room. She appears to be gradually sinking into death, and may we not humbly trust and confidently believe, into the arms of her God and Saviour. Grant, Lord, I pray Thee, if consistent with Thy holy and blessed will, that she may fall asleep in Thee, and that no painful

struggles may attend her change ; that quietly and imperceptibly she may cast off this mortal tabernacle, having already testified to us her faith and her hope, and be landed on the other side of Jordan, awaking to joy and glory unspeakable. And do Thou, O Lord, sustain us also in this time of trial, and enable us in our low estate to rejoice in Thee, our God and our Saviour, who yet giveth the victory over death, hell, and the grave.

‘I have been alone and quiet a little while, and I find in this awful time that “help is laid on One who is mighty ;” for that which, ever since I came to an age of understanding, has appeared almost impossible to bear, even the loss of *this* sister, who has been like “flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone,” now I am enabled to receive, and bow under the dispensation with peace. I believe that she has done her work, and that we have nearly finished our work for her ; but is there not an all-sufficient Helper near, who is holding up her head above the waves of Jordan, that they overwhelm her not ?’

On the 17th of September, in ‘perfect peace,’ Rachel Gurney departed this life.

In April 1828, Mrs. Fry accompanied her husband into some of the shires. Her chief inducement was to attend the Meetings of Friends, and visit prisons ; but she also was glad to avail herself of the change of scene and travelling for some of her family. ‘To follow, and not force Providence,’ was a favourite sentiment with her ; she had taken it from Cecil’s *Remains*, a book in which she delighted. ‘To avail

ourselves of the openings,' was another expression to be frequently heard from her lips.

For the meeting of the British Society, which took place in May, Mrs. Fry had prepared rough notes or memoranda, which exist. They include observations on the good effect of ladies visiting prisons, workhouses, hospitals, lunatic asylums, and other public institutions; the necessity of classification, female officers, regular occupation, enforced plainness of appearance, separation, and, where that cannot be enforced, absolute silence after retiring for the night, with many details that must present themselves to every one who has entertained the subject of Prison Discipline, but above all, the infinite importance of religious instruction. She enlarged on the state of female convict-ships, the need of better clothing for the women, the wretched condition of their little nurslings, and various topics connected with the peculiarities of a sea-voyage. She finished by a heart-stirring appeal to the many present, gifted with influence and talent, wealth and position, on the subject of the increase of crime in this country, the responsibilities of all, the sphere of usefulness open to every individual, even to the tender and delicate woman, who might be said scarcely 'to have the air of heaven visit her face too roughly,' as a wife to influence, as a mother to educate and train, as the mistress of a family to guide, control, reprove, encourage. She touched upon district societies, libraries for the lower classes general education,—and concluded by urging upon

her hearers in nothing to be discouraged ; but in humble confidence to go on, remembering that the work is not ours : therefore, we may look to Him who is mighty, upon whom help is laid, to be ‘steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as their labour would not be in vain in the Lord.’

Clouds in the mercantile world, which darkened the horizon of 1825, had apparently passed over, but it was in appearance only. Mrs. Fry writes :—
· *Ninth Month 15th, 1828.*—The storm has now entered my own borders ; once more we are brought into perplexity and trial ; but I have this consolation, “ He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.” To whom can I go in this time of emergency, but to Him who hitherto has helped me, and provided for me and mine in a marvellous manner, making darkness light before me, and crooked things straight ? Lord, Thou who remainest to be the God of my life, above all things, in this our sorrow and perplexity, cast us not out of Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from us ; keep us from all evil, and from the appearance of it, that through the help of Thy Spirit our conduct may be kept upright, circumspect and clean in Thy sight, and amongst men ; that in all things, at all times, and under all circumstances, we may show forth Thy praise. Keep us in love and unity with those with whom we have to act, even if they do contrary to our wishes and judgment. But oh, dearest Lord, if it be Thy holy will, make a way of

escape for us from the calamity we so much dread ; and continue in Thy unmerited mercy to provide for Thy unworthy servant, her family, and all concerned in this trial, that we may not want what is good and needful for us, and that others may be kept from suffering through us. If it be possible, remove this bitter cup from us ; yet, if it be Thy will that we drink it, enable us, through the grace and spirit of Him who suffered for us, to drink it without repining ; yet trusting in Thy love, Thy mercy, and Thy judgment.'

But it was not at this time the will of God to remove the bitter cup from His servant, but rather to grant strength and grace to drink of it, as coming from His holy hand.

The failure of one of the houses of business in which her husband was a partner, though not that which he personally conducted, involved Elizabeth Fry and her family in a train of sorrows and perplexities which tinged the remaining years of her life. Nature staggered beneath the blow ; but the staff on which she leaned could not fail her, and she fell not.

'Eleventh Month 25th.—I have been brought at times into little short of anguish of spirit ; not, I think, so much for what we must suffer ourselves, as for what others may suffer. The whole thing appears fraught with distress. When I look at this mysterious dispensation permitted by Almighty wisdom, I am ready to say, How is it, Lord, Thou dealest thus with Thy servant, who loves Thee, trusts in

Thee, and fears Thy name? and then I say, This is my infirmity, thus to query. Need I not chastisement? Do I not deserve it? May it not be a mysterious dispensation of deep and sore affliction, laid not only upon us, but upon others, to draw us all more from the things of time, and to set us more on the enduring riches of eternity. I cannot reason upon it; I must bow, and only bow and say in my heart, which I believe I do, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Well, if it be of the Lord, let Him do as seemeth Him good. Lord, let Thy grace be found sufficient for us in this most awful time, and grant that we faint not when Thou rebukest us.'

The tide of sympathy flowed in marvellously from all quarters. The mass of letters that exist attest how well she was loved, how highly she was valued, and upon how many hearts she and her sorrows were borne.

A severe accident to her eldest grandson for a few days detained his mother in Norfolk. She had last seen Plashet really and figuratively basking in sunshine. All the family had been assembled then; all were again together; there was the same pleasant dwelling, the same expanse of verdure, the same beloved ones to receive her; but all was changed. The countenance and effect of her mother at that time were emphatically her own—an expression of such intense suffering, and yet such immoveable peace. Her soft, full-toned voice, saddened yet sweet as ever; her chastened smile, whilst she could point to better days, and hopes to be fulfilled even

in this life ; and then the wonderful judgment—clear, discerning, and practical, with which she would enter into details so little suited for women, and without minutely following their different points, from her ready quickness arrive at true and just conclusions.

She had a quality difficult to describe, but marked to those who knew her well—the power of rapidly, and by a process of thought that she could herself hardly have explained, arriving at the truth, striking the balance, and finding the just weight of a doubtful question ; nothing could be more valuable than this quality under such circumstances.

Mr. and Mrs. Fry resolved upon at once leaving Plashet and seeking a temporary home in St. Mildred's Court, then the residence of their eldest son. One immense mitigation attended this calamity, that the mercantile business formerly their grandfather's, and conducted by their father, remained to the young men of the family, who were enabled by the important assistance of their mother's brothers to carry it on, and by this means to re-establish their parents in comparative comfort.

The surrounding poor found a kind and judicious friend in the Vicar of East Ham (of which parish Plashet is a hamlet), to whom the living had very recently been presented. To him the schools hitherto supported by Mr. and Mrs. Fry, conjointly with William Morley, Esq. of Green Street House, were transferred, and under his care, and that of his successors, they have since remained and flourished.

During that mournful winter in London, there were periods of peculiar suffering and anxiety; Mrs. Fry's own health being so shaken by her severe mental distresses, as nearly to confine her to her room with a bad cough. Her beloved and valued son William was on the bed of sickness from oppression of the brain, the result of an overstrained and exhausted mind. Shortly afterwards, her daughter-in-law was in the same house in an alarming state of illness; and a lady, who came to assist in nursing, was taken ill with the measles. The measles in a grown-up family becomes a serious disease. They were driven from London in consequence, though too late to escape the infection, and sought shelter in the vacant house at Plashet, which, for many weeks, became a scene of anxious nursing.

But it was shelter only which Plashet could afford them. The establishment broken up, the gardens neglected, the stables empty; most desolate was the time passed there, and thankful were they when in June they were able to move to a small but commodious dwelling in Upton Lane, belonging to Mrs. Fry's brother, Mr. Gurney, and immediately contiguous to his own grounds.

The twenty-ninth anniversary of her marriage-day was a sorrowful one to her.

'Eighth Month 29th, 1829.—Our wedding-day; twenty-nine years since we married! My texts for the morning are applicable:—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far

more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "We walk by faith, not by sight." As far as we can judge from external appearances, mine has not been a common life. He who seeth in secret only knows the unutterable depths and sorrows I have had to pass through, as well as, at other times, I may almost say, joys inexpressible and full of glory. I have now had so many disappointments in life, that my hopes, which have so long lived strong, that I should see much brighter days in it, begin a little to subside, and my desire is, more entirely to look beyond the world for that which can alone fully satisfy me; and not to have my heart so much set upon the things of this life, or even those persons nearest to me, but more set upon the life to come; and upon Him who is faithful, and will be all in all to His dependent ones. At the same time I desire faithfully to perform all my relative duties; and may my heart be kept in tender love to all near to me.'

More touching still is her record of an incident some weeks afterwards:—

'*Upton, Tenth Month 21st.*—On First-day, we were rather suddenly summoned to Plashet House, to attend Anna Golder (aunt to my faithful Chrissy), who had charge of the house. She was one of the lowly, retired humble walkers before the Lord; she was suddenly taken very ill, and died in half-an-hour after her niece arrived. It was apparently a departure without sting to mind or body; as far, therefore, as it respected her, all was peace. But to myself it was different. I arrived there after dark,

drove once more into the dear old place—no one to meet me but the poor man who lived in the house, no dog to bark, nor any life nor sound as used to be. Death seemed over the place, such was the silence, until I found myself up-stairs, in the large and once cheerful and full house. When I entered the bedroom, there lay the corpse, in her gown, she having died in her chair, only our washerwoman and the woman who lived in the house in the room besides. Circumstances combined to touch some very tender feelings, and the inclination of my heart was to bow down upon my knees before the Lord; thankful, surely, for the release of the valued departed, but deeply and affectingly impressed with such a change. That once lively, sweet, cheerful home, left desolate—the abode of death—and two or three watchers. It brought, as my visits to Plashet often have done, the hymn to my mind—

“Lord, why is this? I trembling cried.”

Then again I find I can do nothing, but bow, trust, and depend upon that Power that has, I believe, thus seen meet to visit us in judgment as well as in mercy.’

In December Mrs. Fry was called into Norfolk to attend the sick-bed of her most beloved niece, Priscilla Buxton,¹ who was dangerously ill; to her she administered spiritual help, and the most judicious nursing. Referring to this illness especially, she describes her aunt’s skill in a sick-room as ‘peculiar indeed; her very presence and aspect as

¹ Afterwards Mrs. Andrew Johnston.

perfectly calming ; possessing an authority mixed with soothing tenderness, which gave her a most helpful power, quieting both body and mind by her judicious and always indulgent advice, and by her unflinching power of hoping, perhaps too well ;' 'yet under feelings of need and discouragement, what an instrument for good !' She speaks of her 'as condescending to the humblest services,' recalls 'her soft hand, her exquisite reading, and delicious company,' concluding 'Oh that we could hear her, feel her, see her once more !'

On the road Mrs. Fry saw a man lying apparently at the point of death. She went to him, desiring her daughter, who was with her, to open her dressing-case and bring a vial of brandy, which, from her frequent attendance in sickness, she had learned always to have in readiness. She knelt down by the poor man, whose head she found dreadfully torn ; she carefully replaced the scalp, which was lying back, tied it down with her pocket-handkerchief, then gave him brandy, and he began to revive. After a time a cart came by, into which she had him lifted, and carefully conveyed to the next village. He had been driving a powerful team of horses ; they ran away, and the waggon-wheel went over his head. After lingering some weeks, he died in Norwich hospital, apparently ready for that solemn change.

Early in 1830 we find this entry in Mrs. Fry's journal, 'My time has lately been much occupied in writing my text-book.'¹ She had long felt the diffi-

¹ *Text-book* by Elizabeth Fry.

culty of young people generally, and older ones in active life, possessing themselves of any scriptural instructions, before commencing the employments of the day. The experience of life had infinitely confirmed her value of the written Word. She deplored the feeling, wherever she met with it, that the Bible was to be approached as a sort of sacred mystery, to be applied to only occasionally, and with something almost amounting to awe.

Mrs. Fry considered that there was something more wanted to enable those, who have but a short period for a hasty toilette before an early breakfast, still to taste of the spiritual manna provided, and to have a portion of Holy Writ, however short, impressed upon their minds.

Amidst her numerous avocations, she found time to select a passage of Scripture for every day in the year. She endeavoured to combine in it that which is 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;' and in a little preface she urged the importance of endeavouring to appropriate the truths contained in it, with a heart uplifted, that the blessed Spirit might apply the Word; and concludes, 'The rapid and ceaseless passing away of the days and weeks, as well as the months of the year, as numbered at the head of each day's text, it is hoped may prove a memento of the speed with which time is hastening on, and remind the reader of the importance of passing it as a preparation for eternity, in the service of God and for the benefit of mankind.' As soon as her little work

was finished she began its distribution ; thousands and thousands did she give away, besides multitudes that were otherwise circulated. Where have not these little text-books penetrated, from the monarch's gilded hall to the felon's dungeon ?

Many instances of their usefulness came to light, but one only shall be mentioned here. Two or three years after their publication, a text-book, bound in red leather, which she had given to a little grandson,¹ fell out of his pocket at the Lynn Mart, where he had gone to visit the lions. He was a very little boy, and much disconcerted at the loss of his book, for his name was in it, and it was the gift of his grandmother, written by herself. The transaction was almost forgotten, when, nearly a year afterwards, the Rev. Richardson Cox, the clergyman of Watlington, a parish about eight miles from Lynn, gave the following history of the lost book :—‘ He had been sent for to the wife of a man, living on a wild common at the outskirts of his parish, a notorious character, between poacher and rat-catcher. The message was brought to the clergyman by the medical man who attended her, and who, after describing her as being most strangely altered, added —“ You will find the lion become a lamb ;” and so it proved : she, who had been wild and rough, whose language had been violent, and her conduct untamed, lay on a bed of exceeding suffering, humble, patient, and resigned.

Her child had picked up the text-book, and

¹ Afterwards Captain Samuel Gurney Cresswell, R.N.

carried it home as lawful spoil. Curiosity, or some feeling put into her heart by Him without whose leave a sparrow falleth not to the ground, had induced her to read it; the word had been blessed to her, and her understanding opened to receive the gospel of truth. She could not describe the process, but the results were there. Sin had in her sight become hateful; blasphemy was no longer heard from her lips. She drew from under her pillow 'her precious book,' her 'dear little book,' which had 'taken away the fear of death.' She died soon afterwards, filled with joy and hope in believing, having in these detached portions of Scripture found a Saviour, all-sufficient to bear her heavy burden of guilt, and present her, clad in His own spotless righteousness, before the throne of God.

CHAPTER X.

1830-1832.

Brighton—Death of a grandchild—Of a nephew—Interview with the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria—Yearly meeting—Ladies' Prison Society meeting—Introduction to Queen Adelaide—Dagenham—Public meetings in that neighbourhood—Journey with Mr. Fry—Ilfracombe—History of Samuel Marshall—Welsh half-year's meeting—Crosses to Ireland—Visit to Norfolk.

IN October 1830, Mrs. Fry, accompanied by her brother, Samuel Gurney, visited some of the meetings of Friends in Sussex. At Brighton she attended the Friends' meeting on Sunday morning, and in the evening held a public one for persons of different persuasions. She had an interview with the Countess Brownlow, and through her communicated a message of serious import to Queen Adelaide. Her own account of this visit to Brighton is too descriptive and complete to allow of curtailment:—

'My prayer for the King and Queen was, that a blessing might rest upon them; that they might be strengthened by the Spirit of God to do His will, and live to His glory (or to that purpose); then for the Queen, I felt the great importance of her situation, that she was indeed like a city set upon a hill,

amongst women; and my desire for her was, that her light might so shine before men, that they, seeing her good works, might glorify our Father who is in heaven. I expressed my desire that, for the good of the community, she might promote the education of the poor, the general distribution of the Scriptures, and the keeping the Sabbath seriously, by discouraging parties, etc. etc., on that day amongst the higher ranks, as I was sure the tendency of them was very injurious to the lower classes and the community at large. Then I touched on the anti-slavery subject and the abolition of capital punishment, and presented to the Queen my brother Joseph's Essays, also his Peculiarities of Friends, and my little book on visiting Prisons.

'On Fifth-day several of the higher classes were invited to Meeting, and to my own feelings a remarkable time we surely had; it appeared as if we were overshadowed by the love and mercy of God our Saviour. The ministry flowed in beautiful harmony; I deeply felt the want of local prayer being offered, but I did not see it my place upon our Meeting assembling together, when, to my inexpressible relief, John Richman powerfully and beautifully offered up thanksgiving and prayer, which appeared to arise as incense and as an acceptable sacrifice. After a time of silence, I arose with this text—"There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; differences of administration, but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all." In a way that

it never did before, the subject opened to my view whilst speaking; how did I see and endeavour to express the lively bond of union existing in the Christian Church, and that the humbling tendering influence of the love and power of Christ must lead us not to condemn our neighbours, but to love and cover all with charity. I had to end the Meeting by praying for the King, Queen, and all their subjects everywhere; for the advancement of that day when the knowledge of God and His glory would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; for those countries in Europe that are in a disturbed state, and that these shakings might eventually be for good. After a most solemn feeling of union the Meeting broke up. We dined at our dear friends the Elliots, where were Charles Simeon, Henry Elliot (valuable clergymen) and others. A pleasant, sweet, refreshing time we had; I think I never feel so able to rejoice in the Lord as when united with real Christians of different denominations. We went that night to Chichester, and slept at Maria Hack's, and were much interested by her and her family, some of whom have joined the Church of England; but they appeared to us truly valuable and serious, and we were much pleased with our visit.

'I have been thus full in the account of this journey, because it is, I think, well in this way to leave some memorial of the tender dealings of my gracious Lord and Master with me, when engaged in His service.'

'*Twelfth Month 7th*, 1830.—May I be enabled so

to give an account of the various dealings of the Almighty with me and mine that it may be useful to some, at least to my most beloved children and children's children. I have to begin with rather a melancholy tale :—My beloved children, Foster and Richenda Reynolds, lost their sweet baby upon the 4th of last month, after a few days' severe illness. Death is awful and affecting, come as it may ; and this I truly felt when seeing the sweet babe in its coffin, still retaining its beautiful colour. I could not but feel the uncertainty of all our possessions, yet the comfort that death had only entered our family and taken one for whom we could feel no fear for the future. At her grave the desire was very strong within me that we might all become like little children, fit to enter the kingdom of God, being washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Since then, my dear nephew, Harry Buxton, has been called hence. His end appeared in no common degree peace, if not joy in the Lord. He was about seventeen years of age, a remarkable instance of the care and religious instruction of parents being blessed ; he was greatly protected through life from any evil influences, and most carefully and diligently instructed by his dear mother, particularly in all religious truth. He was a child who in no common degree appeared to be kept from evil, and live in the fear and love of the Lord ; he was cheerful, industrious, clever, very agreeable, and of a sweet person—a very deep trial it is to his dear parents to lose him. Still I feel as if I could give

up all my sons to be in such a state ; but I may be mistaken in this, and perhaps my Lord may yet be pleased to raise them up to His service here below, which would be even a greater blessing than having them taken in the morning of the day. I think the way in which the children of my sisters turn out proves the efficacy of much religious instruction, and not too much religious restraint. It certainly is a very serious thing to put upon young persons any crosses in their religious course that Christ does not call them to bear.'

An interview in April with her country's future Sovereign was followed in May by close attendance at the Friends' Yearly Meeting, and soon afterwards by the Ladies' British Society Meeting, for the Reformation of Female Prisoners. Mrs. Fry also records a gratifying introduction to Queen Adelaide, and other members of the Royal Family.

'*Fifth Month 14th, 1831.*—About three weeks ago I paid a very satisfactory visit to the Duchess of Kent, and her very pleasing daughter, the Princess Victoria. William Allen went with me. We took some books on the subject of Slavery, with the hope of influencing the young Princess in that important cause. We were received with much kindness and cordiality, and I felt my way open to express, not only my desire that the best blessing might rest upon them, but that the young Princess might follow the example of our blessed Lord, that as she "grew in stature, she might grow in favour with God and man." I also ventured to remind her of King Josiah,

who began to reign at eight years old, and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, which seemed to be well received. Since that, I thought it right to send the Duke of Gloucester my brother Joseph's work on the Sabbath, and rather a serious letter, and had a very valuable answer from him, full of feeling. I have an invitation to visit the Duchess of Gloucester next Fourth-day; may good result to them, and no harm to myself; but I feel these openings rather a weighty responsibility, and desire to be faithful, not forward. I had long felt an inclination to see the young Princess, and endeavour to throw a little weight in the right scale, seeing the very important place that she is likely to fill. I was much pleased with her, and think her a sweet, lovely, and hopeful child.

'*Sixth Month 3d.*—The yearly Meeting concluded this day week. I was highly comforted by the good spirit manifested in it by numbers. I think I never was so much satisfied by the ground Friends take; leading us to maintain what we consider our testimonies upon a scriptural and Christian ground, rather than because our forefathers maintained them. My opinion is, that nothing is so likely to cause our Society to remain a living and spiritual body, as its being willing *to stand open to improvement*; because, it is to be supposed, that, as the Church generally emerges out of the dark state it was brought into, its light will shine brighter and brighter, and we, as a part of it, shall partake of this dispensation. My

belief is that neither individuals nor collective bodies should *stand still* in grace, but their light should shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. My dearest brother Joseph had a valuable meeting for the youth, further to instruct them in Friends' principles, which delighted me; he was so clear, so sound, so perfectly scriptural and Christian, and so truly in the spirit of charity and *sound* liberality, *not laxity*.

'25th.—I must give an account of the British Society Meeting. It was, I trust, well got through, and I feel the way in which its objects prosper, cause for humble thankfulness. Surely the result of our labour has hitherto been beyond my most sanguine expectation, as to the improved state of our prisons, female convict-ships, and the convicts in New South Wales. I desire to feel this blessing and unmerited mercy towards us, and those poor creatures, as I ought, in humility and true thankfulness of heart. The day before yesterday, I had a very satisfactory interview with the Queen and several of the Royal Family, in rather a remarkable manner. There was a sale on account of the Hospital Ship in the river, in which I was interested; and hearing that the Queen was to be there, whom I wished to see, I went; but was so much discouraged when I arrived, by the gaiety of the occasion, that I should have turned back, had not my sister Catherine made me persevere. We saw the Queen and her party, and quickly passed through the gay scene. When we got out, we found ourselves with a valuable

friend of mine, Captain Young, in a quiet airy place, at the head of the staircase ; we were told by him that the Queen would go down that way, and we should have an excellent view of her. We therefore waited until some of the Royal Family came down ; their carriages not being ready they withdrew into a private room, where Captain Young admitted us ; the Duchess of Gloucester met me with her usual kindness, and presented me to the Duchess of Cumberland. The Princess, sister to the Queen, Prince George of Cumberland and Prince George of Cambridge, were there with them. The Duchess of Gloucester soon withdrew, and the Queen's sister and I had rather a full conversation, together with the Duchess of Cumberland and Prince George. Then came the Duke of Sussex and the Princess of Hesse Homburg ; the Duke appeared pleased to see me, and we had a good deal of conversation ; the Duke said he would present me to the Queen, who soon came into the room, with the Princess Augusta, whom I knew ; he did so in the handsomest manner, and the Queen paid me very kind and marked attention. I had some conversation with the Queen, almost entirely on benevolent objects. I expressed my pleasure in seeing the Royal Family so much interested in these things, my belief that it did much good, and that being engaged in them brought peace and blessing. I was enabled to keep to my simple mode of speech as I believe right, and yet to show them every respect and polite attention. I did not enter religious subjects with any of them, though

I trust the bearing of my conversation was that way. We spoke with the Princess Elizabeth, of Friends, of the love her father George III. had for them, his visit to our great-grandfather Barclay, my meeting Queen Charlotte in the city, and many other things. My dearest sister Catherine's simple boldness brought me into the room, and made me go through the thing; her company was delightful, helpful, and strengthening. It was a very singular opening, thus to meet those, some of whom I so much wanted to see; it is curious, but for days I had it on my mind to endeavour to see the Queen, and by night and day seriously had weighed it, lest my motives should not be right; but when I remembered that from not having been presented to her, I could never on any point communicate with her in person, I felt that if there should be an opportunity to put myself in her way, I had better do it. It was striking how the whole thing was opened for me, I may say providentially; for already I believe some good has been done by seeing one of the party, and I look upon it as a very important event in my public objects for the good of others. Afterwards, I felt as I mostly do, after anything of this kind, rather anxious, and extremely fearful for myself, how far it was safe for me thus to be cast among the great of this world; how far it was even right to put myself in the way of it, and how far others would judge me for it; however, the next day, my mind was much quieted, my fears much allayed, and my present sober view is, that it was a remarkable opening, and my desire,

that it may please the Most High to bless it, that good may result from it.'

Notwithstanding many family cares, and the weighty objects in which she was engaged, the summer of this year, which was passed at Dagenham, proved a very happy one. The two cottages were fully peopled; the larger one inhabited by Mr. and Mrs. Fry, and as many of their home party as it could be made to contain; the smaller cottage was lent to a married daughter, and received the overflowings from the other house. The first burst of the calamity in 1828 had passed away. The younger members of the family had been transplanted sufficiently early to take root at Upton Lane; but with their parents and the elder children it was far different. Dagenham, on the contrary, was not new to any of them; though the arrangements there were different, the associations were the same. Pleasant was it in the quiet of a summer evening to listen from the larger boat, especially appropriated to their mother, and bearing her name, to the voices of the younger party as they rose and fell in cadence, singing the burden of some old song to the dipping of their oars. Mr. Fry and his sons generally spent the morning in London, but about the time when the heat of a summer day is beginning to abate, the ladies and children looked for their return. One of the little watchers would announce that the boat sent to meet them was in sight, and then the expectant party poured out of their cottages. Foremost in the group, and conspicuous from her stature,

she might be seen, whose smile was ever ready to greet them, her gentle voice to bid them welcome. An unbroken band, they met in love, abounding in hope, even she, who had suffered so much, and encountered so many disappointments, would catch their tone, and join with delight in the feelings of the party and the scene around her.

During this summer (1831), Mrs. Fry believed it her duty to hold some meetings in the neighbourhood of Dagenham, for the middle and lower classes. They were very numerously attended, and excited much interest and attention: afterwards, she established libraries for books and tracts in many of the villages around.

In the autumn, Mrs. Fry accompanied her husband into some of the south-western counties. She was greatly alarmed at Barnstaple by the non-arrival of the steamer in which she expected one of her sons; she was enabled to attend the meeting of Friends, and ministered to the needs of others. On returning afterwards to the Friend's house where she was to dine, the tidings met her of her son's safety; she thought she might say, 'her heart rejoiced, and leaped for joy.'

A singular adventure was narrated to her at Ilfracombe, doubly interesting after her recent anxiety. 'A woman asked me at Ilfracombe if I should like to see a poor man who was wrecked, and had had a very wonderful escape, the night before Gurney Cresswell was on the sea. Of course I assented, and we set off to see him. When we arrived at his

cottage, we found a very fine, rather tall young man, who appeared to have been much bruised, shaken, and wounded; with a nice-looking young woman, his wife: the house very clean, and a few books; but one particularly struck our attention—a Bible, with an inscription upon it, in gilt letters, to this effect—“In commemoration of the courageous conduct of Samuel Marshall, in saving the lives of two women who had been out on a Sunday party (a third was drowned), off the pier at Ilfracombe.” It appeared by the short history of this young man, that he had from his great courage, good swimming, and kindness to others, been at different times the means of saving eight lives at least; he had gone out to ships in danger near Ilfracombe, where, from the rocky nature of the coast, there often are shipwrecks.’

His own simple story, told to Mrs. Fry, was as follows:—‘He was fishing in a small boat with two other men, about twelve o’clock at night; a sudden squall or land-wind blew from between the hills. He called out to his companions, “We are lost;” the boat capsized; they, poor fellows, prayed for mercy, and sank. Marshall, knowing his great power of swimming, would not give himself up, but caught hold of an oar, which proved to be a good one, nearly new; and although he knew that he was a mile from the shore, and the sea, in consequence of this land-wind, very boisterous, he resolved to make the effort to reach land. He soon found that with all his clothes on it would be impossible, but how to

take them off was the difficulty. His presence of mind appears to have been wonderful; he first got off his jacket, then his trousers with extreme difficulty, because they became entangled in his feet, but by a violent effort he succeeded; he then found he could not well get rid of his shirt, nor swim with it on. He was driven to great extremity, his shirt being a new stout cotton one; he therefore once more made a violent effort, and tore it down in front; but the hem was so strong, that he there stopped; this he put to his mouth, and bit it through. He then swam on until he nearly reached the shore, where the breakers ran so high that he lost his oar; once more he almost entirely gave up hope, but resolved on one last effort, and found himself thrown upon a rock very seriously bruised. He climbed beyond the reach of the water, and laid himself down cold, hungry, and exhausted, either to perish or to rest. He told me that it being quite dark, he could not tell where he was cast ashore, but he was fully sensible that it must be where the rocky high cliffs could be only here and there climbed by man; his anxiety was consequently great till day dawned, when he saw some sheep feeding up the cliff side. He was sure that wherever sheep could go, he could climb. As his feet were sadly cut, he took his stockings (which he still had on) and bound them round his feet with his garters; with this exception, he ascended the rough cliff naked, his exhaustion and fatigue great indeed. After walking awhile he arrived at a farm-house; the farmer took him for a

lunatic, and at first spoke to him sharply; but soon finding his real case, he took him in, and treated him with the utmost hospitality. The farmer's wife prepared him a bed. From my conversation with Samuel Marshall, I took him to be a man actuated by religious principles, but not possessing an enlightened understanding on these subjects; one who endeavoured to do, as far as he knew it, his duty, which he had so remarkably shown in risking his own life to save the lives of others, particularly in the instance of the women, who were poor and unable to remunerate him. I was strongly reminded, in hearing of his deliverance, of these words of Scripture—"with the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful." The poor man said, also, that he prayed constantly when the salt water was not in his mouth; which showed, on the one hand, his value for prayer, and, on the other, his ignorance, in supposing that when he could not speak, he would not be equally heard by Him who looketh to the most secret desire of the heart. However, as I doubt not his prayers were offered in sincerity, they appear to have been accepted and answered. He was carried home to his sorrowful wife, who had heard of the boat being lost, and did not know that her husband was saved.

'The mother of one of the other men I found in the deepest distress—almost out of her mind. I tried to pour a little balm into her deep wounds, by endeavouring to lead her to look to Him who can alone heal and help in our greatest trials.'

'First Month 2d, 1832.—I think I have seldom entered a year with more feeling of weight than this. As the clock was striking twelve, the last year closing and this beginning, I found myself on my knees by my bedside, looking up to Him who had carried me and mine through the last year, and could only really be our helper in this.'

In August Elizabeth Fry attended the half-yearly Meeting of Friends in Wales, also some Meetings in Ireland, where she believed her mission had not been completed during her former journey. Before leaving home, she communicated her intention of visiting some of the county jails to the Under-Secretary of State, S. March Philips, Esq., and her wish to make arrangements by which ladies might be allowed to attend to the female prisoners confined in them. She received a gratifying reply, with permission to make its contents known, dated Home Office, August 10th, 1832, assuring her, that 'Lord Melbourne was fully sensible of the good which had been done by herself and the ladies connected with her, in many of the prisons; and of the great benefits derived from their exertions, by the female transports; and that his Lordship was anxious that, as far as it could be done, the visiting magistrates should favourably entertain and second her benevolent intentions.'

She was accompanied by her brother, Samuel Gurney, his eldest daughter, and her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Fry. They were absent five weeks; the openings for usefulness very apparent; their recep-

tion kind and cordial; the weather favourable, and much of the country through which they passed beautiful; but to Mrs. Fry all these things were but as dust in the balance compared to the blessed belief that she was in her 'right place,' with, from time to time, 'a feeling of almost unmixed peace.' She was strengthened and refreshed by this journey. Matters of great import awaited her return, in the approaching marriages of two of her children. Her son William¹ was now, almost for the first time, about to quit his parents' dwelling. His mother subsequently beheld his advance in the Christian life; from year to year she marked his exemplary fulfilment of all the relations of husband, son, father, master, friend; and lived long enough to see 'the place that had known him know him no more.' With her whole heart could she then acknowledge, that God had led him although 'by paths that she knew not, and by ways that she had not seen.'

Mr. and Mrs. Fry, with the two daughters who remained at home, sought, after these events, the refreshment of a visit to their relatives in Norfolk. They first went to Lowestoft, and remained some days at the vicarage;² there Mrs. Fry saw the schools just established, united in the cottage-readings, and entered warmly into the various interests of the place.

They then went to Earlham—that home of the

¹ 'October 3d.—William Storrs Fry married Julia Sally, eldest daughter of Sir John Henry Pelly, Bart.'

² The residence of her brother-in-law, the Rev. F. Cunningham.

past; afterwards to Northrepps Hall.¹ The all-absorbing subject of Slavery was occupying Mr. Buxton's mind. It was to Mrs. Fry most interesting to listen to his details of the struggle of the preceding sessions of Parliament, one replete with importance to this vast question, now approaching the crisis of its fate. All but alone, and nearly single-handed in the House, he had brought forward a measure for emancipation, in opposition to the wishes of Government, at a cost of effort and self-sacrifice little known to lookers-on in general.

Her stay at Northrepps Cottage² delighted her; she visited the schools, met the hardy fishermen of that boisterous coast in the schoolrooms at Overstrand and Trimingham, and partook, as no common privilege, of social intercourse with the inmates of that lovely retreat. Their journey concluded with visits to Runcton, and to the Bank House at Lynn.

She returned home, comforted as to the circumstances of her own family; and strengthened in the belief that there might be 'differences of administration,' but the 'same Lord.'

¹ The residence of Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Buxton.

² The residence of Miss Anna Gurney and Miss Sarah M. Buxton.

CHAPTER XI.

1833-1836.

Sojourn in Jersey—Visits to Guernsey, Sark, and Herm—Objects in these islands—Recall to England—Nurses one of her daughters in severe illness—Attends the Meetings in Dorset and Hants—Crosses to the Isle of Wight—Freshwater—Coast-Guard stations—Journey into Scotland—Death of the Duke of Gloucester—Coast-Guard Libraries completed—Examination before Committee of the House of Lords—Goes to Lynn—Journey along the southern coast—Crosses to Jersey and Guernsey—Libraries for packets at Falmouth—Libraries for shepherds of Salisbury Plain—Religious visit to Sussex and Kent—Sheerness—Visit to Dublin—Female Prison.

AT this period, in consequence of the marriages which had taken place, and other circumstances, the press of interests and engagements had become too heavy for the reduced party at home. A long absence from home appeared the best resource, and after some deliberation the island of Jersey was selected as the place of retreat. Its lovely scenery and fine air afforded strong inducements; augmented by the interest attached to the peculiar language, government, and internal regulations of the Channel Islands, that only remnant of Norman ducal power still united with England. Some of the party preceded the rest, to prepare for their mother's reception with the second detachment. They had a long and

stormy passage, and their first encounter with the rocky approach to the island, from a boisterous sea, in the obscurity of twilight, gave an unfavourable impression of the navigation, which their letters conveyed home. Mrs. Fry naturally dreaded the sea, so that after receiving their accounts, she felt peculiarly alive to the mercy and indulgence of a tranquil voyage. She arrived in the morning—the lovely bay of St. Aubin smooth, full and blue—the rocks mostly covered by the tide—the verdant island before her smiling in sunshine. A profusion of flowers and fruit ornamented the breakfast table that awaited her in ‘Caledonia Cottage,’ which had been engaged and prepared for their residence. A few letters of introduction amongst some of the island families led to friendships which lasted till the close of her life. The circumstances by which she was surrounded were very congenial to her. The beauty of the scenery, the luxuriance of the productions, the prosperity of the inhabitants, the refinement and intellectual cultivation of the upper classes, combined with simplicity of habit, and, in many instances, with true piety and active benevolence, rendered the period of her residence in Jersey one of peculiar refreshment and pleasure. With her husband and children, and a few of her intimate friends, she would often spend the day in the remote parts of the island, amongst the secluded and romantic bays of its northern coast. The little party would picnic in the open air or in one of the empty rooms of the small barracks scattered round the

coast, left under the care of some invalided soldier and his family. On these occasions the tract-bag was never forgotten. Whilst the rest of the party were sketching or walking, she would visit the cottagers, and making herself as well understood as their antique Norman dialect permitted, would give her little French books and offer the kind word of sympathy or exhortation. Alive to the beautiful, especially to the picturesque, and with a quick eye for the droll, the peculiarities of the Jersey cottage and its inmates were fully appreciated by her. The fire of *Vrâck* (sea-weed) burning on the hearth, the huge kettle suspended over it, in which the *soupe à la graisse* was preparing for the family repast; the women knitting the wool of their own sheep, occasionally with the fleeces of one or two black ones intermingled to produce the desired grey tint; the dairy, and their far-famed cows tethered in picturesque little enclosures; orchards rich in fruit, and gardens painted and perfumed by the carnation, picotee, hydrangea, and other brilliant flowers, all combined to delight her. Amidst these scenes the summer passed away, but higher and more important objects were not unheeded. There was in the island a little band of persons, in very humble life, who professed the principles of Friends, one or two only, however, being members of the Society. They assembled for worship on the Sunday morning, in the cottage of Jean Renaud, an aged patriarch, about a mile from the town of St. Heliers, on the sea-shore. There was a quaint old-fashioned effect

about the low large room in which they met, whilst from bundles of herbs suspended from the beams to dry, a flower or a leaf would drop from time to time on the assemblage below.

The appearance of the congregation was in keeping with the apartment, seated on planks supported by temporary props. An antique four-post bedstead stood in one corner; when the mistress of the house died, which occurred during their sojourn in Jersey, she was there laid out, a circumstance which did not prevent the meeting assembling as usual, the drawn curtains screening the corpse from view. High-backed chairs were prepared for the seniors of the assembly, the younger members of Mrs. Fry's family appropriating to themselves the window-seat. The novelty of the occasion was increased by the English ministry having to be interpreted, to render it comprehensible to the hearers.

Nor were the afternoon meetings much less peculiar. They also were held at a private house, situated in the suburbs of the town; but the heat in-doors being considerable, the congregation not unfrequently moved to the small walled garden, and sat beneath the shade of some evergreens. This, however, was found practically so inconvenient, that a room in the town was engaged for the purpose, and properly fitted up. There, until Elizabeth Fry left the island, large congregations assembled, including many of the gentry and principal inhabitants; these meetings were exceedingly solemn and instructive. In this important service she was greatly helped by the

company of her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Fry, with her friend and companion, Rebecca Sturges.

Philanthropic objects also presented themselves to Mrs. Fry's notice, especially the state of the Hospital, as well as the Workhouse and Lunatic Asylum, and the Prisons. Acts of the British Parliament have no power in the Channel Islands; as part of the ancient Duchy of Normandy they are governed by their own laws and customs; and in consequence none of the recent improvements in Prison Discipline had been effected in Jersey. After repeatedly visiting the Prison, and communicating with the authorities, she believed it the best course to have a letter which she addressed to them printed for circulation.

Mrs. Fry took great pains in establishing a District Society at St. Heliers. A gentleman of high standing and importance in the island thus bears testimony to the results of her exertions:—

‘I can only affirm, with perfect truth, that your dear mother's visits to Jersey were blessed as a means of incalculable good. It was through her peculiar talent and persevering exertions that a District Society was formed in St. Heliers. Mr. John Hammond and Mr. Charles Le Quesne very ably seconded her views in connexion with this matter.’

After some weeks in Jersey the party crossed to Guernsey; they remained there about a fortnight, received with the hospitality of the ‘olden time:’ Mr. and Mrs. Fry at Miss Le Marchant's, their daughters at Castle Carey, and Mrs. Elizabeth Fry

and her companion at the house of a Friend named Edmund Richards.

The islands of Guernsey and Jersey have separate and independent legislative assemblies, and differ in some minor points of law. Mrs. Fry's time was divided between social enjoyments, objects of benevolence, and, above all, devotedly caring and labouring for the good of others. One important work she accomplished—establishing the St. Peter's Port Provident and District Society.

From Guernsey Mrs. Fry crossed to Sark, a rock precipitous on all sides, about three miles long by one and a half wide. They went in an open sailing boat, but as they approached its rocky shore perceived no inlet, nor any indication of ascent to the lofty table-land. A small jetty, from a natural projection, formed a little basin, where they landed, amidst impending rocks. It was not till they were on the narrow shelf of pebbly beach, that they perceived what appeared to be the mouth of a cavern; there a cart was waiting, and in it were placed two high-backed chairs; this was the carriage to convey the ladies. The cavern gradually narrowed, and at length the party emerged through a ravine on the plain. A lodging had been engaged for them at a farm-house. They stayed three or four days there; they also visited Herm, an islet between Guernsey and Sark, nearly four miles in circumference, but the population very small.

An entry in her journal, without date, describes how much she suffered at this juncture :—

‘ Before I left Jersey very serious accounts came of our dearest Rachel ; of such a nature were they, last First-day, just before an important public meeting, that it became necessary for me to decide to return home direct, and not by France with my husband and daughters. I felt greatly afflicted, and earnestly prayed that I might be permitted to see my tenderly beloved child again. I was brought into a state of deep conflict, walking about the room weeping bitterly, and hardly knowing how to go to the meeting appointed at the Hospital for the poor there, and the public generally ; however, I went, and power was present to calm my troubled spirit, and enable me to preach the gospel to the poor, the sinners and the afflicted. It was a very solemn parting with the people of the island ; but, through mercy, I felt so clearly in my right place, and such a blessed calm came over me, in spite of myself, that undue anxiety was taken away. I passed a calm night, and was enabled to commit my dear child and my all to Him who can do all things for us. The next day I had many little matters to finish off, and take leave. On Third-day morning, after a short solemn time in prayer, my husband set off for France with my daughters, and I, with my maid and my little boy, for England.’

The voyage proved foggy and tempestuous ; her maid and child immediately became ill. Accounts rather more favourable of her invalid daughter enabled her to spend a day at Hampstead with her sister, Mrs. Hoare, and her widowed daughter-in-

law, entering into the anguish of their great bereavement, and the rich consolations of their hope. Then she pursued her way to her suffering child, where her presence was greatly needed. Six weeks she remained devoted to her daughter, and to that devotion, directed by singular skill and judgment, was apparently to be attributed her child's gradual restoration to health.

As the spring of 1834 approached, Elizabeth Fry believed it right to leave home for religious services in the counties of Dorset and Hants. She was accompanied by her friend William Forster, and her nieces Priscilla Buxton and Priscilla Gurney.¹ The impression left on her mind by her aunt's address and manners during the journey are well described by the former :—

‘There was no weakness or trouble of mind or body which might not safely be unveiled to her. Whatever various or opposite views, feelings or wishes might be confided to her, all came out again tinged with her own loving, hoping spirit. Bitterness of every kind died ; when intrusted to her it never reappeared. The most favourable construction possible was always put upon every transaction. No doubt her failing lay this way ; but did it not give her and her example a wonderful influence ? Was it not the very secret of her power with the wretched and degraded prisoners ? She always could see hope for every one ; she invariably found or made some point of light. The most abandoned

¹ Mrs. William Leathan.

must have felt she did not despair for them, either for this world or another ; and this it was that made her irresistible.

‘At Southampton, time and opportunity were rather unexpectedly afforded for an excursion to the Isle of Wight. I think she undertook it chiefly for the sake of pleasing Priscilla Gurney and myself ; but it had important consequences. We travelled round by Shanklin, Bonchurch, and the Undercliff. She was zealous as we in the enjoyment of the scenery and the wild-flowers ; but the next day, on reaching Freshwater, she was fatigued, and remained to rest, whilst we went to see Alum Bay. On our return we were told she had walked out, and we soon received a message desiring us to join her at the Coast-Guard station. We found her in her element ; pleased and giving pleasure to a large group, who were assembled around her. She entered with the greatest sympathy into their somewhat dreary position, inquired into their resources for education for their children, and religious improvement for themselves—found them much in want of books ; and from this visit originated that great undertaking of providing libraries for all the Coast-Guard stations in Great Britain—an undertaking full of difficulties, but in which her perseverance never relaxed till it was accomplished.’

The latter part of the summer of 1834 was passed by Mr. and Mrs. Fry and their two unmarried daughters in Scotland ; but her character shows itself the same under all circumstances, and never

was Mrs. Fry's individuality or oneness of purpose more evidenced than on this journey.

After the 'Braes of Aberfeldy,' the travellers reached Kenmore, a village at the head of Loch Tay. They enjoyed a quiet Sunday, and tolerable Highland accommodation. In the evening, anxious to turn the day to some good account, Mrs. Fry invited the servants of the inn to attend the reading with her own family. Some ladies were polite enough to offer the use of their sitting-room, as it was more roomy; and soon a large congregation of barefooted chambermaids and blue-bonneted hostlers assembled.

From Killin they proceeded to Mrs. Stewart's famous inn near Loch Katrine. Accommodation having been secured beforehand, they found comfortable apartments ready; but they had not them long to themselves, for as travellers arrived, weary and hungry, for whom there was no room in the inn, Mrs. Fry could not resist sheltering them. Just at the close of the day a party of ladies drove up, extremely fatigued, and dreading the danger of the roads in the darkness of night; the entreaties for admission were heard from without; they were invited to share their sitting-room, and with their maid passed the night on its floor.

Whilst numerous institutions of value directly or indirectly owe their existence to her exertions—and she sowed the seed of many a noble tree—she did not omit the smallest opportunity of benefiting others. Hers was a constant endeavour to leave some savour of good on all with whom she had any

communication. The chambermaid and the waiter received the word of kindness and counsel, and a little tract or text-book to impress it upon their memories. The postilion at the carriage window, or the cottar at the road-side, met with appropriate notice; and this mingled with the most unaffected enjoyment of the country and spirit in all the incidents of travelling.

The result of her observations on the state of the Scotch Prisons she forwarded to the proper authorities after her return home.

The close of the year 1834 was marked by the death of the Duke of Gloucester. He had been highly esteemed by Elizabeth Fry, from the time when quartered at Norwich in the latter part of the last century. His Royal Highness was amongst the few who addressed words of friendly caution and sound advice to the young and motherless sisters at Earlham. She was requested soon afterwards to wait upon the widowed Duchess. Her journal furnishes an account of an interview so gratifying yet affecting to her.

' Upton Lane, First Month 27th, 1835.—I yesterday went, by appointment, to visit the Duchess of Gloucester, after the death of the Duke. She gave a highly interesting account of his death. He appeared to depart in the full hope of a Christian. This I felt satisfactory and comforting, after having traced him from his youth up, and seen his conduct, and known his principles when a young man. I observe how gently the Lord deals with His people,

and how, under the most varied circumstances, He visits all, and how He bears with those that fear Him. It appeared to me that the Duke desired to act up to the light received, and his faith was strong in his Saviour, which proved his stronghold in the day of trouble.'

The beneficial effects of the libraries introduced through Mrs. Fry's influence into the Naval Hospitals at Haslar and Plymouth, and the testimony borne to their utility by Sir William Burnett, the highest medical authority in the navy, had confirmed her desire to extend this advantage to all the Coast-Guard stations without further delay. It was brought under the notice of Sir Robert Peel, then First Lord of the Treasury, by means of a letter addressed by Mrs. Fry to his brother, Lawrence Peel, Esq., who had already ably seconded her views in the Brighton District Society. This application met with the approbation of Sir Robert Peel, by whom it was referred to Sir Thomas Freemantle; from him an assurance was received that there existed a strong disposition on the part of the Board of Treasury to give effect to this proposal; and that as soon as the plan was matured it should receive all the assistance in his power.

Admiral Bowles, at that time Comptroller of the Coast-Guard, gave the project his cordial support. Admiral Sir Edward Parry united with Mrs. Fry in this movement, and under such powerful patronage it rapidly advanced. A formal application was made to the Treasury for a sum of money for this purpose,

and the result was a grant of £500. Large private subscriptions had still to be sought, and were obtained chiefly through Mrs. Fry's influence. The details of the arrangement were almost entirely her own, and admirably adapted to meet the tastes and necessities of those she desired to benefit.

Besides subscriptions in money, many liberal donations of books were received from some of the most eminent booksellers, which, with the grants from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Religious Tract Society and other similar institutions, amounted in value to upwards of a thousand pounds.

The selection of the libraries was a work of considerable difficulty, demanding much caution; and examiners were appointed to decide on suitable books for this important purpose. The gentlemen selected were the Rev. John W. Cunningham, Sir W. E. Parry, and Admiral Bowles.

The libraries for the stations alone amounted in all to 25,896 volumes. Fifty-two different works were prepared for each station, whilst a still larger and more important collection was to be attached to every one of the seventy-four districts, in order to afford the needful variety and change. The packages of books, the greater part carriage-free, were despatched in the course of the summer from the Custom-House, in Government vessels, to their different destinations. But all this was not done without much fatigue and exertion, many wearisome journeys to London, and a great deal of writing,

though, in the latter, she was much helped by Mr. Timpson, a Dissenting minister engaged as Secretary, and who proved an efficient and useful agent.

More than a year was, however, to elapse before the final arrangement of the Coast-Guard Libraries.

It was June 1836 when Mrs. Fry had the gratification of receiving the printed Report of the Committee, acting under the sanction of His Majesty's Government, for furnishing the Coast Guard of the United Kingdom with libraries of religious and instructive books, announcing the completion of the project, with a short account of what had been effected.

Then the work was accomplished, and dismissed from her mind as a point gained, and a blessing granted.

On the 22d of May 1835, Mrs. Fry was ordered to attend a Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the present state of the several Gaols and Houses of Correction in England and Wales. She was accompanied by Mrs. Pryor, Mrs. Pirie (Lady Pirie), and Miss Fraser, who were likewise to be examined. Mr. T. Fowell Buxton was with Mrs. Fry. The ladies were conducted by him to an anteroom, where they found the Duke of Richmond and Lord Suffield. The Duke of Sutherland came in shortly afterwards. The Duke of Richmond, as Chairman of the Committee, presided; Mrs. Fry and her companions were seated at the right hand of the Duke. There might be from twelve to fifteen noblemen present.

An eye-witness writes :—

‘Never, I should think, was the calm dignity of her character more conspicuous. Whatever her inward feelings might have been, nothing like excitement was visible in her manner—nothing hurried in her language. Perfectly self-possessed, her speech flowed melodiously, her ideas were clearly expressed, and if another thought possessed her, besides that of delivering her opinions faithfully and judiciously on the subjects brought before her, it was, that she might speak a word for her Lord and Master in that noble company.’

Some important affairs requiring her husband’s personal attention in the south of England, it was decided for Mrs. Fry and their remaining daughter to accompany him ; it appeared a desirable opportunity for seeing the Commanders of the different Coast-Guard districts, through which they would pass, and endeavouring to stimulate them, with the officers and men under their command, to a proper application of the books they were about to receive. This proved, however, almost needless, for in nearly every instance these gentlemen warmly seconded her views, and approved of the plan. Her suggestions were received by them with the utmost attention and politeness, and greatly did the intercourse with the Coast-Guard officers add to the interest of this agreeable journey, along the whole southern coast of England from the Forelands to the Land’s End.

At Portsmouth she visited Haslar Hospital, speaking kind and pitying words to the sick and deranged.

Admiral Garrett and his family paid her the most hospitable attention ; with Miss Garrett she visited the Penitentiary at Portsea. While they went over the house, the unfortunate inmates were assembled in the parlour, where they were all standing when Mrs. Fry and the party with her returned to the room. This lady describes Mrs. Fry as 'sitting down, laying her bonnet on the table, and making some inquiries as to the arrangements of the place, and the conduct of the young women there. Two were pointed out to her as being particularly refractory and hardened ; without noticing this, she addressed some words of exhortation and advice to all ; and when she arose to go away, she went up to these two, and extending her hand to each of them, said, in a tone and manner quite indescribable, but so touching,—“I trust I shall hear better things of thee.” The hearts that had been proof against the words of reproach and exhortation softened at the words of hope and kindness, and both burst into tears.'

The travellers made a three days' tour of the Isle of Wight. At Cowes Mrs. Fry separated from her husband and daughter, believing it her duty to cross to Jersey, in the hope of effecting something towards remedying the crying evils which still existed in the Prison there. She was accompanied by a young Friend from London. They had a rough passage, but a warm reception at D'Hautrée, the residence of General Touzel. By him and his family were they treated, not merely with hospitality, but with

true Christian fellowship, as beloved for their work's sake.

She had many interviews with persons in authority, but to little immediate purpose. Her desire was that such buildings should be added to the Prison as should render it a House of Correction, and make it possible to enforce classification and needful discipline; but great difficulty existed from many perplexing questions between the States of the Island and its Governor, Field-Marshal Viscount Beresford, as to who was to pay the expenses that would be entailed. She found the District Society flourishing, and a committee of ladies visiting the Hospital.

On her return she spent a few days at Guernsey, where the Prison was in the same deplorable state in which she had seen it two years before. Thence she crossed to Weymouth, where she rejoined her party, who were rejoiced to welcome her again in safety. She was laden with fruits and flowers, the rich produce of those fertile islands. She landed bearing in her hand a huge bunch of carnations and picotees of every shade of colour.

They were some days at Plymouth. Occasional intervals of rest, with the addition of sunshine and fine scenery, were thankfully received by her. She could appropriate the language of Heber—

‘ If thus Thy meaner works are fair,
 If thus Thy bounties gild the span
 Of ruined earth, and sinful man—
 How glorious must the mansion be
 Where Thy redeemed shall dwell with Thee !’

There was one day she often referred to with

pleasure, when, with the Coast-Guard Captain of the District, in his cutter, they visited some of the stations, crossing Cawsand Bay, and landing at a romantic spot where one of them is placed. At the breakwater, on their return, they were met by several naval officers, their cutters or yachts, meanwhile, sailing about that beautiful harbour.

The contrasts in her life were great. This was rather a fresh variety; walking with her daughter up and down the breakwater, surrounded by naval officers of various ranks and different ages, but the one great aim of her life not forgotten. The conversation between the Quakeress and those sons of storm and strife was of benefiting seamen, raising their moral condition, and the best methods of inculcating habits of piety and virtue.

At Falmouth they were warmly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. George Croker Fox, and by every member of that family. Mrs. George Croker Fox and Mrs. Robert Were Fox were among her oldest friends; their mother, Mrs. Barclay, was sister to her father. In childhood and youth the intercourse was frequent and delightful between the two groups of sisters, seven in each family, alike motherless in early life.

Here she heard much of the packets continually sailing from that port; she wished to have libraries for them also. In this she was seconded by Captain Clavell, R.N., of the 'Astrea,' flag-ship, and by many of the commanders of the packets and their families. Grants from the societies, and private subscriptions were raised; the Religious Tract Society gave their

publications at half-price, and the Christian Knowledge Society presented books to the amount of ten pounds. These vessels were supplied with Bibles, Testaments, and Prayer-books, by Government. The library books were placed, as a depôt, at the office of Captain Clavell; each packet, when she sailed, took out a box containing thirty books, changed from time to time, so as to produce constant variety. The gratitude of the men was great, and the co-operation of their officers hearty: of fifty-one pounds that this arrangement cost, twenty pounds were subscribed by them.

Accompanied by some of their relatives, the travellers proceeded, passing through the stern features of the Cornish coast to Penzance and the Land's End. The state of the lunatics at Penzance was very grievous. Elizabeth Fry could not permit such evils to remain without some endeavour to remedy them. She soon afterwards heard from a friend that 'the comforts of the poor lunatics at Penzance are likely to be increased. A wall is now building round a part of the garden, which is made expressly for them to walk in, and I hope the internal arrangements are also improved.'

A few days were passed among the romantic beauties of North Devon. Thence they turned their steps homewards; but at Amesbury she paused long enough to make arrangements for a library being established for the use of the shepherds of Salisbury Plain. An excellent individual, approved by the clergyman and Sir Edward and Lady An-

trobus, undertook the care of the books and their circulation. After a few months' trial of the plan, he writes to Mrs. Fry, that—

‘Forty-five books are in constant circulation, with the addition of magazines. More than fifty poor people read them with attention, return them with thanks, and desire the loan of more, frequently observing they think it a very kind thing indeed that they should be furnished with so many good books, free of all cost, so entertaining and instructive these long winter evenings.’

From the different officers of the Coast-Guard stations she received letters that gladdened her heart, but far too numerous for insertion here, and to select would be most difficult, as all breathe the same spirit, and express their cordial approbation of the plan, and the pleasure felt by the men and their families. But something beyond pleasure was desired by her with whom the idea originated; that advantage and edification should accrue to those who read. The seed she sowed in truth wonderfully flourished. Persons visiting our coasts for pleasure or duty, who made their way into the low-browed preventive houses, would see three or four shelves against the wall filled with well-kept, but evidently well-read books. A little conversation with the intelligent-looking man, decently dressed, who sat reading after a long watch, proved whether or not these books were appreciated. But now, after the lapse of little more than thirty years, scarcely any libraries remain in the Coast-Guard

stations—occasionally a few worn-out volumes, but more often the memory only of that which, ‘whilst possessed, was so much valued.’ At a time when Her Majesty’s ships are so carefully supplied with books and means of self-improvement, it seems hard that the Coast-Guard stations should be so entirely overlooked and apparently forgotten.

In February, in pursuance of her conviction of duty, Elizabeth Fry undertook a short journey into Kent and Sussex. Prisons, District Societies, and the distribution of the Holy Scriptures shared her attention. At Sheerness there was a remarkable occasion on board one of the ships in ordinary; at her request Captain Kennedy had the women and children from the other ships collected. ‘It was a fine sight,’ remarks Mrs. Fry, ‘in a large man-of-war, instead of bloodshed and fightings, to see naval officers, two chaplains, sailors, soldiers, ladies, numbers of women and children, all met to hear what two Quakers had to say, more particularly a woman, and to listen to any advice given by them.’

They examined the children as to their progress in education, counselled them as suited to their tender years; afterwards addressed their parents; and, lastly, the varied party assembled around them on those topics which are the same for all. The cordiality and kindness of Captain and Mrs. Kennedy were very great.

Circumstances now arose which determined Elizabeth Fry, for a third time, to cross the sea to Ireland. Her motives were twofold—to attend the Meetings

of Friends in Lancashire, to be present at the Dublin Yearly Meeting; and to visit the prisons at Dublin, and make a renewed effort for their amendment. She cared especially for the large female prison, in Grange Gorman Lane, then in contemplation; she had long earnestly wished to see a prison devoted to women. This being the first in the kingdom, it was likely to prove a sort of model, should the example be followed in other places; she therefore considered it of great importance that the arrangements should be as complete and effective as possible. Lord Mulgrave (Marquis of Normanby), the Lord Lieutenant, she had reason to believe, was earnestly anxious to carry out a wise and yet merciful system of prison discipline. Mr. Spring Rice (Lord Mont-eagle) kindly furnished her with a letter of introduction to him, but in a note to herself assures her that any introduction to that nobleman was unnecessary, which indeed she found verified; for the attention Lord Normanby gave to her suggestions was not greater than his personal kindness and courtesy to herself and her friends during their stay in Ireland.

The Grange Gorman Lane prison was completed early in 1837. After the lapse of ten years it is thus mentioned in the Appendix to Twenty-fifth Report of Inspector-General of Prisons in Ireland:—

‘Visited, February 18th, 1847.—Although I made my annual inspection of this prison on the 18th February 1847, as a date upon which to form my report, yet I have had very many opportunities of

seeing it during the past and former years, in my duties connected with my superintendence of the convict department. The visitor may see many changes in the faces and persons of the prisoners, but no surprise can ever find a difference in the high and superior order with which this prison is conducted.

‘The matron, Mrs. Rawlins, upon whom the entire responsibility of the interior management devolves, was selected some years since, and sent over to this country by the benevolent and philanthropic Mrs. Fry, whose exertions in the cause of female prison reformation were extended to all parts of the British Empire; and who, although lately summoned to the presence of her Divine Master, has nowhere left a more valuable instance of her sound judgment and high discriminating powers than in the selection of Mrs. Rawlins to be placed at the head of this experimental prison, occupied alone by females; and so successful has the experiment been, that I understand several other prisons solely for females have lately been opened in Scotland, and even in Australia. In this prison is to be seen an uninterrupted system of reformatory discipline in every class, such as is to be found in no other prison that I am aware of.’

Her return home was very happy; touchingly does she describe the pleasure her reception gave her:—

‘*Upton Lane, Fifth Month 13th, 1836.*—I returned home safely yesterday afternoon. I think I never

had so happy and so prosperous an arrival; I wept with joy; the stream appears to be turned for a while; my tears have often flowed for sorrow, and now my beloved husband and children have caused them to flow for joy. I found not only all going on well, and having done so during my absence, but to please, comfort, and surprise me, my dearest husband had had my rooms altered and made most comfortable, and my children had sent me nice presents to render them more complete. Their offerings of love quite gladdened my heart, though far too good for me; I felt utterly unworthy of them, I may say peculiarly so.'

CHAPTER XII.

1836-1838.

Jersey Prison—Illness of a sister—Voyage to Guernsey—Return home—Summons to Calais—Accompanies Joseph John Gurney to Liverpool—His departure for America—Philanthropic evenings—Visits France—Sojourn at Paris—Prisons—Schools—Return through Normandy.

MRS. FRY'S active exertions in behalf of the prisons of the United Kingdom generally, were drawing to a close. She had been an eminent instrument in calling attention to the subject, but attention was now fully aroused, and the Prison Inspectors were pursuing their scrutinies with great and good effect.

But whatever progress might be making elsewhere, in Jersey and Guernsey the state of the prisons continued deplorable. Dr. Bisset Hawkins had discovered their defects, but had failed to find a remedy, from the disputes existing between the Governor and the States. These, at least, seemed about to be overcome, and Mrs. Fry was urged to cross the sea once more, and assist in arranging for the female prisoners. She wished again to inspect the Hospital, and to see the working of the District Society. Similar objects attracted her to Guernsey. She believed also that it was her duty to visit the island of Alderney, where she had never yet been.

After taking all these things into consideration, Mrs. Fry decided on revisiting the Channel Isles, and, with Mr. Fry and their daughter, embarked at Southampton, on a calm fine evening, with every prospect of a pleasant voyage. But these favourable appearances were not of long duration. About four o'clock in the morning all on board were roused by the sudden stopping of the vessel. A dense fog had come on, when passing through the intricate passage between the Caskets and the island of Alderney. The packet remained for many hours entangled amongst rocks, with the fog so thick that it was not always easy to see the length of the vessel.

Happily—may it not be called providentially?—there was as passenger in the steamer the old Guernsey pilot who had brought Lord de Saumarez, and two frigates under his command, into Guernsey, in the presence of a superior French force, by piloting them through a passage generally considered impracticable. Of his advice and assistance, the Captain, himself a skilful pilot, took advantage, and after a time of careful navigation, the joyful tidings spread among the passengers that the jeopardy was over, that they were through the channel, and once more in the open sea. The spirit of her mind was exemplified in Mrs. Fry's remark to her daughter, at this instant, 'I have felt it very doubtful whether this was not to be for us the dawn of the eternal instead of the earthly Sabbath; I thought it rather the Church above than the Church below we were to join to-day.'

For a few weeks the Hospital, the District Society,

and the prisons, occupied Mrs. Fry's attention in Jersey, and she accomplished to her own satisfaction visits to Alderney and Guernsey. Then the accounts of Mrs. Hoare became more alarming, her objects in the Channel Islands were nearly accomplished, and she prepared for her departure.

A committee of ladies was established for visiting the Hospital in Jersey, with the lady of the Lieutenant-Governor, General Campbell, at its head. The District Society was increasing in usefulness; the new House of Correction was likely to be established on the best principles; and she had the comfort of knowing that all these objects were left under the skilful and efficient superintendence of her kind friend Major-General Touzel, who had been, with other Jersey gentlemen, faithful coadjutors in her various labours.

On the 2d of October, when going into the Friends' Select Quarterly Meeting, with her brother Samuel Gurney, her son William met her with the painful tidings that a serious accident had befallen Mr. Fry and his daughter, in Normandy. They had been thrown over a precipice, and the carriage broken to pieces; and although their lives were mercifully spared, yet her daughter was so grievously hurt, and her husband so shaken, that they wished her to go to them immediately. Accompanied by her son William, she travelled to Dover, and crossed by the next packet to France.

From Calais she wrote home:—

'*Ninth Month 25th, 1836.*—Our journey was an

anxious one, until, as the evening advanced, I became more quieted, and trustful that all was ordered for us in mercy and wisdom. We had a very favourable passage of three hours ; and, to our great satisfaction, found your father looking for us on the quay. We found our dearest Kate exceedingly bruised, and very grievously hurt altogether. Your dear father looks, I think, shaken and aged by all he has gone through. Mary has been a very attentive nurse. From her excessive fright, when they were going down the hill, she knelt down and put her head on Catherine's lap, by which means her face was perfectly saved. And so I have at last touched French ground. William and I have not been idle ; we have already visited the Prison and Hospital. We hope it may please Providence, in tender mercy, to permit us all to arrive at home next Seventh-day, probably by a packet that leaves this place that morning for London.'

Mrs. Fry's return home was followed by a fresh case of anxious nursing, to which she sedulously devoted herself. From the sick-chamber of one daughter, she writes, to soothe the sufferings and sorrows of another, who, with her little boy, was dangerously ill with the scarlet fever :--

'The very affecting account from you is just arrived ; to think of that lovely boy laid so prostrate ! Still, sweet babe ! it is good to remember, that "of such is the kingdom of God," and the encouraging, delightful idea, that their angels or ministering spirits are always before the face of our

God. I am afraid of asking for his life, lest he should be contaminated in this evil world, but I can ask, if in the mercy of our Heavenly Father, He should see meet to keep him in the world, that He would preserve him from the evil; and that should he be raised up, it may be for purposes of His own glory. But it is a trial indeed to flesh and blood—I have found it a bitter one, to see these little ones suffer; but as thy dear husband truly says, we must in all things learn to say, “Not my will, but Thine be done.”’

The last day of 1836 is closed by Elizabeth Fry with these words:—

‘Alone, late in the evening. I feel it rather a solemn close to this year, not a time of brightness, though abounding with causes for thankfulness, which I desire more deeply to feel. May my Lord grant, for His dear Son’s sake, that the Holy Spirit may more abundantly rest upon me and mine, as our Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter. May I more faithfully, watchfully, and humbly perform all my duties to my Lord, my family, my friends, the church generally, and the world, and to myself. In afflictions may my soul be possessed in patience and watchfulness; and may every day draw us nearer to God and His kingdom.’

At Earlham, four days later, she adds:—

‘*First Month 4th, 1837.*—It is rather striking to begin my new year here. The drawing of my mind led me this way, and I ventured to leave all, in faith, after offering many prayers for their help and pre-

servation during my absence. My prayers have been expressed in public, in my family, and in private, upon entering this new year. There are cries from the depth of my heart, unutterable ; but He who is my Advocate with the Father, will, I trust, availingly present them before the throne. I may say, "Help, Lord, or I perish." Grant, through Thy love, pity, and grace, that I may know Thee always, in all places, and at all times, to be my Defence—my Help—my Counsellor. Enlighten my darkness ; cause me, in all things, to choose the good and refuse the evil ; lighten mine eyes always lest I sleep the sleep of death, and Satan in any way blind mine eyes. Pour forth more fully, and more freely, Thy Spirit upon me, that I may be qualified for Thy work, in my family, amongst my neighbours, in the church, and wherever Thou mayest call me.'

The commencement of 1837 brought with it the consideration of a subject not new to the mind of Elizabeth Fry, one which she dared neither accept nor dismiss without prayerful deliberation.

'*Upton Lane, First Month 25th.*—My heart and mind have been much occupied by my brother Joseph writing to inform me that he apprehends it will be his duty to go to America this year upon religious service. The subject is deeply important and weighty, yet I desire to rejoice in his willingness to give up all for the service of his Lord ; though some fears have arisen from a sort of floating apprehension I have had for many years, that I might, or ought to go with him, if ever he visited that land.

Upon viewing it, as it respects myself, I believe I may truly say, I do not at present see any such opening. As far as I can see, *home* has my first call of duty; what the future may produce I leave; but as far as I know my own heart, I very earnestly desire to feel continually that I am not my own, but bought with a price, therefore I am my Lord's servant, and must do as I am bidden, even if the service called for appear to me unreasonable. But I must further observe that in condescending mercy, I have generally found in services really called for, there has been a ripeness that may be compared to the fruit come to maturity. For this service, for the present, I see no way.'

When the time drew near for Joseph John Gurney to leave his home and children for so long a time, his sister went to him at Earham. There also assembled other members of the family. At Norwich a large and most solemn meeting was held, as a sort of leave-taking of his fellow-citizens. In this meeting Elizabeth Fry took part, and with more than her usual power ministered to the numerous assemblage there. Then, with his children, and his brother Samuel Gurney and his wife, he set forth on his journey to Liverpool, Mrs. Fry accompanying them. At Runcton they tarried one night with their brother, Daniel Gurney and his eight children, lately deprived of the blessing of a mother's watchful love. It was very touching to find themselves on board the ship which was to convey their beloved brother from them, though sustained by the

belief that this wonderful sacrifice for those who were left, as for him who was about to go, was in obedience to the call of duty and for the service of their Lord. Thus his sister closes this history :—

‘Soon afterwards we went to the ship. I saw the library arranged, with some others to help me ; then went and devoted myself to my beloved brother, put flowers in his cabin, which was made most comfortable for him. It was announced that the ship was going ; we assembled in the ladies’ cabin—I believe all wept. William Forster said, the language had powerfully impressed him—“ I will be with you always, even to the end of the world ;” therefore we might trust our beloved ones to Him who had promised. I then knelt down with these words—“ Now, Lord, what wait we for ? our hope is in Thee,” and entirely committed him and his companions in the ship to the most holy and powerful keeping of Israel’s Shepherd, that even the voyage might be blessed to him and to others. In short, our souls were poured forth before and unto the Lord, in deep prayer and supplication. We remained at Liverpool till Second-day morning ; went by the railroad to Birmingham, meeting with an accident by the way which might have been serious, but we were preserved from harm. By the time we arrived at Lynn, I was too ill to go on to Earlham, and there remained to be most affectionately cared for by my beloved son and daughter and their servants.’

On Mrs. Fry’s return home, two important objects in her public life claimed her attention, arrangements

for the great Female Prison in Ireland, and the deplorable condition into which the Factory for women at Paramatta had fallen.

About the same time, the long-debated question of the Jersey Prison was brought to a close by the accession of the States to the proposals of Lord John Russell; and arrangements were entered into for commencing the building without further delay. Mrs. Fry never again visited Jersey, but she had the pleasure of cheering reports, from time to time, of the alterations effected there.

As the objects for which she had laboured were thus completed, or passed into other hands, fresh interests arose to occupy her. Amongst her children many had begun, more or less, to assist her in her plans and pursuits for the good of others; this was exceedingly cheering to her, and she much desired its continuance and increase; but there was a purpose infinitely nearer to her heart than even this union for external objects, however excellent in themselves; she craved closer and more direct religious communion with her children.

Mrs. Fry's first visit to France had been compulsory, but she had long desired to visit that country. She had been urgently pressed to do so by many individuals amongst the Protestant bodies there.

She had reason to believe also that she would have access to influential quarters, and be able to bring before the proper authorities the deplorable condition of some of the French prisons. Her hus-

band, Josiah Forster, and Lydia Irving accompanied her to Paris in January 1838. The morning after their arrival they united in solemn prayer for wisdom from on high to direct, and strength to perform, whatever might be called for at their hands. A month was spent there most laboriously in inspecting and suggesting improvements for various public and private institutions. Count Montalivet, Minister of the Interior, gave free access to the prisons. The visits, generally in company with M. de Metz, Conseiller de la Cour Royale, Lady Granville, the Duchess de Broglie, and others, to the Prison des Jeunes Detenus, to the Military Prison at St. Germain, to the Central Prison at Poissy, to the Prison of the Conciergerie, and, on three occasions, to the Prison of St. Lazare, with its 1000 inmates, are recorded in her journal. At this latter, after going over the building, the women were collected at Mrs. Fry's request, that a portion of Scripture might be read to them. She chose the parable of the Prodigal Son. It was beautifully read by a French lady, from the Roman Catholic Prayer-Book. A pause ensued, when Mrs. Fry commented upon it; the same lady translated for her, sentence by sentence. It was exceedingly well done, losing little or nothing of its solemnity. The women were touched and impressed. She then asked them whether they would like ladies to visit them, read to them, and sympathize with them. The offer was eagerly accepted. 'Oui, oui!' 'Eh, moi aussi!' came from all sides; nor was it only these poor outcasts,

or those accompanying Mrs. Fry, who wept; the gaolers and turnkeys who had entered the room, contrary to her wish, were so affected that tears ran down their cheeks. 'Elles ne sont pas pire que nous, ces pauvres femmes' (said an excellent lady for the first time brought into contact with such as these), 'seulement les circonstances sont toutes pour nous, et toutes contre elles.'

This reading occasioned quite a sensation in Paris, for it has been said that the wonderful effect of Mrs. Fry's readings in Newgate arose from her peculiar voice and manner, her skill in arresting the attention of her auditors, and her power to touch their hearts. She and others rightly attributed it to the simple indwelling power of the Word of God, and asserted that it would be found the same whatever national differences might exist, or by whomsoever the inspired Word might be presented.

The result of her observations on the state of the prisons Mrs. Fry embodied in a letter addressed to the Prefect of Police, containing her views respecting arrangements, classification, female officers for women, and instruction. She also addressed a memorial to the King on the subject that so deeply occupied her thoughts, but, beyond every other thing, urging a more extended circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and their free use in all public institutions in France. Mrs. Fry's attention was not confined to the prisons in Paris. She visited the hospitals, amongst others the Salpêtrière, containing 5000 inmates—the old, infirm, epileptic,

idiotic, and insane ; the schools, both Protestant and Roman Catholic ; the *Enfans Trouvés*, and other similar charities.

Nothing could exceed the kindness and hospitality with which Mrs. Fry and her companions were everywhere received. They were frequent guests at the houses of Lord Granville the British Ambassador, the Duke de Broglie, M. Rumpff the Minister of the Hanse Towns, M. Jules Mallet, M. Pelet, M. Pressensé, the Duke Decazes, M. de Salvandi, Minister of Public Instruction, and others ; or received large parties of their distinguished and philanthropic friends at their hotel.

From a sketch of her time at Paris is extracted her own account of an interview with King Louis Philippe and the Orleans' Royal Family, then in the zenith of its greatness.

‘ Our visit to the King and Queen was interesting. The King I think in person like the late Lord Torrington, the Queen a very agreeable and even interesting woman. I expressed my religious interest and concern for them, which was well received ; and we had much conversation with the Queen and the Princess Adelaide, before the King came into the room. We strongly expressed to the Queen our desire to have the Sabbath better kept, and the Scriptures more read. She is a sweet-minded, merciful woman. There were present Madame Adelaide, the King's sister, one of the young Princesses, and the Marchioness of Dolomieu, principal Lady of Honour to the Queen.

‘We then proceeded to the Duchess of Orleans’ ; there we had a delightful visit, the sweetest religious communication with her, and other interesting conversation.

‘The Queen appeared much pleased with my Text-book ; and the Princess Adelaide said she should keep it in her pocket, and read it daily. Indeed, no books have given the same pleasure as the Text-books, both in French and English. I think we have given away many hundreds of them, and next in number my sister Louisa’s books on Education ; they delight the people ; also a great many of my brother Joseph’s Letter to Dr. A——, of which we have a beautiful edition in French, and his work on the Sabbath ; of these we expect to give many hundreds, and one or two other tracts upon Christian Duties and the Offices of the Holy Spirit. Our various books and tracts have had a very open reception ; but we have been very careful when, where, and what to give ; although in some of the newspapers it was stated that I distributed controversial tracts, which is not true.’

At Caen they found some excellent and devoted Methodists amongst the French, and that, through the efforts of one young English lady, an orphan, residing in a gentleman’s family as governess, many copies of the Scriptures had been purchased ; and at the shop of a Roman Catholic more than a hundred of De Sacy’s Testaments sold since the beginning of the year.

The prison of Beaulieu, near Caen, they visited with

much satisfaction—nearly a thousand prisoners were confined there; they found it admirably regulated, and a serious Roman Catholic priest devoted to the good of those under his care. He gladly welcomed the gift of fifty Testaments.

At Boulogne they made arrangements for the sale of the Holy Scriptures, and took a lively interest in the District Society; thence crossed to Dover, and the following day Mrs. Fry had the comfort of finding herself again with her family at home.

CHAPTER XIII.

1838-1839.

Birthday reflections—Journey to Scotland—Visits to Friends, prisons, etc.—Solitary system—Return home—Renewed prospect of visiting France—Applications—Sturdy beggars—Sale at Crosby Hall for the Ladies' British Society—Departs for the Continent—Paris.

ON the 20th of May 1838, Elizabeth Fry says—
'To-morrow I am fifty-eight, an advanced period of what I apprehend to be not a very common pilgrimage. I now very earnestly desire and pray that my Lord may guide me continually, cause me to know more of the day of His power, that I may have my will subjected to His will. What He would have me to do, that may I do; where He would have me to go, there may I go; what He may call me to suffer for His name's sake, may I be willing to suffer. Further, may He keep me from all false fears and imaginations, and ever preserve me from putting my hand to any work not called for by Him, even if my fellow-creatures press me into it, as I think some are disposed to do about America. Be pleased to grant these my desires and prayers for Thine own holy and blessed name's sake.'

On the 11th of August 1838, Mrs. Fry left home

once more to visit Friends and their Meetings in North Britain, again to inspect the prisons there, and to communicate with the magistrates and men in authority, whilst the Bill was still pending, which had been brought before the House the preceding session of Parliament, to improve prisons and prison discipline in Scotland.

She was accompanied by her sister-in-law Elizabeth Fry, and her husband's old and valued friend John Sanderson. They stayed a night at Birmingham, and on the 14th of August arrived at Glen Rothay, in the Vale of Rydal, where a warm reception awaited them from Mr. and Mrs. Ball. Elizabeth Fry's onerous and multiplied objects requiring more assistance, their host, a minister among Friends, agreed to accompany them on their way. They left Glen Rothay on the 15th, Mrs. Ball going with them the two first stages.

We extract the following passages from Mr. Ball's letters and journal:—

'These journeys are, I trust, not lost time; we have two Scripture readings daily in the carriage, and much instructive conversation; also abundant time for that which is so important, the private reading of the Holy Scripture. This is very precious to dear Elizabeth Fry, and I have thought it a privilege to note her reverent "marking and learning" of these sacred truths of divine inspiration. Often does she lay down the Book, close her eyes, and wait upon Him who hath the key of David to open and to seal the instruction of the sacred page.

Truly, it helps to explain how her "profiting appears unto all," when she is thus diligent and fervent in "meditating upon these things, and giving herself wholly to them."

The first two days at Aberdeen were devoted to attending the meetings, and visits to Friends; amongst others, one to a very old and valued friend, John Wigham. He had been to her as 'a nursing father' in the early part of her religious course.

'It was much like the meeting and interchange of parent and child, after long separation and many vicissitudes; and these last, as they had affected our dear friend in the interval, were freely spoken of by her, with that deep feeling, chastened into resignation, which so remarkably covers her subjected spirit, in relation to these affecting topics.'

After a breakfast at the house of Principal Jack of Old Aberdeen College, the prison was visited, accompanied by the magistrates and official persons. She thought the condition of the gaol wonderfully amended.

Mr. Ball thus describes the gathering in the evening:—

'A meeting with the ladies of Aberdeen this evening at our hotel, when prison matters were discussed, and things put in train for forming a regular association ere we leave the city. Elizabeth Fry's capacity for various successive engagements, all of an important nature, is astonishing. Surely it is because she dwells mentally in the "quiet habitation," to which she continually resorts for the

renewal of that calming influence of the Spirit, which purifies the heart, clears the understanding, and rectifies the judgment, bestowing upon the truly devoted follower of the Lamb, "the spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind." She is both lovely and wonderful on close acquaintance; such energy combined with meekness, and so much power with entire teachableness, are rarely found.'

The usual routine went on, striving to stir up the good of all, and enlist them according to their circumstances or ability, in some work of usefulness or Christian love. A Ladies' Society was formed for visiting the prisons—the Countess of Erroll, President; the Lady Provost, Patroness. The bride-well was also thoroughly inspected by Mrs. Fry. She found much there to approve and admire; but the want of female officers for the women prisoners, and of an efficient matron, was greatly to be deplored; and she strongly urged the adoption of both these measures on the proper authorities.

From Aberdeen, Mrs. Fry and her companions went to Rennie Hill, and remained for three days with Mr. Johnston and her niece. A large party of magistrates, lairds, and their ladies, met on Saturday at Rennie Hill, when prison subjects were discussed. The history of the Sunday must be told in Mr. Ball's own words:—

'First-day, 26th.—Our little party sat together after the manner of Friends this morning. Dear Priscilla Johnston joined us. I felt afresh, that it is a privilege to know that the worship of God is

in spirit and in truth ; and may be rendered acceptable, wherever contrite hearts are reverently turned toward Him, in dependence on the mediation of His beloved Son, who is ever near to those, if only "two or three," who are met to offer this worship in His name.

'Elizabeth Fry and her sister had desired to meet with the fishermen about Anstruther this evening ; but we were all taken by surprise on going down to the town, to find that this simple religious gathering turned out to be a very large and crowded meeting. The room we had arranged for, not having proved nearly capable of containing the people, they had flocked to a chapel near, the service of which (and of some others, I believe) was put off to give place for a public meeting of Friends. We had expected to sit down with the poor fishermen in a much more private way. John Sanderson stated to the assemblage that we began with a pause of silence. Then Elizabeth Fry explained our views on worship, rather in the way of an affectionate introductory address. Her sister E. Fry bent the knee in prayer. After which Elizabeth Fry was strengthened, in a very striking manner, to proclaim the glad tidings of the gospel of life and salvation—truly an awakening ministry! Her sister followed, enlarging on the nature and fruits of true repentance:—then Elizabeth Fry addressed the seafaring men most appropriately and feelingly, warned the sinners emphatically, and was afterwards engaged in fervent prayer. At the close of this memorable

meeting, Andrew Johnston briefly addressed this large assembly of his neighbours, acknowledging the kindness of the minister and attention of the people, and enforcing, with great seriousness, his desire that the novelty of the occasion might in no degree be suffered to divert solemn attention from the infinite importance of the gospel truths delivered.'

At Edinburgh the same work began again, and the state of prisons was closely investigated. Mrs. Fry found, as at Aberdeen, great improvements; but there were still points which, as she believed, were open to correction. She was extremely anxious at the extent to which penal discipline was carried at this time in Scotland, especially the enforcement of solitary confinement. She considered it incumbent on her to make an appeal against its possible abuses.

For this purpose she invited a large number of influential gentlemen, whose attention had been given to the subject,—magistrates, lawyers, members of the Prison Discipline Society, and others, to meet her on this occasion,—an appalling audience, as they sat around her to the number of fifty. She quietly engaged in conversation with some who were seated at the most distant part of the room, and by degrees fell into an account of her experience, and a full exposition of her mind on the subject.

As an abstract principle, she doubted the right of man to place a fellow-creature under circumstances of such misery, if his offences were not of a

very heinous or aggravated nature. She could not believe that it was accordant with reason or religion thus to isolate a being, intended by his great Creator for social life, unless necessary for the safety of the community at large; nor did she consider continual solitude as the best method of reforming the offender. Very many hours, she thought, might be passed alone with advantage, and the night always; but she recognised a vast difference between time for reflection, and the imagination being left to dwell upon past guilt or prospective evil. Confinement that secluded from the vicious, but allowed of frequent intercourse with sober and well-conducted persons, would have been in her view perfect.

From Glasgow by Carlisle, Penrith, and Patterdale, where meetings for worship were held, this united little band travelled on till again at Glen Rothay.

They attended some meetings appointed for them in Westmoreland and Lancashire. Mr. Ball accompanied them as far as Liverpool; from whence Mrs. Fry and her sister returned immediately home. There for a time she remained amongst her own family and friends; her home objects and interests easy and pleasant to her. Not so the claims and applications from without; these were almost innumerable; many of a character wholly beyond her power to entertain or assist. Numerous persons would come to Upton from London, some needing money, others wanting her interest to obtain public or private situations for which frequently they were

utterly unfitted; there were individuals who could scarcely be persuaded to take a refusal. This affected the comfort of her family, as well as her own. The party consisted of only Mr. Fry and herself, their eldest daughter and youngest son, and induced them more readily to entertain the idea of uniting with her in a lengthened journey on the Continent, whither she believed it would be ere long her duty again to go, to visit some places where she had never been, and to strengthen her labours of love in those parts which she had already visited. By the Society of Friends she was encouraged in this undertaking, and arrangements were made for leaving England in the early spring. But there was one subject of anxiety pressing on her mind which she greatly desired to have set at rest before her departure—the low state of the funds of the British Ladies' Prison Society.

Money was not only wanted in carrying on the prison visiting, to furnish employment in many cases, and to supply books and rewards as encouragements for good behaviour, but there were also to be assisted the valuable Refuges that had been established, one for little girls at Chelsea, and another for young women at Manor Hall, in the same place. Besides this, the convict ships continued to be a heavy demand upon the funds of the British Society. Some expedient to meet these emergencies had become essential. Mrs. Fry had no taste for bazaars and repositories; but, conducted in a sober quiet manner, she did not believe them wrong; under

these circumstances, therefore, and after full consultation with her friends and coadjutors, she determined upon having a sale for this purpose.

There is an ancient building in the City of London, called Crosby Hall, still beautiful, though at that time fallen into decay. This building was engaged for the purpose, and skilful workmen were called in; a magical change passed over the scene, the worm-eaten timbers were covered and floored, the arched windows, through which the wind had howled, and the rain beaten three days before, were glazed, and where cobwebs waved upon ruined walls, hangings were suspended, with, at intervals, armorial bearings to enliven the whole. By the day of sale, all things were ready to receive the public.

The sale was conducted to her satisfaction, and above a thousand pounds realized for the objects she had in view.

Then she prepared in earnest for her foreign journey. Josiah Forster, an 'elder' amongst Friends, an estimable person, and one eminently suited for it, accompanied Mrs. Fry and her party, to assist her in her various objects. They arrived at Boulogne, March 12, 1839. Scarcely had she reached the hotel, when so many came to see her, that she could hardly find time to breakfast or to change her dress. She visited the prison, which was in a deplorable condition, and in the evening received a large party at the hotel, mostly consisting of the ladies of a little District Society she had been instrumental in forming on her previous visit. The

results of their labours were very satisfactory ; many of the poor French were subscribing for, or buying, New Testaments, as well as eagerly reading the tracts circulated amongst them. The state of the resident English poor was also considered as decidedly improved, through this means.

On retiring to her room at night, Mrs. Fry's maid could not refrain the expression of her astonishment at the eagerness of the servants of the Hotel for Testaments—'The people here are craving Testaments, ma'am.' It appeared that they lent them to their friends, who carried them into the country, where they were so eagerly read and re-read, that it was difficult for the rightful owners to regain possession of them.

Mrs. Fry's reception at Paris was gracefully affectionate—'Loved for her work's sake!' Who like the French for those indefinable attentions which go so far to adorn and poetize life! Beautiful flowers decked their saloon, with many and varied tokens of caring for her health and comfort. But human love and human approval, however precious and genial to her nature, sufficed her not. Earnest were her prayers for guidance and that the 'Lord Himself might bless, prosper, and increase' her unworthy labours; that a 'patient, quiet, and trustful spirit' might be given her, only dependent upon the fresh pourings forth of His Spirit, and the incomings of His love.'

The same friends gathered round her, the same institutions were revisited, with some others which

she had not seen before; the same objects of interest occupied her attention. The mornings were thus spent; the evenings generally at the houses of their many kind friends, or in receiving guests at the hotel. No one was more capable than Mrs. Fry of appreciating the enjoyment of social intercourse or society, such as these occasions afforded; but it was not from this motive she united in them. She considered it her duty to avail herself of the opportunities thus afforded for the diffusion of knowledge on those subjects which had brought her to Paris, and the introduction of topics of a philanthropic and religious character.

Mrs. Fry had not before visited the hospitals generally; now she did so with exceeding interest, accompanied by the Baron de Gerando. The enlarged religion and benevolence of this excellent old man was delightful to her; his being a member of the Roman Catholic Church in no way preventing their Christian unity. He was endeavouring to found a Penitentiary or Magdalen in Paris; but complained that people are so easily influenced through their senses, that it was comparatively easy to induce them to feed the starving, clothe the naked, and administer to the sick; whilst moral reforms, the benefit of which are less immediately obvious, but of such infinitely greater importance, are too often neglected.

The first visit was to the Hospital of the Hôtel Dieu, a vast pile built on either side of one of the branches of the Seine, over which is a communica-

tion by a covered bridge. It is an extremely ancient foundation, and contains one thousand two hundred and sixty beds, of which a hundred or a hundred and fifty are placed in each of the immense wards. These, notwithstanding their size and the cleanliness of the beds, linen, and floors, were offensively close. The mortality in this hospital is at all times great; partly to be attributed to the severity of the accidents and other cases brought to the Hôtel Dieu, but even more to the defective ventilation. This is proved by the singular fact, that the greatest number of deaths occur on the third or highest storey, less on the second, and the fewest on the ground-floor.

The following day, accompanied by the Baron de Gerando and M. Valderuche, Mrs. Fry visited the Hospital of St. Louis, founded by Henri IV., for plague, leprosy, and other contagious complaints. It was entirely built in his time and contains all that was then considered necessary to prevent or check contagion; it is now used for cases of cutaneous disease. It encloses within itself five large courts laid out in gardens; the wards were perfectly fresh and pleasant. The nuns said the rate of mortality was very small.

A poor English maid-servant was amongst the sufferers; she had been there for months, having been left by an English family with whom she had been travelling. She spoke of the kindness she had received in the Hospital as great. Her heart bounded at the sound of her native tongue; nor was she left without arrangements for her future comfort.

Before quitting the establishment Mrs. Fry asked to see the Chaplain (l'Aumônier). After some general discourse on the state of the institution, she addressed him on the subject of her concern for the souls of these poor people; the reply was, 'Nous avons les sacremens de l'Eglise,' which closed the conversation; the priest accepting a Text-book, and parting from his visitors in a friendly manner.

Two days afterwards, the same party went to the Hôpital des Enfants Trouvés. This monument of St. Vincent de Paul is an affecting sight from the miserable state of the wretched infants and the fearful mortality that prevails among them. Their sufferings must be greatly increased by the unnatural practice of swaddling, from which thralldom they are only unloosed, for any purpose, once in twelve hours; the sound in the ward Mrs. Fry compared to the bleating, faint and pitiful, of a flock of young lambs. A lady who not unfrequently visited the institution said, that she never remembered examining the long array of clean white cots that lined the walls, without finding one or more dead. In front of the fire was a sloping stage, on which was a mattress, and a row of these little creatures placed upon it to warm, and await their turn to be fed from the spoon by a nurse. After much persuasion, one that was crying piteously was released from its swaddling bands; it stretched its little limbs and ceased its wailings.

The Friends' week-day meeting proved a very solemn one; it was attended by numbers of persons.

Her ministry on this occasion was wonderful, and chiefly addressed to the afflicted, and found an echo in many hearts. She afterwards called on Madame Guizot, mother of the Minister; a charming old lady, eighty years of age, taking charge of her three little grandchildren.

Mrs. Fry again visited the St. Lazare prison. She found some improvements effected, and female officers introduced. Many of the prisoners knew her again, and seemed delighted to see her. In one ward (*salle*) they told her that since her last visit, they had thought and talked so much of religion, that they had subscribed to purchase 'Celle-là' pointing to an image of the Virgin placed against the wall!

About this time Mr. and Mrs. Fry were joined by others of their children; to them it was highly interesting to be permitted to witness and partake in scenes incident to their beloved mother's labours in the cause of religion and benevolence. One day there was a large dinner at the house of her faithful friends the Mallet family. Another evening above one hundred persons were assembled at their hotel,—Greeks, Ionians, Spaniards, a Pole, Italians, Germans, English, Americans, and French. A sketch by herself of their last week's engagements at Paris concludes the narrative.

'*Paris, Fourth Month 21st.*—I feel that, under a lively sense of peace and rest of soul, I may record the mercies of the Lord this last week.

'I had a very serious, interesting, and intimate conversation with the Duchess of Orleans.

‘I visited and attended to some prisons ; formed a Ladies’ Society to visit the Protestants in prisons and hospitals ; met a very influential company at dinner at Lord Granville’s, much interesting conversation in the evening ; the same twice at Baron Pelet’s, and we had an agreeable dinner at Lord William Bentinck’s. I have paid some very interesting private calls, spent one morning with my children ; our great philanthropic evening largely attended, about a hundred and forty present. Josiah Forster gave a concentrated account of our former evenings, and added other things very agreeably. I strongly impressed upon them the extreme importance of the influence of the higher on the lower classes of society, by their example and precept ; mentioned late hours, theatres, and other evils. Then advised giving the poor Christian education, reading the Holy Scriptures in their families, Lending Libraries, District Societies, and other objects. We finished with a very solemn Scripture reading, the greater part of the third chapter of Colossians, and 20th and 21st verses of the last chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

CHAPTER XIV.

1839.

Lyons—Avignon—Nismes—Congenies, tarriance there—Marseilles—
Toulon—Aix—Montpellier—Toulouse.

MRS. FRY and her party left Paris on the 27th of April. She was furnished with a letter from the Minister of the Interior, granting her, Mr. Forster, and her husband, permission to visit all the prisons in France. This document was first made use of at Melun, and on this occasion, as on every succeeding one, Mrs. Fry was received with respect, and every facility afforded her and her party for inspecting the prisons.

The prison at Melun contained upwards of a thousand men, thirty of whom were Protestants, and visited by their own minister who supplied them with copies of the Scriptures; but on inquiring of the Chaplain (l'Aumônier) whether the Roman Catholics were allowed to possess the Bible, he evaded the question, by replying, 'They have religious books.'

An accident to the carriage detained them for the night at Auxerre. Mrs. Fry went to the prison,

where she found that a benevolent woman in humble circumstances had for many years daily visited and read to the prisoners and still persevered in her work with vigour, although eighty years of age. At Chalons-sur-Saône, the evening was occupied by a visit to an hospital under the care of nuns, which had the effect of comfort greater than ordinary; the beds having clean white curtains, and each patient a little table by his side.

The next morning, embarking on the Saône before six in the morning, they had a delightful voyage to Lyons, with the mountainous districts of Auvergne and the Puy-de-Dôme in full view. The change of climate in steaming so rapidly southwards was very remarkable—it was spring in the morning at Chalons, at Lyons in the afternoon it was summer. Many tracts were distributed among the passengers on board the boat; some refused them, some returned them; but one man not only kept the 'Letter on the Evidences of Christianity' by J. J. Gurney, but insisted on Josiah Forster's acceptance of his wine-flask, an ancient and grotesque specimen of china, which the donor considered of Sèvres manufacture, and upwards of two hundred years old. There did not appear to be the same desire for books as in the north of France; probably from so few of the people being taught to read.

In Lyons, many objects of interest presented themselves. In the prison of La Perrache, they saw a hundred and thirty-two lads under the care of fifteen of the Brethren of St. Joseph.

They also visited the Maison d'Arrêt or La Roanne, where they saw with pleasure the beneficial effects of women being placed under the care of persons of their own sex.

They saw an institution under the care of the same Order of nuns, called La Solitude. The women were out for recreation; the young persons 'at a simple dance, for their amusement.' The building commands a very fine view, with extensive garden and orchard attached to it. The inmates, about eighty in number, are either discharged prisoners or vagrants; they are employed in washing, spinning, etc. Some were being trained as novices, eventually to enter the Order. The whole effect was neat and orderly. With M. Cordes, the Protestant pasteur, and many members of his flock, their intercourse was valuable and encouraging.

From Avignon the travellers proceeded to Nismes. Mrs. Fry says in a letter to her children:—

'We have passed through the most delightful country I ever saw. Lyons, with the Rhone and Saône, is in its environs beautiful, and the passage from Lyons to Avignon really lovely; mountains in the distance (parts of the Alps), their tops covered with snow; vegetation in perfection, the flowers of spring and summer in bloom at once, grass just ready to be cut, barley in the ear, lilacs, laburnums, syringas, roses, pinks, carnations, acacias in full bloom, yellow jessamine wild in the hedges. It is a sudden burst of the finest summer, combined with the freshness of spring. The olive groves, intermixed

with abundant vineyards and mulberry groves, all beautiful from their freshness. The ancient buildings of Avignon, the ruins on the bank of the Rhone, the very fine and wonderful Roman remains of the aqueduct called the Pont du Gard, really exceed description. This place also abounds in curious buildings. Here, or in the neighbourhood, we expect to remain some time.'

Nismes is perhaps more the centre of Protestantism than any other place in France. There Mrs. Fry made a longer tarryance than usual. There exists at Nismes and in the neighbouring villages, a scattered body of people professing the principles of the Society of Friends. She and Mr. Forster visited with much interest all who resided at Nismes, and attended their Meetings.

The Protestant pastor, M. Frossard, with his lady, proved wonderful helpers to Elizabeth Fry, such excellent interpreters—such true sympathizers! Much kind attention was paid them by Dr. Pleindoux, who entertained them sumptuously, in his kindness of heart thus marking his welcome. After dinner, a still better entertainment awaited them, in important and edifying conversation, amongst a large party of excellent persons. Mrs. Fry took a lively interest in the great Maison Centrale at Nismes, containing about one thousand two hundred prisoners. It is built on the site of the old citadel, from which, in the time of Louis XIV., the Protestants were attacked whilst holding their assemblies for divine worship. In her first visit, besides Mr.

Forster, Mrs. Fry was accompanied by M. Frossard, the Protestant chaplain, and M. Castelnau, the surgeon of the prison. The men were employed in vast workshops, where absolute silence was maintained. In passing through two or three of these, she expressed her interest for the prisoners, her pity for them, and her desire for their repentance and amendment of life. She particularly desired to see the Cachots. In the first were eight men, placed there as a punishment for exacting usury of their fellow-prisoners; for instance, lending them a franc when they came out of the infirmary, or when, from any other cause they were without money, and receiving eight sous weekly as interest. This practice had existed to a great extent, and is one of the many evils resulting from the cantine system. These men were discontented and clamorous, their appearance fierce and depraved. Five armed soldiers were introduced into the cell with the visitors to protect them from their violence. In the second cell were eighteen men without employment. Into this the visitors requested to be admitted alone. In the third, which was entirely dark, were two placed for refractory conduct; one was chained both hands and feet. Mrs. Fry said to them, that she had sometimes when she had seen men thus circumstanced pleaded for their liberation, on the promise of future good behaviour, if she believed their promise to be sincere. The fettered prisoner immediately volunteered this promise, and was promptly released.

In this prison, besides the Roman Catholic chapel served by the Aumônier, who resides in the prison, there is a Protestant chapel, in which daily service is performed by a pastor of that faith. In this building, on their second visit, a solemn religious service was held ; on leaving the chapel and crossing a corridor, a gendarme brought two men out of a workroom to Mrs. Fry ; they began to speak eagerly to her ; one told her that he should never lie down in his bed without praying for and blessing her, whilst the other echoed the sentiment. They were the two men for whom, on her previous visit, she had interceded, that they might be liberated from the dungeon.

Congenies was the next place visited by the travellers ; it is a retired village, to the west of the road from Nismes to Montpellier, about four leagues from the former place. The inhabitants are almost all Friends ; a simple and serious people.

To abandon hotels, towns, and highways, and diverge amongst lanes and cross roads—to spend a fortnight in a country village in France amongst its simple inhabitants, was an event not without interest and amusement. Hampers well stocked were piled upon the carriage, or the attendant van, which was also the Congenies and Cordognan diligence. The country became less and less interesting, although well cultivated, till a group of grey flat roofs in a little hollow amongst the hills marked the first appearance of Congenies. After passing some distance through the village street, the carriage stopped

at the door of a large dull prison-like house, the windows barred with iron, and the door at one side up a flight of eight or ten steps. This was the house prepared for the reception of the travellers. A hall with no one single article of furniture; an anteroom containing a buffet, a fire-place, and a couple of chairs; and a saloon with white curtains to the windows, a table, and some rush-bottomed chairs—all these vaulted, white-washed, and floored with stone, formed the suite of reception rooms.

Other rooms of the same character communicated with the hall of entrance, from which ascended a dark, wide stone staircase, leading to rambling comfortable chambers. Various needful articles were willingly supplied by the friendly peasants—spoons were lent by one, by another a bedside carpet for Mrs. Fry. A second table was arranged in the saloon, and after a day or two a sort of homely comfort prevailed. The finest anchovies from the neighbouring Mediterranean, a cask of olives of the village produce, and sweet wine made at the last year's vintage, had been prepared by these kind people.

The hostess had good store of white household linen, and her kitchen was in high activity, though provisions were uncertain and only to be obtained from Calvisson. The Savoyard waiter, who had accompanied them from Nismes, superintended the cooking. The day's bill of fare, hung by him on a nail in the kitchen, was an inexhaustible source of amusement to the village women, who were per-

petually gossiping with the hostess, and watching with curiosity the proceedings of her foreign inmates. There was one peculiarity in this ménage—the usual operations of a scullery being carried on in the entrance hall, where an old woman and a girl had established themselves, with a broken-down table and chair, perpetually flooding the place in the process of cleansing all manner of pots and pans, iron, copper, and earthenware, red, yellow, and green.

The Friends in Congenies and the neighbouring villages appeared to be a respectable well-conducted body of people. Louis Majolier was a valuable minister amongst them. Accompanied by her friend Josiah Forster, Elizabeth Fry regularly attended their meeting for worship and discipline. Their Meeting-house was neat, and abundantly adequate to the needs of the congregation; she also visited them all in their families.

The houses were mostly approached by cart-gates under an archway into a court-yard, filled with dust and straw, chickens and rabbits running about it. On one side of this court or yard was the sitting-room, entered through a vine-covered porch, beneath which the women sat and knitted silk gloves and mittens. An open outside flight of stairs led to the chambers. A stable opposite the entrance, a well in one corner, and a cart under the gateway, completed the style of most of their buildings. These cottagers all possessed abundant supplies of table linen, and in every house where Mrs. Fry dined, however humble, she found dinner napkins for use.

Soup, one or two entrées, a roast of lamb or a fowl, salad and vegetables, composed the dinner.

Although there are no horned cattle, the villagers possess a good many sheep, and some goats, which gather a scanty subsistence from the herbage of the rocky hills, where the vine cannot grow. Their milk is excellent, and so is the butter made from it. The flocks are invariably attended by a shepherd and strong dogs, to protect them from the wolves of the Cevennes mountains; after watering them at the fountain in stone troughs—a most picturesque sight, they are folded in the village at night. The women Friends wear the peasant cap and costume, but with a graver shade of colouring; the men the usual peasant's dress of the district. In all the neighbouring villages there was an eager open ear for gospel truth. The meeting held at Congenies, on the last Sunday evening of their residence there, was crowded. The people clustered round the open windows, on the wall outside, and even clambered to the tops of the doors, yet with perfect quietude and order. It was the same at Calvisson the following Sunday. There the meeting was held in the Protestant Temple. The party broke up from Congenies on the 27th, and after again partaking of the abundant hospitality of Dr. Pleindoux, at Nismes, proceeded by the ancient city of Arles to Marseilles.

At Marseilles, Mrs. Fry visited several of the institutions. One called 'La Maison des Orphelines du Choléra,' was under the especial care of the Abbé Fisseaux, an active, intelligent young man, apparently

devoted to doing good. The children were in excellent order. He accompanied the party to a prosperous little institution, founded by himself, called 'La Maison des jeunes Détenus, ou Nouvel Pénitencier,' for twenty-eight young delinquents, boys. They had all been committed for theft, and collected from the different prisons of the department. They appeared very kindly cared for by the Abbé; they sleep separately at night, with the exception of some, who, for good conduct, are permitted to be together in one apartment. The town prison contained more than sixty prisoners; the women in a separate part of the building; but there was no further classification, not even the tried from the untried, nor any employment. After this, Mrs. Fry visited a large hospital, in which were four English sailors, from ships in the port. One of these recognised her, having seen her on board a female convict ship in the river Thames, and greeted her as though she were an old and valued friend. He informed those who accompanied her who she was, which they had not previously understood. This fatiguing day was concluded by dining at Monsieur Rabaut's.

From Hyères, where, for two days, through 'orange groves and myrtle bowers,' she looked forth upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean, Mrs. Fry returned to Toulon, 'refreshed' and ready for work.

The following morning, the Protestant Pasteur and a naval Captain, appointed to accompany her by the Préfet de la Marine, went with Mrs. Fry to visit

the Arsenal, and afterwards the Bagnes, or Prison of galley-slaves. They sleep upon the boards, one or two hundred in each gallery, chained to a long iron rod, which runs along the foot of the sleeping-boards. Their food consists of bread and dried beans. There is one *salle*, which can contain four hundred, for such as have improved in conduct; to them mattresses and rugs for covering are permitted.

In their leisure hours they are allowed to make and sell little carved toys and netting. Their look is generally unhealthy. The dress consists of a red cap and jacket. The greater number are fastened two and two by heavy chains; notwithstanding which they often escape. Sunday the 10th was passed there—a most onerous day it proved—two crowded meetings, and multitudes of persons coming to see Mrs. Fry.

At Montpellier a Protestant Ladies' Committee was formed to visit the great female prison there. It is a 'Maison Centrale,' and contained at that time five hundred women. The prisoners were employed in workrooms; some resistance had been shown on their part to the introduction of the female officers, so that this visit was useful and timely. Mrs. Fry visited this prison again the following day, and had a long conversation at her hotel with the Director and the new Matron, on their important duties. After this, she met a number of Protestant ladies at the Pastor Losignol's, who had waited for her arrival to form themselves into a Committee for visiting the Protestant women, both in the prison and hospital;

this Committee was then regularly organized, and was, as well as that formed at Marseilles, to correspond with the Committee in Paris. In the evening, she returned to the Pastor Losignol's, as she supposed to spend a quiet social evening, but found instead a large congregation assembled for a religious meeting. There were rich and poor, all ages, and the place so crowded, that the windows were lined with listeners, and boys perched upon the trees beyond.

In the evening, at Béziers, after a fatiguing day, whilst resting and refreshing themselves at the hotel, the Sous-Préfet was announced, he having been requested by the Préfet at Montpellier to show Mrs. Fry attention during her visit to Béziers. He was anxious she should see the prison and hospital, but all arrangements had been made to set off again at five in the morning; and therefore, fatigued as she was, she and her companions consented to accompany him at once to the prison. It had become quite dark as this little band threaded its way through the narrow winding streets of Béziers—how altered since those streets ran blood, when, during the first crusade against the Albigeois, the Papal Legate gave order to the Roman Catholic chieftains 'to kill all, for God knows those who are His.'

The astonished gaoler, candle in hand, followed by his myrmidons, answered the thundering rap of the Sous-Préfet; and the mastiffs which were prowling in the yards having been chained up, this badly-constructed and ill-arranged prison was inspected.

In returning to the hotel they paid a visit to the

Cathedral, a vast, lofty, Gothic building, of one aisle and transepts, which had been lighted up to receive them. The effect was magnificent, illumined by a glare of partial light from the various altars, and the lamps carried by the attendants.

At Toulouse two prisons were visited, an important prison meeting held, and Mrs. Fry also had an exceedingly solemn and satisfactory Scripture-reading and time of prayer with the Courtois family, one or two pasteurs, and other religious persons.

CHAPTER XV.

1839-1840.

Bagnerès de Luchon—A look into Spain—Military hospital at Barèges — Pau — Grenoble — Geneva — Retreat at Bönigen'—Return home—Journey into Norfolk—Audience of the Queen—Public meeting in London.

MRS. FRY'S determined perseverance had surmounted every obstacle as long as her physical powers permitted; but these were beginning to fail. Rest and some cessation from mental and bodily labour had become indispensable, and she yielded, though not without reluctance, to her husband's wish for a short tarriance in the cooler atmosphere of the Pyrenees.

From Bagnerès de Luchon, which they found a delightful resting-place, they made many pleasant excursions amongst the neighbouring mountains.

One of these expeditions was to the Lake D'Oo. The gentlemen of the party, who were on horseback, having gone on, Mrs. Fry and her daughter found themselves, when about half way up a steep ascent, on a little level of green sward, shadowed by a huge rock. They left their chairs for the carriers to rest themselves. A group of wild-looking peasants were reposing near. Mrs. Fry sat down by them.

and entered into conversation; they assured her, they 'adored the Virgin in those parts.' She took out her French Text-book; the eight bearers joined the party. She read some words of Scripture, then drew their attention to the wonderful works of God in creation, in the beautiful scene around them; from thence, she led to His infinite mercy, in giving a Saviour to die for them. They listened with earnestness and respect, and thankfully received the little books she offered.

On another occasion Mrs. Fry accompanied her family on an excursion for a day into Spain.

At Bagnerès de Bigorre, they entered the gorge that leads to Luz. They passed the ruined castle of Ste. Marie, built by the English, the Templar's Fortress-church at Luz, and pursued their way to St. Sauveur. There they remained some days, amidst the shadowy mountains which surround the town, the rushing waters not alone of the Gaves, or rapid rivers of the district, but the hundred little rivulets which feed them, tumbling and foaming from the heights above.

At Barèges they visited the great Military Hospital, and obtained leave to introduce the New Testament. By permission of the Directors, they distributed about two hundred tracts among the patients. They remained the following Sunday at St. Sauveur, holding a meeting in their room in the morning. In the evening most of the English (two clergymen among the number) assembled in Mrs. Fry's rooms, and a very solemn religious meeting was held. Meanwhile

at the Catholic chapel, a sermon was preached, warning the people against the little books that the Protestant visitors might distribute, especially 'one lady, who went up even into the mountains to give them away.' These were all to be given to the priest, or committed to the flames, unread, on pain of excommunication.

On the 8th, they departed for Pau. The drive was beautiful, through country familiarized by Froissard's descriptions, by the valley of Argeliez, and the old castle of Lourdes. Pau delighted them. In the birthplace of one, for a time the hero of the Protestant faith, there is still a small body of Christian believers, untainted by the errors of Romanism, and adhering to the pure and simple faith of their forefathers. A few Protestants were found at Tarbes. With them Mrs. Fry had a meeting, and was exceedingly interested by them and their pasteur, M. Doudret.

Geneva now lay before Elizabeth Fry. She had long wished to go there, not for its glorious sunsets, nor its mountains, nor its lake—but that she might hold communion, face to face, with many loved and honoured ones, personally unknown to her, who dwelt there.

In Madame Vernet Mrs. Fry found a congenial friend, a mother in Israel. At Coppet lived Madame de Stael, her daughter, and with her the Duke de Broglie, the brother-in-law of the Baron de Stael. One evening a very large party assembled at Madame Vernet's. It had been Mrs. Fry's most earnest wish

to enjoy some conversation of a decidedly religious character with her Genevan friends, on points forming the common ground of faith and hope, with all who look only to one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus our Lord; but the occasion proved somewhat different from her expectations; for in the evening came in a Sardinian, Count Pettiti, a kindred spirit in works of benevolence and philanthropy, and soon the conversation turned upon prison subjects, on which both the Count and Mrs. Fry spoke at considerable length. She handled the subject in a manner peculiar to herself, and to the opportunities she then possessed. Some were present that evening belonging to the National Church of Geneva, a Church fallen from her first love, whose doctrines have become tinctured with vital error, and her faith corrupted and mystified.

Mrs. Fry felt the opportunity to be one given her to *use*; a solemn responsibility lay upon her, and it was with trembling earnestness that she called the attention of her hearers to her experience in prisons. She spoke of her firm conviction, that no human means of reformation amongst prisoners can avail aught, except God's Word be brought to bear upon their own condition, their daily life, their past sins, their future improvement. Earnestly she told of the one way open alike to the weary-hearted guilty captive, and to 'whosoever will,' among men: that way, the precious blood of the Lamb slain, whereby alone the sinner can be reconciled to God, and be cleansed from the power and guilt of his original

and contracted transgression. The impression she made was deep and permanent. Many remember the edification and instruction they there received, and recall with grateful emotion her clear earnest statement of the way of life.

At Beseigne, the beautiful place of Colonel Tronchin, a few miles from the lake, Mrs. Fry met above a hundred persons at an entertainment given by the hospitable owner of the domain. The repast was laid out in the avenue, and after its conclusion, hymns were sung, and thanks returned, and then they withdrew to the house, where Mrs. Fry appears to have spoken with peculiar power and wisdom. M. la Harpe, of the 'Société Evangélique,' and Theological Professor of the Geneva School, acted as her interpreter. The occasion was one of deep interest and improvement. 'I can never forget Mrs. Fry, at Beseigne, or her words of faith and earnest counsel,' says M. Anet, Secretary of the Belgian Société Evangélique; 'they were burned like words of fire on my heart and brain.'

'We had half-expected a philosophical discourse upon subjects of a philanthropic and general interest: but everything that fell from her lips was characterized by delicacy, extreme simplicity, and an ardent desire to draw our attention to our own happiness, in being permitted the opportunity for meditation on the one subject which seemed always present in her thoughts, Christ Jesus crucified for the expiation of our sins. At this distance of time I have an actual realization of the opening of her

exhortation—"I think it is impossible for us to be more profitably employed than by occupying the next few moments with the contemplation of the love which the Lord Jesus has for us" were her arresting words.'

'I was at that time a young student at the Genevan school, under M. la Harpe, and much absorbed with my studies preparatory to my entrance into the ministry, but those words can never leave my memory as long as I retain any power of recollection. After a little time spent at the large table, with the host, the magistrates, chief people of the Republic, and others, Mrs. Fry joined us, a cluster of students and others, under a wide-spreading tree, and, through her interpreter, spoke to us all with kindness and much judgment. In order a little better to understand the circumstances of that *déjeuner*, I must premise that above fifty persons having arrived at Beseigne, uninvited by Colonel Tronchin, but drawn there by an irresistible impulse, to see and to listen to Mrs. Fry, the tables spread out in the avenue were found insufficient to accommodate all those assembled. The students, therefore, and the younger portion of the guests, had retired to a little distance, to a beautiful spot under one of the finest trees in the place, surrounded by flowering shrubs, and carpeted by a soft moss of the richest green; there we made for ourselves a sort of eastern banquet, each reclining in the position the most convenient for the repast; and supplied with provisions by Colonel Tronchin's care, the mossy bank

became our banqueting-hall, the rough rocks, which rose here and there from that verdant covering, our tables. Thus placed we chanted our hymns, at Mrs. Fry's request, and then all returned to the house together. The rooms were full to overflowing; my fellow-students and I took up our places in the passage, on the staircase, crowded round the open door, eagerly hanging on such parts of the beautiful exhortation as we could catch by the most breathless attention. After she had concluded she kindly came out among us, and expressed her regret that we should have been so inconvenienced. I can see her now, her tall figure leaning on Colonel Tronchin's arm, M. la Harpe at her side; her dignified, animated, yet softened countenance, bending towards us. I can never forget it. Such occasions are rare in life; they are very green spots in the garden of memory; more, they are opportunities given for improvement, solemnly increasing the responsibility of each who participates in them. May I never lose the impression of that day at Beseigne, nor the holy lessons I there heard and learned.'

It was on the same day that Mrs. Fry, accompanied by Colonel Tronchin, visited the institution which he had founded on his grounds for receiving convalescents during that trying period of debility and weakened energy which commonly follows severe illness, and requires judicious and tender treatment. All admitted into this valuable institution were under spiritual instruction.

On another occasion at the hotel, a party of above

eighty met in the evening expressly to discuss the state of prisons.

The Sunday morning the travellers sat down in their room as usual, to worship after the simple manner of Friends.

The penitentiaries at Geneva, Lausanne, and Berne appeared, in most respects, admirably arranged and conducted, though in some points open to improvement. At Berne a circumstance occurred very exceptional to Mrs. Fry's usual proceedings. She addressed the female prisoners at some length, well interpreted for by Sophia Werstemberger, a young German lady present. This address Miss Werstemberger afterwards embodied in a tract, which has been extensively circulated in prisons; a tone of lamentation for the past and entreaty for the future, more than reproof or exhortation, pervades the whole; the conclusion is a clear exposition of gospel truth, and an earnest invitation to repentance and amendment of life. At Berne Mrs. Fry visited Dr. Fellenberg's excellent Institution for Boys.

Here Mrs. Fry considered her journey, in a more directly religious point of view, to terminate.

Mr. Forster returned to England, and Mr. and Mrs. Fry with their children withdrew for a while to the little inn at Bönigen. But in the midst of relaxation she did not forget her peculiar objects. She called on the pastor at Grindelwald, and found his flock numerous, scattered, and ignorant. Very few had Bibles; partly that the Bible Society had not reached the place, and partly from these moun-

tain peasants having a strong predilection for large Bibles with clasps ; these they look upon as a sort of heirloom, but their costliness renders them almost unattainable.

One Sunday was passed at Brienz, where they had the unexpected pleasure of meeting some of Mrs. Fry's excellent friends of the Mackenzie family from Edinburgh, and of spending a quiet day together, concluded by a reading in the evening. The pastor of this place was also visited, and the condition of his flock inquired into. On a previous occasion when on the Lake of Brienz, a poor boy who rowed the boat told her that his mother lay sick in a cottage he pointed out. It rested on her mind, and in crossing the lake to return to Bönigen, she landed, not without difficulty, accompanied by the wife of the pasteur of Brienz. They found the poor woman very ill on a mattress spread in the gallery of her cottage, with her Bible by her side ; she was an afflicted, discouraged Christian woman, to whom the few words of encouragement offered were very timely to strengthen that which, through bodily suffering, seemed almost ready to die. Her temporal wants were not forgotten, and the case was left under care of the pastor's wife.

Whilst at Bönigen, the landlord of the little inn and his family attended their Sunday evening readings. On one of these occasions a peasant girl was with them who appeared pious and afflicted. Her name was Madelina Kauss. She came from a neighbouring village to seek counsel of Mrs. Fry.

Madelina and her mother had joined themselves to a little body of pious people, Pietists, somewhat resembling Methodists, seceders from the National Church. The father, a coarse ignorant man, vehemently threatened his wife, and turned his daughter out of doors to earn her own livelihood by weaving for nine French sous a day. Good people from Berne who interfered on their behalf had only made matters worse. It so fell out about this time that a certain small old-fashioned black-letter German newspaper reached the little inn at Bönigen, and the host and his household were startled therein to find a long account of his guests, a history of Mrs. Fry, 'her works and labours' of love, concluding with her visit to the Oberland of Berne, and residence at Herr Mitchell's country inn. After careful perusal of this wonderful document, it occurred to the worthy host that in his inmates he had found the very people to rectify the wrongs of poor Madelina, and restore peace in her parents' dwelling; persons in his opinion not to be resisted by Heinrich Kauss, the peasant of Wilderswyl, to whom he advised that a visit should forthwith be made. When the carriage came to convey the party, he insisted on driving it himself arrayed in his holiday costume. The interview with the family was quite pathetic. The father laid the fault of his violence and severity on the grandfather, and he on the schoolmaster; but a little kind and wise conciliation sufficed to bring them all to tears. They wept and kissed, and Herr Mitchell wept for sympathy;

after which Mrs. Fry had a religious time with Madelina, her mother, and a few of their neighbours, leaving them with the thankful belief that they had been permitted to act the blessed part of peacemakers.

After leaving Bönigen, Mrs. Fry was met at Thun by Miss Werstemberger, and in the evening Mr. Fellenberg, the chaplain of the prison at Berne, arrived there also; a few important hours devoted to prison subjects were concluded by reading and prayer, in which Mr. Fellenberg took part.

The morning of their departure from Zurich, the venerable Mr. Gesner (Antistes, or Prelate of the Canton), and many others, called to take leave. This apostolic old man pronounced a blessing on Mrs. Fry, to which she replied in terms so heart-tendering that the bystanders wept aloud.

After visiting Stuttgart and Ludwigsburg, they arrived at Frankfort, where a cordial reception awaited them from their dear friend Dr. Pinkerton and his family. A rapid journey thence brought them to Ostend; and on the evening of the 13th of September they arrived at Upton Lane, 'in peace and safety.'

With the exception of a journey into Norfolk, the winter of 1839-40 was passed by Mrs. Fry with much tranquillity at home. She did not return the certificate which she had received from Friends for her continental journey in 1839. She had, when she asked for it, some expectation of prolonging her travels in Germany, but her objects

in France occupied so much more time than she anticipated, that she was under the necessity of returning to England; she, however, did not abandon the idea, but waited and watched for opportunity to complete the work she had begun. The time now seemed approaching when she might again leave home with satisfaction.

Her brother, Samuel Gurney, his daughter Elizabeth, and their friend William Allen, with his niece, Lucy Bradshaw, agreed to accompany her. But there were certain things resting on her mind to be done before she left England; they are described in her journal.

*‘Upton, Seventh Month 1st, 1840.—*I am called to visit our young Queen to-day, in company with William Allen, and I hope my brother Samuel also.

‘We went to Buckingham Palace, and saw the Queen. Our interview was short. Lord Normanby, the Home Secretary, presented us. The Queen asked us where we were going on the Continent. She said it was some years since she saw me. She asked about Caroline Neave’s Refuge, for which she had lately sent the fifty pounds. This gave me an opportunity of thanking her. I ventured to express my satisfaction that she encouraged various works of charity; and I said it reminded me of the words of Scripture—“With the merciful Thou wilt shew Thyself merciful.” Before we withdrew, I stopped and said, I hoped the Queen would allow me to assure her that it was our prayer that the blessing of God might rest upon the Queen and her Consort.

‘I have for some time believed that duty would call me to have a meeting in London and the neighbourhood previous to leaving home. I see many difficulties attached to it, and perhaps none so much as my great fear of women coming too forward in these things beyond what the Scripture dictates ; but I am sure the Scripture most clearly and forcibly lays down the principle that the Spirit is not to be grieved, or quenched, or vexed, or resisted, and on this principle I act, under the earnest desire that I may not do this ; but that whatever the Lord leads me into by His Spirit, may be done faithfully to Him, and in His name ; and I am of opinion that nothing Paul said to discourage women’s speaking in the churches, alluded to their speaking through the help of the Spirit, as he clearly gave directions how they should conduct themselves under such circumstances, when they prayed or prophesied.’

The proposed meeting took place. The large Meeting-house belonging to Friends in Bishopsgate Street was filled to overflowing. Persons were there of all ranks and various denominations.

A lady, not a Friend, who was present, thus describes the scene, and the impression it made upon her mind :—

‘It was really a most impressive occasion ; the large fine circular building filled ; not less, I should think, than fifteen hundred present. Mrs. Fry began by entreating the sympathy and supplications of those present. I cannot tell you how mine flowed forth on her behalf. After her prayer, we sat still

for some time, then William Allen spoke, and then she rose, giving as a text—"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead;" and uncommonly fine was her animated yet tender exhortation to all present, but more especially the young, to present themselves as living sacrifices to the Lord—to be made of Him new creatures in Christ—the old things passed away, and all things become new, as those alive from the dead. This change she dwelt and enlarged on much; its character, and the Power that alone can effect it; the duty demanded of us—"Yield yourselves," and its infinite and eternal blessedness. I was astonished and deeply impressed, and my feeling was—"Surely God is amongst us of a truth."

CHAPTER XVI.

1840-1841.

Leaves home for the Continent—Brussels—Rotterdam—Prison at Gouda—Mindon and Pymont—Friends there—Hanover—Berlin—Rest at Leipzig—Return home—Nursing—Sisters—Niger Expedition—Alarming mistake.

MRS. FRY had to take this journey unaccompanied by any of her own children. She could not satisfactorily withdraw her eldest daughter from the place she filled at home; none of the married ones felt justified in leaving their families. This added much to the pain and effort involved; happily in Mr. Samuel Gurney she had a faithful friend and wise counsellor, as well as a most loving brother, and in his daughter Elizabeth,¹ one singularly capable of ministering to her aunt's necessities, and aiding in her undertakings. They crossed to Ostend, February 26th, and pursued their ways to Bruges.

The Maison de Force, at Ghent, Mrs. Fry considered to be, in most respects, excellently conducted: but in another prison there, she was shocked at the sight of a cell, so contrived, the floor and sides being

¹ Now Madame Ernest de Bunsen.

formed of angular pieces of wood, that no one could lie down, stand, or lean against the walls, without a species of prolonged torture.

The English workmen at Ghent form a numerous body, but without schools or any pastoral care. Mrs. Fry held a meeting with them, their wives and children. It was numerously attended, and her counsel and exhortations were listened to by them with earnest attention.

Brussels abounded in objects of interest. Writing from thence her niece says:—

‘Had I a hundred times more power of writing, I could not initiate you into our life here. A great meeting is now assembling in the *Table d’Hôte salon*, fitted up by our landlord for the occasion. This is to be our farewell meeting. We have had a very full morning, partly employed in distributing books. The servants at the palace sent an entreaty that they might not be overlooked. I wish you could have seen us looking out a good variety for about sixty of them.

‘Yesterday began with a full tide of business. They were to see the King at twelve o’clock. My aunt looked beautifully. He is a particularly pleasing-looking man, rather older than I expected. The Duchess of Kent had kindly written to the King, to say that my aunt was likely to visit Brussels.

‘I must tell you about our dinner at M. le Comte de ——, the first Roman Catholic family here. We were taken there by our kind friend Count Arrivabene. The party consisted of fifteen persons, only two

speaking English. Amongst them was the Dean, the head of the Church here, under the Bishop of Malines. Much that was interesting passed. The Dean and our aunt seated themselves in a corner of the room, and by degrees the whole party gathered round; the Count and Josiah Forster interpreting by turns. It was a critical thing to know what to say, as the conversation became more and more of a religious nature. She began on the prisons—prevention of crime—how much the upper classes are often the cause, by example, of the sins of the lower; related a few of her prison facts as proofs, and finally ended by saying, “Will the Dean allow me to speak my mind candidly?” His permission being given, and that of the Count and Countess, she began by expressing the sincere interest that she felt for the inhabitants of this city, and how much she had been desiring for them, “that as a people, they might each place less confidence in men and in the forms of religion, and look to Christ with an entire and simple faith.” The priest said nothing, but turned the subject, and asked what the views of the Quakers were; upon which Josiah Forster gave them a short account in French, which appeared to interest them all.’

At Rotterdam they visited a large prison for boys. They are capitally taught by gentlemen, who visit them daily, as well as by an excellent schoolmaster. Another prison under the same roof, for women, was solely under the care of men. In the evening, a large party of Dutch, both gentlemen and ladies,

assembled at the hotel; the occasion concluded with a short Bible-reading.

Mrs. Fry speaks of going 'over land and water' to Gouda, about twelve miles from Rotterdam, to see the female prison there. This prison contained about three hundred women; they were under the care of two female officers, appointed only a short time before. There were five men to assist them, but no watch over the women was kept at night.

From the Hague, where Mrs. Fry and her party were kindly and courteously received by the English Minister, Sir Edward Disbrowe, and many of the Dutch residents, they travelled to Utrecht. There Mrs. Fry and her party had invited some persons to meet them at the hotel on the evening of arrival; but as no one appeared, they sat down, in travelling gear, to their various employments, when, to their no small surprise, ladies and gentlemen began to assemble; and so interested did they appear in all they saw and heard, that the travellers resolved the next evening to throw open their *salon* to all comers. Eighty-two presented themselves. The usual topics were brought forward. Christian love flowed forth amongst them, and the evening ended with religious service. At Zeist, near Utrecht, there is a large Moravian settlement. Mrs. Fry went to see it. A weighty concern had long rested on her mind towards the conductors of the Moravian Church. Their isolated mode of life, hiding their light from their fellow-men, and not turning their powers and talents to greater account—this she brought before the

elders of that body at Zeist, and urged it strongly upon their consideration.

Utrecht to Zwolle, and thence to Minden, was the route pursued by the travellers. They wished to visit a small body of Friends resident there, as well as a larger congregation at Pymont.

Young as well as old were wonderfully attracted by Mrs. Fry; the little ones would press round her, and try to climb upon her knee, and when there, nestle to her bosom. A specimen of their hospitality may be found in the description of a dinner given by one of the most wealthy amongst them, at Friedenthal (or the valley of peace). The table was well covered with cakes and dried and stewed fruits, the produce generally of their own grounds. The soup was on the table, and one large Westphalia ham. Veal was handed round afterwards in different forms; and plum-puddings (of course for the English) in the middle of dinner.

At Hanover Mrs. Fry and her companions were admitted to an audience of the Queen. She tells her family at home that a more 'interesting visit to Royalty' she 'never paid.' They were 'received with ceremonious respect, and shown through many rooms to a drawing-room, where were the Queen's Chamberlain and three ladies-in-waiting. They showed us some pictures of the family, until Prince George and his half-sister came in to us; he appeared much pleased to be with me again. His sister appeared a serious and interesting young lady. After some little time we were sent for by the Queen; the King

was too ill to see us. She is a stately woman, tall, large, and rather a fine countenance. We very soon began to speak of her afflictions, and I gave a little encouragement and exhortation. She was much affected, and after a little while requested us to sit down. We had very interesting and important subjects brought forward—the difficulties and temptations to which rank is subject—the importance of its influence—the objects incumbent upon them to attend to and help in, Bible Societies, prisons, etc. We then read our address to the Queen, wishing her to patronize ladies visiting the prisons. It contained serious advice, and our desires for her, the King, and the Prince; then I gave the Queen several books, which she accepted in the kindest manner.’

At Berlin the travellers found a cordial welcome from all ranks of persons. A wonderful field of usefulness appeared open, and many hearts ready to receive them. The gracious and kind reception accorded to Mrs. Fry and her companions by the Prussian Royal Family, was very gratifying to her. In the Princess William, sister of the late King, she found a zealous co-operator in her endeavours to ameliorate the condition of the prisons there. This eminent and truly Christian lady had been as a mother to the younger members of the Royal Family after the death of the Queen Louisa, and in her exalted station was an example of every good word and work.

From a letter written by her niece, dated Hôtel de Russie, Berlin.—

‘Our dear aunt’s first evening for philanthropic purposes took place on the 13th. There is a splendid room in the hotel, capable of containing two hundred persons, where we have our réunions. At one end is raised a low platform; on this platform sat my aunt, William Allen, Lucy Bradshaw, Papa, and Professor Tholuck (a very noted scholar) as interpreter. A fine company of the higher classes filled more than half the room.

‘It would be impossible to describe the intense interest and eagerness which prevailed when our aunt rose. Papa having introduced her to the assembly, she commenced with the deplorable state of London prisons when she was young—her own first entering these horrid abodes—the clamour that was raised by all parties on her venturing to go in alone and unprotected—the shocking state of filth and depravity that the prisons were in, and the violence of the prisoners, the females especially, so great that even the turnkeys hardly dare venture amongst them. Then she related the quiet way in which she and her companions were received, their taking clothing for the children, and the respect with which the prisoners treated them. She went on to express her own feelings about introducing Christian doctrine amongst them. “Could it be possible to touch their hearts by religious truths? Shall I venture to read the Holy Scriptures to them? What effect will it produce?”

‘The attention of the whole assembly seemed completely riveted by her address. Those that

could not understand a word, could at least watch her and listen to her voice. She then mentioned a few instances of the good that had been effected, and the changes that had been brought about through the means of the visiting ladies ; such as commencing public worship amongst the prisoners, instituting matrons over them, etc. She ended with a most earnest and eloquent appeal to all to come forward in the work, and lend their aid to seek to turn these poor sinners from the error of their ways, and to take an interest in their everlasting welfare. William Allen had previously told them the object of their mission, and a little of what they had been doing since our arrival in Berlin. Every one wants to know about our aunt's history. "Where does she live?" "Is she married?" And their astonishment is great, when I tell them of five-and-twenty grandchildren. This seems to add to the respect paid to her.

'The Princess William has been very desirous to give her sanction, as far as possible, to the Ladies' Committee for visiting the prisons that my aunt has been forming ; and to show her full approbation, had invited the Committee to meet her at her palace. So, imagine about twenty ladies assembling here, at our hotel, at half-past twelve o'clock to-day, beautifully dressed ; and further, fancy us all driving off and arriving at the palace. The Princess had also asked some of her friends ; so we must have been about forty. Such a party of ladies, and only our friend Count Gröben to interpret. The Princess

received us most kindly, and conducting us herself to the top of the room, we talked some time whilst waiting the arrival of other members of the Royal Family ; the ladies walking about the suite of rooms, and taking chocolate, for about half an hour, waiting for the Crown Princess, who soon arrived. The Princess Charles was also there, and the Crown Prince himself soon afterwards entered. I could not but long for a painter's eye to have carried away the scene. A table was placed before our aunt, with pens, ink, and paper, like other Committees, with the various rules that our aunt and I had drawn up, and the Countess Bohlen had translated into German, and which she read to the assembly : our aunt then gave a clever concise account of the Societies in England, commencing every fresh sentence with " If the Prince and Princesses will permit." When business was over, my aunt mentioned some texts, which she asked leave to read. A German Bible was handed to Count Gröben, the text in Isaiah having been pointed out that our good aunt had wished for, " Is not this the fast that I have chosen," etc. The Count read it ; after which our aunt said, " Will the Prince and Princesses allow a short time for prayer ?" They all bowed assent and stood, while she knelt down, and offered one of her touching, heartfelt prayers for them—that a blessing might rest on the whole place, from the King on his throne to the poor prisoner in the dungeon ; and she prayed especially for the Royal Family, then for the ladies, that the works of their hands might be prospered in

what they had undertaken to perform. Many of the ladies now withdrew, and we were soon left with the Royal Family. They all invited us to see them again before we left Berlin, and took leave of us in the kindest manner.'

Among other most onerous matters, Mrs. Fry felt it her duty to inquire into the actual state of the Lutheran Church in the Prussian dominions, and whether it was still exposed to persecution. She found that, although more leniently dealt with than it had been, great oppression existed; confiscation of property and imprisonment being not unfrequently resorted to, to compel submission. Mrs. Fry could not feel justified without endeavouring to bring the subject before the King. Lord William Russell, our Ambassador, her kind and constant friend, and the Baron Humboldt, discouraged her attempting to do so. She had a strong inclination to consult the Crown Prince, when the unexpected meeting at the Princess William's afforded her the desired opportunity. After earnestly petitioning the best help and wisdom from above, she opened the subject. His Royal Highness gave her most attentive hearing, and entirely encouraged her to act as she believed to be right. A petition had been beautifully drawn up by William Allen; this was translated into German, and presented, through the official channel, to His Majesty. It was no light matter doing this; but in faith she committed it to Him who had put it so strongly into her heart, to bless the measure. The following day, the King's Chaplain was the bearer

of the delightful intelligence, that the petition had been graciously received, and that the King had said, that 'he thought the Spirit of God must have helped them to express themselves as they had done.' She told this gentleman what a subject of prayer it had been with her; to which he rejoined, that 'like Daniel, her petition had been answered before she had ceased praying.'

Berlin and its interests, to use her own expression, 'so expended her powers,' that Mrs. Fry found a pause absolutely requisite; and whilst her companions went on to Dresden, she, with her maid and a young German gentleman, Mr. Byerhaus, who had given himself to serve her, remained at Leipzig. She enjoyed the rest and fine weather, and exclaims—'How beautiful is the breaking forth of spring!'

Friends gathered round her,—one brought her beautiful flowers; another, oranges; another, books; and a fourth, a fine print of 'Prisoners at Worship.'

The travellers visited the establishment of Kaiserwerth, under the care of M. Fliedner, for training Deaconesses to tend and nurse the sick and to aid their spiritual necessities whilst providing for their temporal wants. At that time this admirable institution had existed only four years, but its utility was generally acknowledged, and information upon the subject earnestly desired.

From Düsseldorf through Liege and Antwerp, Mr. Fry and her party pursued their way to Eng-

land. In the course of this journey, Mrs. Fry had experienced less difficulty than she anticipated from her entire ignorance of the German language, partly from the assistance of her companions, but even more from the excellent interpretation of like-minded persons, who arose for her help, as she passed on from place to place. She had also been furnished with a document most useful and important to her, by the late Baron de Bunsen, at that time Prussian Minister at Berne. She had requested him to furnish her with letters of introduction to such of his countrywomen as were likely to interest themselves in the objects of her journey. Instead of this, he proposed to provide her with a printed address to the women of Germany, written as in the name of Elizabeth Fry, giving a sketch of her prison work, and the different objects which induced her to go abroad.

Elizabeth Fry's return home was shortly followed by attendance at the Friends' Yearly Meeting in London; and soon afterwards by the Annual Meeting of the British Ladies' Prison Society.

' Upton Lane, Seventh Month 7th.—We had the French Ambassador and a large party to dinner here yesterday; these occasions are serious to me. The query comes home—how far the expensive dinner is right to give, and, further, whether good results from it, and whether, if death was approaching, we should thus spend our time? On the other hand, after the extraordinary kindness shown us in France, and even by the French Government, some mark of

attention was due from us ; also, to show hospitality to strangers is right and Christian, and in some measure to receive them as they are accustomed to live, does not appear wrong. My fear is that the time was not turned to account, by the most important subjects being enough brought forward ; I tried to do a little in this way, but I fear not enough. May my Lord keep us from in any way lowering the cause we love ; may He help us by His grace more continually to exalt it, and may neither our omissions nor commissions injure it.'

A fresh object about this time claimed the attention of Elizabeth Fry. Her habitual acquaintance with the chamber of sickness, and with scenes of suffering and death, had taught her the necessity that exists for a class of women to attend upon such, altogether different and superior to the hireling nurses that are generally to be obtained. Her communications with M. Fliedner, and all she learned from him personally and by letter, of his establishment at Kaiserwerth, stimulated her desire to attempt something of the kind in England. Her own occupations being too urgent and numerous to allow of much personal attention, the plan was undertaken, and on a small scale carried into effect, by Mrs. Samuel Gurney, with the assistance of her daughters and some other ladies. When not engaged in nursing, the 'Sisters' reside at 'the Home' in the City. They wear a plain but inconspicuous dress ; they are maintained and paid by the Institution, but are not permitted to receive any money

or gift, under any circumstances, for their attendance in illness.

The Queen Dowager kindly granted her name as Patroness. With Lady Inglis as President, and an effective Committee to conduct the management of the Institution, it has steadily advanced and prospered, and now contains nearly one hundred sisters.

Whilst at the Home, the sisters visit and nurse the sick poor in its neighbourhood. But there is another class of persons to whom their services are invaluable, persons of comparative refinement, but who are in circumstances of great limitation, perhaps wholly dependent on their own exertions for support. To such as these the boon is great indeed, of an experienced, conscientious nurse, who carefully and with fidelity discharges her onerous duties. In cases of this kind a large proportion of their time is occupied often entirely gratuitously; at other times, on terms proportioned to the means of the patient, but which are very far from repaying the Institution. The lowest sum which is considered to cover its current expenses is £1, 1s. a week.¹

Amongst the gifts bestowed upon her, a remarkable one was the power Mrs. Fry had of accepting rest, and even recreation, in the midst of her most arduous engagements. She could turn from her cares, and, after a time, resume her occupations refreshed and invigorated. Nor did this faculty apply only to longer periods of leisure. The same

¹ Nursing Sisters' Institution, Devonshire Square, Bishopsgate Street.

powers extended to short intervals of sleep. Wearied with many hours of continuous writing and attention, returned from a long day in London or visits to the sick and afflicted, she would take off her clear muslin cap, wrap a shawl round her head, and lie down upon the sofa. She liked something thrown over her feet; scarcely was this done ere she slept, and a sleep so calm and balmy, so like the sleep of infancy, 'so truly nature's soft nurse,' that after a few minutes, and a very few sufficed, she would arouse herself, if not awakened, with a smile almost invariable and quite peculiar to herself, bathe her face in cold water, attend a little to her toilet, and return to life calmed and revived.

Whilst pursuing her own peculiar avocations, Elizabeth Fry was not unmindful of the many and stirring interests of the day. Her warmest sympathies were called forth at the time of the Niger Expedition, for those brave and self-devoted men preparing to go forth with their lives in their hands to do battle against cruelty, slavery, and death. She speaks of meeting Captain Trotter and Captain Bird Allen at Mr. Buxton's; Sir Edward Parry, Sir Robert Inglis, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, and many others, being present. The following Sunday, accompanied by Mr. Buxton and Mr. Samuel Gurney, she went on board the 'Wilberforce.' She describes this occasion as 'taking place in a great hulk, there not being suitable room in the ship.'

'In the first place a considerable portion of the Church Service was read; then Captain B. Allen

opened the way for any present to speak. My brother Buxton rose and addressed all present, officers and crew. Further, he said, on behalf of any there of the Society of Friends, he wished all to know that they did not come prepared, but entirely trusted to the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and how earnestly he desired that on that occasion the Holy Spirit might be poured forth upon some present, and help them to speak. He said to those going with the expedition how he prayed for them, and should pray for them day and night, that their Lord might be with them, keep them and bless them (or to that effect): we then sat in silence a while, then I arose and ministered. I think the first text I had to speak was, "Put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." I had to show the wonderful power and efficacy of the influence of a true Christian spirit, and however humble a situation any might fill, they would be preachers of righteousness, if they were thus governed by the spirit of Christ. I showed them how our Lord made use of humble instruments, such as the poor fishermen; then I endeavoured to encourage the most peaceable conduct towards the heathen. I had some advice for the officers, and afterwards knelt down, and had a very solemn time in prayer. My brother Samuel spoke very acceptably, and then gave them all a Text-book, and we parted in love.'

From the 'Wilberforce,' Mrs. Fry went on board a female convict ship lying in the river. They found

the unhappy women on the deck singing hymns ; she gave them a 'parting exhortation' before commencing their long voyage, so rife with temptation and trial, and committing them to the keeping of the Great Protector of the Universe, bade them farewell.

' *Upton, 5th Month 30th.*—In the very depths of affliction, O Lord, I apply unto Thee, in faith, for help. Leave me not, nor forsake me in this awful time, and enable me to thank Thee for the mitigations permitted. Our dearest Louisa being again extremely ill, I in my hurry gave her a wrong medicine of a poisonous nature. My fright at first was inexpressible. It was thought that she did not suffer materially from it, but in addition to her other sufferings and afflicted state, it was bitter to me almost past expression ; but I sought to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. The conflict of my mind is great indeed ; not I think so much in giving up this beloved one, if the Lord see meet to take her to Himself, into His kingdom, though it would be very hard to part, as I have perhaps too much encouraged her with the expectation of recovery. Still, she has had a long time of preparation ; for many months past, she has, I know, doubted her living, and I do believe, that a very precious work of grace has been going on in her heart, and through infinite wisdom, mercy, and love she has, through a Saviour's blood, obtained pardon and reconciliation with God.

' Permit me, gracious Lord, in this deep emergency,

to entreat Thee to save my beloved child with an everlasting salvation, and if it be Thy blessed will, grant her a little revival, that I may never have the weight of believing that her end was accelerated by my carelessness. Be very near to her, granting her Thy peace and the joy of Thy salvation, and be very near to help her beloved husband, whose tender care over her is wonderful. Keep also, merciful Lord, Thy poor servant from losing her faith or her power of mind in this close trial of faith and patience.'

CHAPTER XVII.

1841.

Another journey—Rotterdam—The Hague—Amsterdam—Bremen—Hamburg—Copenhagen—Berlin—Silesia—Illness—Return to England—Ramsgate—Upton Lane—Lynn—Earlham—Warley Lodge—Winter at home.

FROM the time of Mrs. Fry's return from her journey of the preceding year, she had continually received communications from the Continent, urging her to visit places where she had not been, or to return and complete her work where she had already commenced it. When she heard of these openings for usefulness, her heart responded to the call. Her home party was provided for, having arranged to spend the autumn at Ramsgate, whilst her beloved brother, Joseph John Gurney, offered her the great advantage of his society and support—he believing it his duty to visit several places on the Continent, for various religious and philanthropic purposes, especially to impart the observations he had made during his lengthened tarriance in America and the West Indies, on the subject of Slavery, to those potentates who still permitted this evil to exist in their dominions. Mrs. Fry shrank from the great

effort of leaving home, and encountering the fatigue of travelling, for her own sensations and many symptoms in her general health could but lead to the belief that her life of exertion and effort had told irremediably upon her vital powers. But it was not because the shades of evening were gathering round her that she would slacken her labours for the good of others.. Whilst it was yet day she desired to work and accomplish all that her great Master might have for her to do, before 'the night came, wherein no man can work.'

Mr. Gurney took with him his daughter Anna,¹ and Mrs. Fry had for her special companion and care-taker, her niece, Elizabeth Gurney, who had been her attendant on her previous journey.

The travellers arrived at Rotterdam, July the 31st, 1841, and passed a tranquil Sabbath there. In the evening, they held a large meeting in an apartment of the hotel; the following day visited prisons; and on the 2d of August proceeded to the Hague.

To her home circle Mrs. Fry writes:—

'Our visits to the boys' prison at Rotterdam, and to the women's prison at Gouda, were highly interesting. I find a second visit to a place much better than a first. We had two meetings—one philanthropic, one religious—both well got through, and a large attendance. I felt in leaving the place much comfort and satisfaction.

'When we arrived at the Hague, our kind friend

¹ Afterwards Mrs. Backhouse.

Lady Disbrowe (the wife of the British Minister), and Sir Alexander and Lady Mallet, received us cordially. We sent our letters to the King from Prince Albert. On Sixth-day, a message came to desire that we would wait upon the King and Queen the next day, at half-past one o'clock, accompanied by Lady Disbrowe.

'We remained with the King and Queen and their daughter the Princess Sophia, about an hour. As rather an interesting event in my life, I mean to tell you particulars of this interview. Before we went we had a solemn, short meeting for worship with our dear and valued friends of this town; afterwards we prepared to go. I was decorated by my best garments outwardly, and I desired so to be clothed with better ornaments spiritually as to render attractive that which I had to recommend. We all felt very weightily our serious engagement, as we had much to represent to the King respecting the West Indies, prisons and religious education for the people in his own country. The King, a lively, clever, perfect gentleman, not a large man, in regimentals; the Queen, sister to the Emperor of Russia, a fine stately person, in full and rather beautiful morning dress of white; the Princess much the same. After our presentation, the King began easy and pleasant conversation with me about my visiting prisons. I felt helped to speak very boldly, yet respectfully; so did my brother. I concluded by expressing my earnest desire that the King's reign might be marked by the prisons being

so reformed, that punishment might become the means of the reformation of criminals ; by the lower classes being religiously educated ; and by the slaves in their colonies being liberated. The King then took me by the hand, and said he hoped God would bless me. I expressed my desire that the blessing of the Almighty might rest on the King, Queen, their children and their children's children. We gave them books which they accepted kindly. It certainly was a very pleasant and satisfactory interview that, I humbly trust, will not prove in vain in the Lord.'

At Amsterdam they remained four days, visiting the prisons and various public institutions, and holding meetings for philanthropic and religious objects.

The Lunatic Asylum they found in a deplorable condition. Among other miserable objects, one unhappy woman, unclothed, lay grovelling in straw. Whether the look of compassion or the voice attracted her cannot be known ; but she dragged herself, as nearly as her chains would admit, to her visitant and endeavoured to reach her ; the hand she desired to touch was yielded ; she kissed it again and again and burst into an agony of tears. Will any one venture to assert that this poor creature was past all touch of human feeling or the reach of gentle control ?

On Saturday, the 14th, they had the happiness of finding themselves in excellent quarters, in the pleasant town of Bremen. The early part of Sunday

was tranquil, but in the evening there was a very large meeting held in the Museum, a noble building near the hotel. Long before the appointed hour well-dressed persons proceeded to secure places. Several of the pastors were present. One of them at the close arose, and beautifully addressed the missionary brother and sister, expressing his desire that what had passed might be blessed to the people, and that they might be themselves blessed. To Mrs. Fry he said, 'Your name has long been to us a word of beauty.' A Christian gentleman wrote to them afterwards, 'Now I am more than convinced that you are sent to us by the Lord, to be and to become a great blessing and a salt to our city.' The following morning they went to see the prison. Bremen being a Hans town, the address afterwards forwarded by Mrs. Fry and her brother to the authorities necessarily varied in some respects from one intended for a sovereign power.

Their little transit across the Elbe would have been delightful, with a glorious setting sun, but for a mob of persons returning from Harburg market, who, having discovered Mrs. Fry and her tract-bag so pressed upon her that she was glad to take refuge in the carriage, whilst their clever and devoted courier (François) harangued the people and carefully prevented their approach. The time at Hamburg was extremely full, work being ready for them before their arrival. There she found Miss Sieveking, with whom she had long communicated, and whose active energy had been the means of estab-

lishing an association, termed the 'Society of the Ladies' Committee for Visiting and Assisting the Destitute.'

Many other admirable institutions existed in Hamburg, none more interesting than the *Rauhe Haus*, founded in 1833 by Herr Wichern. The object originally intended was the establishment of a Reformatory for boys, but another and even more important element has arisen from it,—the preparation of young men for active religious service in the Church and the world by the experience gained there.

Whilst prisons and public institutions occupied the mornings, the evenings were devoted by Mrs. Fry and her party to social intercourse where subjects of benevolence or religion were discussed, or to appointed meetings for worship. They held two of this nature at Hamburg; the last, a very large one, took place in the Assembly Room, a splendid apartment, fully lighted and well arranged. Many of the authorities and principal inhabitants of the place were present,—the English *Chargé d'Affaires*, the French *Chargé d'Affaires*, and many others. They were conducted into the meeting by the *Syndic Sieveking*, an eminently good man, who led them to a small platform. Mrs. Fry rose to explain her experience in prisons, and the principles upon which she had acted, the results of gospel truth being taught, Christian kindness, change of habit, and many similar topics; she then spoke of the institutions of their city, and all she had remarked in

them of a desirable or an undesirable nature. Mr. Gurney addressed the assembly upon what he had seen in the West Indies, abolition of slavery, religious liberty, etc. Great attention was paid, and the interpretation was excellent. At the conclusion, about fifty of their friends attended them to their apartment, when, after partaking of refreshments, they parted with regret and affection on all sides.

The following afternoon saw them embarked on the Baltic; they had a brilliant moonlight night, and pleasant voyage to Copenhagen, where they remained a week.

*'On board the packet leaving Copenhagen,
8th Month 30th, 1841.*

MY DEAREST HUSBAND AND CHILDREN,—We have been favoured to leave Denmark with peaceful minds, having endeavoured to fulfil our mission as ability has been granted us; a more important one, or a more interesting one, I think I never was called into. On First-day morning, when we arrived in the harbour at Copenhagen, we were met by Peter Browne, the Secretary to the English Legation, to inform us that the Queen had engaged for us apartments in the Hotel Royal. The appearance of the hotel was, I should think, like the arrangements of one of our first-rate hotels about a hundred years ago.

'The next morning the Queen came to town, and we had a very pleasant and satisfactory interview with her; she certainly is a most delightful woman, as well as a truly Christian and devoted character:

she is also lovely in person, and quite the Queen in appearance. She took me in her carriage to her infant school; it really was beautiful to see her surrounded by the little children, and to hear her translating what I wished to say to them. After staying with her about two hours, we returned to our hotel; and that evening took a drive to the beautiful Palace of Fredericksburgh, in a most lovely situation, the beauties of land and sea combined, with fine forest trees around it. The following morning we regularly began our prison visiting; very sad scenes we witnessed in some of them. We saw hundreds of persons confined for life in melancholy places; but what occupied our most particular attention was the state of the persecuted Christians. We found Baptist ministers, excellent men, in one of the prisons; and many others of this sect suffer much in this country, for there is hardly any religious tolerance. It produces the most flattening religious influence, I think more marked than in Roman Catholic countries. We were much devoted to this service of visiting prisons. Third and Fourth days, we received various persons in the evenings, but saw as yet but few Danes. We dined at Sir Henry Watkin Wynn's, our ambassador, and here we became acquainted with several persons; they live quite in the country, and we saw the true Danish country-house and gardens. The King and Queen were kind enough to invite us all to dine at their palace in the country; this was a very serious occasion, as we had so much to lay before the King

—slavery in the West Indies—the condition of the persecuted Christians here—and the sad state of the prisons. I was in spirit so weighed down with the importance of the occasion, that I hardly could enjoy the beautiful scene. We arrived about a quarter-past three o'clock; the Queen met us with the utmost kindness and condescension, and took us a walk in their lovely grounds, which are open to the public. We had much interesting conversation, between French and English, and made ourselves understood. When our walk was finished, we were shown into the drawing-room to the King, who met us very courteously; several were there in attendance. Dinner was soon announced: imagine me, the King on one side, and the Queen on the other, and only my poor French to depend upon; but I did my best to turn the time to account. At dinner we found the fruit on the table; first we had soup of the country, secondly melons, thirdly yams, anchovies, caviare, bread and butter and radishes, then meat, then puddings, then fish, then chickens, then game, and so on. The fashion was to touch glasses; no drinking healths. The King and Queen touched my glass on both sides: when dinner was over we all rose and went out together. The afternoon was very entertaining; the King and Queen took us to the drawing-room window, where we were to see a large school of orphans, protégés of the Queen. I took advantage of this opportunity, and laid the state of the prisons before the King, telling him at the same time that I had a petition

for him, which I meant to make before leaving the palace. After an amusing time with the poor children, my brother Joseph withdrew with the King into a private room, where for about an hour he gave him his attention, whilst he thoroughly enlarged upon the state of their West India Islands. I stayed with the Queen; but after a while went in to them, and did entreat the King for the poor Baptists in prison, and for religious toleration. I did my best, in few words, to express my mind, and very strongly I did it. I gave also Luther's sentiments upon the subject. We slept at our friends the Brownes', a beautiful place by the sea-side. An agreeable, serious gentleman, Julius Schesteed, was our interpreter, and remained with us, helping us to prepare our document for the King; he has become our constant companion, and is now with us in the packet, going to Lübeck, to interpret for us there. On Seventh-day, one of our fullest days, we drove into the country to visit the King's sister, the Landgravine of Hesse Cassel, the Prince, her husband, brother to the Duchess of Cambridge, and the lovely Princesses, her daughters. We endeavoured to turn these visits to account, by our conversation. In the evening, we held one of our very large meetings, I may say a splendid one, as to the company, room, etc. I trust that we were both so helped to speak the truth in love on various and very important subjects, as to assist the causes nearest our hearts for our poor fellow-mortals. It did not appear desirable to allude to the persecuted Christians:

as we had laid their case before the King, we might have done harm by it; but I feel the way in which Protestant Europe is persecuting, to be a subject that cannot and must not be allowed to rest.

‘Where we now are, the same old Lutherans whom we found persecuted in Prussia are persecuting others. The way in which ceremonies are depended upon is wonderful; no person is allowed to fill any office civilly or religiously, until confirmed, not even to marry; and when once confirmed, we hear that it leads to a feeling of such security spiritually, that they think themselves at liberty to do as they like; sadly numerous are the instances of moral fall. These very weighty subjects so deeply occupying my attention, and being separated from so many beloved ones, prevent the lively enjoyment I should otherwise feel in some of the scenes we pass through; but I see this to be well, and in the right ordering of Providence. I have the kindest attendants and everything to make me comfortable.

‘On First-day morning, we had a very interesting Meeting with the poor Baptists. We then again went into the country, to lay all our statements before the King and Queen. I read the one about the prisons and the persecuted Christians; and my brother read the one about the West Indies; we had had them translated into Danish, for the King to read at the same time. After pressing these things as strongly as we felt right, we expressed our religious concern and desires for the King and Queen. I read a little to them in one of Paul’s Epistles;

after that I felt that I must commit them and these important causes to Him who can alone touch the heart. We had a very handsome luncheon, when I was again seated between the King and Queen. I may say their kindness was very great to me.

‘On Second-day morning, we formed a Society for attending to poor prisoners—gentlemen and ladies; and then paid a most delightful farewell religious visit to the Queen and Princess. I forgot to mention a very interesting visit to the Queen Dowager.

‘We arrived at Lübeck, after a calm voyage. I believe that we were sent to Copenhagen for a purpose. May our unworthy labours be blessed to the liberation of many captives, spiritually and temporally.

‘May the God of peace be near to all of you and to us, as our continual Keeper and Helper.

‘Farewell, in most tender and near love to all.
Yours in deed, and in truth, ELIZABETH FRY.’

From Hamburg, by Minden and Pymont, they pursued their way to Hanover. A day of very hard travelling brought them to Magdeburg, and a second, by railroad diverging to visit Wittenberg, to Berlin. Numerous objects awaited their attention in that city, not the less weighty to Mrs. Fry, from having been there before and made so many acquaintances, besides the additional interest she felt in Institutions already known to her.

The state of the prisons was of course her chief object of attention. Mrs. Fry and Mr. Gurney pre-

pared recommendations to lay before General Thile, Minister of the Royal House, embodying their observations and opinions, and urging the necessity of many alterations before real improvement could be effected. The Prussian Royal Family were at the time in Silesia; thither the travellers had been invited to follow them, for there were those amongst them who considered that the retirement and tranquillity of that place would be well suited for the consideration of Mrs. Fry's objects. It was not a light prospect to Mrs. Fry; she had naturally the fear of man deeply implanted in her character. Religion had changed its direction, but not eradicated it. It was no longer for herself that she was afraid; it was for the cause's sake to which her heart was given; for amongst these royal and noble personages she dreaded, in either herself or her companions, anything that might not adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour; but she soon discovered that she had come amongst Christians, many of them devoted as herself to the service of their Maker. In the beautiful retirement of the Reisenberg, she saw Royalty retaining all the grace and finish that appertains to it, but freed from the encumbrance of a city court. Her reception was more than kind; honoured for her 'works' sake, she found herself by all, and on all occasions, treated with Christian affection and consideration.

No record of this time written by herself exists. The deficiency is, however, well supplied from the journal of one of her companions.

It was on the 10th of September that the party arrived at Hirschberg, a beautiful little village, inhabited by a clean and very respectable class of peasantry. It is situated about eight miles from the Royal residences of Erdmansdorf, Fischbach, and Schildau; and is nearly equidistant from Buchwald, the home of the Countess Reden, of whose Christian character and benevolence Mrs. Fry had often before heard. The King and Queen were at that time residing at Erdmansdorf. At Fischbach lived Prince and Princess William, the uncle and aunt of the Queen, with their sons Prince Waldemar and Prince Adelbert, and their daughter Princess Mary. Prince Charles, brother of the King, was also on a visit at Fischbach. The sister of the King and her husband, Prince and Princess Frederic of the Netherlands, with their daughter Princess Louisa, were then residing at Schildau.

To many of the Royal Family, Mrs. Fry had been presented the previous year at Berlin, and the Princess Frederic of the Netherlands she had visited at her own beautiful home, near the Hague, some time before. It was a lovely spot, in which Mrs. Fry now found her tent pitched for a while. To a mere passing traveller there was much to delight and to please; but even still more of deep interest to those who could in any degree enter into the Royal domestic circles there assembled; and this was Mrs Fry privileged to do, with much enjoyment, and an earnest desire to be permitted to be useful and faithful in all her intercourse with them. To enable her

to be more accessible to the opportunities thus furnished, the pleasant little Goldenstern Hotel in the village of Schmiedeberg, had been exchanged for the equally agreeable and commodious inn at Hirschberg. The mornings were usually passed in writing, and preparing important documents on the Prison, Slavery, and other questions; and the afternoons were commonly spent in some visit to one of the palaces, which had been previously arranged. The Sunday was a day replete with interest. In the early part of it, it was necessary to finish an address to the King on Religious Toleration, and on matters connected with prisons.

Mrs. Fry was at that time suffering from great debility and fatigue; but a power not her own seemed granted her to rise above her infirmities, and meet the various duties, which on that Sabbath were given her to fulfil. It is only those who held intimate communication with her at these times, who can in any measure understand the extreme nervousness of her constitution on the one hand, or, on the other, the amount of strength granted her—granted doubtless in answer to fervent constant prayer, offered to the very moment of her entering a large assembly, or sitting down to commence some document, or engage in some important conversation. She prayed that in nothing might she seek herself, in *all* Christ Jesus; and that all which He laid upon her for His glory, and the good of her fellow-creatures, she might rightly and faithfully perform. Such was the spirit in which that Sabbath morning found her. Marvel-

lously were her prayers answered—most remarkably was her strength upheld.

The papers which she and Mr. Gurney had prepared for the King were again perused during the drive to Princess William's Palace, which they reached about one o'clock, having called on the way at Buchwald for the excellent Countess Reden, whose ever-ready aid was given to support and help her, and who, in the present instance, interpreted Mrs. Fry's words for the Princess. Many other ladies were assembled at the Palace, and after some conversation of a general nature, every one remained in silence to listen to what she might have to say to them. This opportunity of addressing gospel truth to such a company she dared not pass by; every word was listened to, every expression of her countenance watched, during her discourse. She spoke of the importance of upholding a religious standard in the world; of making a final and decisive choice in these important matters; of taking Christ as the only portion and rejecting all besides. She impressed upon her hearers the duties incumbent on persons of a higher class of using their influence with others for good and not for evil. She spoke of the privilege of possessing such means of usefulness. Very solemnly she urged upon all heads of large establishments the vast amount of responsibility intrusted to them; the prevention of crime, and the good to be derived even by silent example, still more by the daily reading of the Holy Scriptures to the assembled family. She added an account of the experience of

many prisoners, as to the blessings of being placed in professedly religious families, and the awful temptations presented to the servants of those who take no care for their souls and are neglecting their eternal interests. Many tears were shed on this occasion, and all seemed anxious to share her sympathy and love.

During her stay in Silesia, Elizabeth Fry had opportunities of intercourse with the poor Tyrolese, who having fled from their native Zillerthal, on account of the religious persecution which they endured from the Austrian Government, had thrown themselves under the protection of the late King of Prussia, and by him had been placed under the care of the Countess Reden who had proved herself indeed a nursing-mother to them.

Their new home lay in the domain of Ermansdorf, where each obtained a house and farm suitable to his means and his former position in the Tyrol. The colony itself has received the name of their old home, Zillerthal. The Countess of Reden had their cottages built in the true Swiss style, with large balconies and long roofs; established for them schools, and in every possible way employed and instructed them. Ever thoughtful of their interests, she invited them to come to Buchwald that Sabbath evening to receive encouragement and comfort from Mrs. Fry, she having expressed her wish to hold with them some communication in Christian love. The King and Queen and other members of the Royal Family were present at the service, and before

the evening closed Mrs. Fry had much close and heart-searching intercourse with them. The exiles from Zillerthal formed a curious and picturesque group, dressed in the costume of their country ; both men and women in the dark green cloth clothes, and high-pointed hats, many of the latter ornamented with garlands and nosegays of flowers. A long table was placed at one end of the room, at which the Zillerthalian sat, and in front of which was a Moravian brother, for whom the good Countess had sent forty miles, to act as interpreter. On the right hand of the table were seated the Royal Family and others, and many persons stood crowding round the door. It would be scarcely possible to describe the deep interest of that whole group, or the solemn silence which prevailed when Mrs. Fry began to speak.

After Mr. Gurney had in a few words prepared the way for her, she rose with much solemnity and earnestness. Never did she address any assembly more beautifully, with more unction, or more truly from the depths of her heart ; and no audience could have given more profound attention to every word she uttered. She invited them all to a close dependence upon Jesus Christ, and urged a full, firm, and constant trust in Him as their Lord and their Saviour, their King and their God.

With her usual tact and power, each individual, each class present seemed included in her address. It was the first occasion on which she had seen the King since his accession to the throne, and she knew

too that it was the first time of his meeting many there present, as their sovereign. Her words of sympathy to him, on the death of his father, and her estimate of his present important position in Europe, which she spoke for herself, as well as for those about her, were beautifully adapted to the occasion. Mr. Gurney added a few words; afterwards a hymn was sung, led by the Moravian brethren, and the Tyrolese departed. Every one flocked around her with a word of love or kindness, but none expressed more interest or more gratitude than the King himself.

The following day the travellers dined at Fischbach, where she again met the King, and then came the leave-taking, always so sad, when the probabilities of life afford little expectation of meeting again on this side the eternal world.

The history here becomes almost too mournful. Mr. Gurney was earnestly anxious to return to England by a certain day, only to be accomplished by very rapid travelling. Such fatigue, though with every alleviation and indulgence, was more than his sister's failing health could bear. Sorrowful was the letter she wrote to her family from Cassel, dated the 26th of September:—

‘MY MOST TENDERLY BELOVED HUSBAND AND CHILDREN,—I am glad, and I trust thankful, to be so far on our way homewards, and I hope and expect that we may this day week have the consolation of being once more in England; my longings for it are almost inexpressible, and I have to pray

and seek after faith and patience not to be too anxious, or in too great a hurry. I have continued very far from well, so that I am obliged to be assisted to walk up-stairs. I might have had the same attack at home; but one thing is certain, we may fully trust in our Heavenly Father, who is constantly protecting us under the wing of His love, and who knows what is best for us. I have sometimes thought that after being so helped on my way, from the palace to the prison, it was likely that the poor instrument should need a little further refining and purifying, for our works are to be tried as by fire. I have very earnestly desired not to repine, or to be unwilling to drink the cup that may be given me. We travel with six horses to make the greatest speed home. I have a board in the carriage, so that when your uncle and Anna are outside, I can quite rest, and make a real sofa of it, when I need it, which I do for one or two stages in the day. Mary and François are very attentive and kind; indeed, how differently am I cared for to many poor missionaries. I wish you to feel for me, but not to be too anxious about me; commit me entirely to Him who only knows what is best for me. Your aunt Elizabeth's letter was very seasonable and acceptable. I wish her and all my children to know how it is with me, for I need their sympathy and prayers, at the same time that I feel the best help to be near, and the power that says, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." Often in my very wakeful, and at times distressing nights, a sweet peace comes over me to

calm my troubled spirit. We hear from newspapers, that the poor Baptists in Copenhagen are to be released from prison, a small sum being paid by way of fine. What a comfort! and the poor Lutherans in Prussia say they are now so well off that they do not wish us to ask for any more liberty for them of the King.—I am indeed yours most faithfully and lovingly,
ELIZABETH FRY.'

On the 2d of October the travellers landed at Dover. There Mr. Fry met them, little prepared for the melancholy condition in which his wife was to return. But her loving grateful spirit prevailed over all her trials and sufferings.

In her letters and journal, she only alludes to her sufferings in order to record the support given her, and the alleviation she receives in the care and love of her family and attendants.

After a short stay at Ramsgate, and visits to some of her relatives, she returned to the comforts and rest of home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1842-1843.

Communications with the Continent—The King of Prussia in England—Sale at the Mansion House—Letter to her eldest son—Autumn at Cromer—Return by West Norfolk to Upton Lane—Last visit to France, 1843—Female Prison at Clermont-en-Oise—Paris—Guizot—The Duchess of Orleans—Greeks—Return home.

THE infirm state of Elizabeth Fry's health precluded at this period much active exertion; but her time was fully occupied, and her interest not at all diminished in those subjects to which she had so long devoted her attention. She had the happiness of hearing of the beneficial results of her exertions in different parts of the Continent; from others, she received details of the obstacles which had occurred to delay or preclude improvement.

From her beloved and valued friend, the Countess Reden, she received the joyful intelligence that the King of Prussia had urged upon General Thile, Minister of the Royal House, the necessity of effecting various reforms in prisons.

A few weeks later, a delightful account came from the Pasteur Fliedner, chaplain to the prison at Jauer, of the improvement amongst the prisoners. A

hundred and three Bibles, and a hundred and twelve Prayer Books, had been purchased by them, at the price of much self-denial, out of their small earnings, besides many copies of the Scriptures and tracts having been distributed amongst them.

Sir John Pirie the preceding autumn had been elected Lord Mayor of London. Lady Pirie had been one of Mrs. Fry's most indefatigable helpers in Newgate, and in all her public objects. Sir John and she, being both persons eminently devoted to the service of God and the good of their fellow-men, resolved to use their year of power in doing everything within their reach to benefit others, and exalt the cause of truth and righteousness on earth. Amongst other things, they were bent upon assisting the cause of prison reform; and in their partial kindness looking upon Mrs. Fry as a sort of impersonation of the subject, they desired to bring her into communication with such persons as were likely to forward her views, for they believed that her persuasive arguments were founded on such indubitable truth, that they required but to be understood to carry conviction to the minds of those who heard them. With this object, they urged her to meet the few ladies invited to the banquet given at the Mansion House, on occasion of the laying the first stone of the new Royal Exchange.

She hesitated at first, but on consideration believed it right to yield to the wishes of her friends. Where she sought her armour, and how she wore it, her own words must show:—

First Month 18th, 1842.—Through condescending mercy, I may say I found this prayer answered. I had an important conversation, on a female prison being built, with Sir James Graham, our present Secretary of State, upon the Patronage Society, etc. With Lord Aberdeen, Foreign Secretary, I spoke on some matters connected with the present state of the Continent; with Lord Stanley, our Colonial Secretary, upon the state of our penal colonies, and the condition of the women in them, hoping to open the door for further communication with him on these subjects. Nearly the whole dinner was occupied in deeply interesting conversation with Prince Albert and Sir Robert Peel. With the Prince, I spoke very seriously upon the Christian education of their children, the management of the nursery, the infinite importance of a holy and religious life; how I had seen it in all ranks of life—no real peace or prosperity without it; then the state of Europe—the advancement of religion in the Continental Courts; then prisons; their present state in this country—my fear that our punishments were becoming too severe—my wish that the Queen should be informed of some particulars respecting separate confinement, etc. We also had much entertaining conversation about my journeys, the state of Europe, habits of countries and mode of living.’

The King of Prussia’s arrival in England soon afterwards, to stand in person as sponsor to the infant Prince of Wales, was an event of much interest to Mrs. Fry. She greatly wished to see His Majesty

again. But it was not for her to make any overture; it was therefore with much pleasure that she received an intimation of the King's desire to meet her at the Mansion House.

'First Month 29th, 1842.—To-morrow, the King of Prussia has appointed me to meet him to luncheon at the Mansion House. I have rather felt its being the Sabbath; but as all is to be conducted in a quiet, suitable and most orderly manner, consistent with the day, I am quite easy to go. May my most holy, merciful Lord, be near to me as my Helper, my Keeper, and my Counsellor. My dearest husband and Katharine are to go with me. Oh, may my way be made plain before me as to what to do, what to leave undone; when to speak, and when to be silent.

'30th, First Day.—I felt low and far from well when I set off this morning for London; but, through the tender mercy of my God, soon after sitting down in meeting, I partook of much peace.

'After this solemn and refreshing meeting we went to the Mansion House. The Duke of Cambridge was there, and many others who accompanied the King. We had much deeply interesting conversation on various important subjects of mutual interest. We spoke of the christening. I dwelt on its pomp as undesirable; on prisons; on the marriage of the Princess Mary of Prussia; on the Sabbath. I entreated the Lord Mayor to have no toasts, to which he acceded, and the King approved; but it was no light or easy matter. I rejoice to believe my efforts

were right. I told the King my objection to anything of the kind being allowed by the Lord Mayor on that day; indeed, I expressed my disapprobation of them altogether. I may at the end of this weighty day return thanks to my most gracious Lord and Master, who has granted me His help and the sweet feeling of His love.'

It was at the Mansion House that His Majesty arranged to meet Mrs. Fry the following morning at Newgate, and afterwards to take luncheon at Upton Lane. She describes the King's visit:—

'*Second Month 1st, Third-day.*—Yesterday was a day never to be forgotten whilst memory lasts. We set off about eleven o'clock, my sister Elizabeth Gurney and myself, to meet the King of Prussia at Newgate. I proceeded with the Lady Mayoress to Newgate, where we were met by many gentlemen. My dear brother and sister Gurney, and Susannah Corder, being with me, was a great comfort. We waited so long for the King that I feared he would not come; however, at last he arrived, and the Lady Mayoress and I, accompanied by the Sheriffs, went to meet the King at the door of the prison. He appeared much pleased to meet our little party, and after taking a little refreshment he gave me his arm, and we proceeded into the prison and up to one of the long wards, where everything was prepared; the poor women round the table, about sixty of them, many of our Ladies' Committee, and some others; also numbers of gentlemen following the King, Sheriffs, etc. I felt deeply, but quiet in spirit—

fear of man much removed. After we were seated, the King on my right hand, the Lady Mayoress on the left, I expressed my desire that the attention of none, particularly the poor prisoners, might be diverted from attending to our reading by the company there, however interesting, but that we should remember that the King of kings and Lord of lords was present, in whose fear we should abide, and seek to profit by what we heard. I then read the 12th chapter of Romans. I dwelt on the mercies of God being the strong inducement to serve Him, and no longer to be conformed to this world. Then I finished the chapter, afterwards impressing our all being members of one body, poor and rich, high and low, all one in Christ, and members one of another. I then related the case of a poor prisoner, who appeared truly converted, and who became such a holy example; then I enlarged on love and forgiving one another, showing how Christians must love their enemies. After a solemn pause, to my deep humiliation, and in the cross, I believed it my duty to kneel down before this most curious, interesting, and mixed company, for I felt my God must be served the same everywhere and amongst all people, whatever reproach it brought me into. I first prayed for the conversion of prisoners and sinners generally, that a blessing might rest on the labours of those in authority, as well as the more humble labourers for their conversion; next I prayed for the King of Prussia, his Queen, his kingdom, that it might be more and more as the city set on the hill that could

not be hid ; that true religion in its purity, simplicity, and power, might more and more break forth, and that every cloud that obscured it might be removed ; then for us all, that we might be of the number of the redeemed, and eventually unite with them in heaven, in a never-ending song of praise. All this prayer was truly offered in the name and for the sake of the dear Saviour, that it might be heard and answered. I only mention the subject, but by no means the words. The King then again gave me his arm, and we walked down together. There were difficulties raised about his going to Upton, but he chose to persevere. I went with the Lady Mayoress and the Sheriffs, the King with his own people. We arrived first. I had to hasten to take off my cloak, and then went down to meet him at his carriage-door, with my husband, and seven of our sons and sons-in-law. I then walked with him into the drawing-room, where all was in beautiful order—neat, and adorned with flowers : I presented to the King our eight daughters and daughters-in-law (Rachel only away), our seven sons and eldest grandson, my brother and sister Buxton, Sir Henry and Lady Pelly, and my sister, Elizabeth Fry—my brother and sister Gurney he had known before—and afterwards presented twenty-five of our grandchildren. We had a solemn silence before our meal, which was handsome and fit for a king, yet not extravagant—everything most complete and nice. I sat by the King, who appeared to enjoy his dinner, perfectly at his ease and very happy with us. We went into the drawing-room

after another solemn silence, and a few words which I uttered in prayer for the King and Queen. We found a deputation of Friends with an address to read to him ; the King appeared to feel it much.

‘The King expressed his desire that blessings may continue to rest on our house.’

Two very diverse interests shortly followed—the departure of a grandson for the China seas, in H.M.S. ‘Agincourt,’ and preparations for a sale for the benefit of the Funds of the British Ladies’ Society. The Lord Mayor had offered the use of the Egyptian Hall for the purpose, and Lady Pirie had volunteered to make every arrangement to lessen the fatigue of Mrs. Fry, and render it easy and agreeable to her coadjutors and friends.

Both events are recorded in her journal :—

‘*Fourth Month 17th.*—I feel the prospect seriously of our dear grandchild¹ going to sea : he leaves us to-morrow. It is no light matter. May our God, through His tender mercy, bring good out of this apparent evil. I have exceedingly regretted his going, but I am now more reconciled.

‘This week we have a very large sale at the Mansion House for the British Society. Although, on the whole, I approve these sales, there are many difficulties attached to them. I earnestly desire and pray, that through the tender mercy of my God, no harm may come of it, but in whatever we do, that the cause of truth and righteousness may be exalted.

‘O Lord, hear ; O Lord, help ; O Lord, protect

¹ The late Captain S. Gurney Cresswell, R.N.

and forgive, for Thine own Name's sake ; and I pray, gracious Lord, that Thou wouldest be very near to me this day and this week ; and help me, in deep humility, godly sincerity, and faithfulness, to do Thy will. And be near, I pray Thee, to all my children and friends, as their Helper and Keeper, and to my dear little grandson in this his most serious going out. I ask Thy protecting care over him, and if it be Thy will, make him feel the dangers, temptations and difficulties of the line he has chosen, that he may never be one to promote war, but rather peace upon earth.'

The kindness and liberality of Sir John and Lady Pirie on this occasion towards all, was only equalled by their personal and most considerate attention to Mrs. Fry. The sale occupied three days, and realized above £1300.

About this time she addressed to her eldest son the following letter, on his becoming a magistrate :—

'MY DEAREST JOHN,—Ever since I heard of the prospect of thy being a magistrate, I have had it on my mind to write to thee ; but, alas ! such is the press of my engagements, that in my tender state I cannot do what I would. I now, however, take up my pen, to tell thee a little of my mind. I think the office of magistrate a very weighty one, and often, I fear, too lightly entered, and its very important and serious duties too carelessly attended to ; and this I attribute to a want of a due feeling of the real difficulty of performing any duty, parti-

cularly one where much true wisdom is required in doing justice between man and man, unless governed and directed by that wisdom that cometh from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." I believe it is thy desire to be governed by this wisdom, and to do justice and love mercy; but remember this requires a very watchful and subjected spirit, and those who have to sit in judgment on others must often sit in judgment on themselves: this fits the mind for sympathizing with the wanderers, and adopting every right measure for their reformation and improvement. I think it is of the utmost importance to enter the duties attached to a magistrate in a very prayerful spirit, seeking the help and direction of the Spirit of God, and that the understanding may be enlightened to comprehend His will. I am perfectly sensible that a justice of the peace must keep to the laws of his country in his decisions, and further, that he should be *well acquainted with these laws*; but I also know much rests with him, as to leaning on the side of *mercy*, and not of *severity*; and I know, from my experience with many magistrates, how much they may do for the improvement and real advantage of criminals. Much is in their power; they may do *much* harm or much good: too many are influenced by selfishness, party spirit, or partiality, both in individual cases and where public good is concerned; but the simple, upright, faithful, just and merciful magis-

trates are too rare, and they are much wanted. Mayst thou, my dearest John, be of this number ; but remember, it can only be by grace, and being thyself directed and governed by the Holy Spirit of God. . . . I am, thy very affectionate mother,

‘ ELIZABETH FRY.’

Mrs. Fry's health continuing in an infirm and suffering state, although better than during the winter, some change appeared necessary, and absence from the continual tide of London engagements which reached her at Upton Lane. Her brother-in-law, Mr. Hoare, offered the loan of his house at Cromer, a commodious residence on the top of the cliff, commanding fine sea views. The little village of Cromer, and its beautiful church in the foreground, and at the back, the Light-house hills, their easy ascent and smooth short turf, dry in even the wettest weather, afforded a delightful resort for one whose failing power could no longer encounter exertion. Cromer, too, was associated with the days of happy childhood. She greatly enjoyed this time, and was cheered by the singular kindness and affection of many whom she had long loved, and others with whom she then for the first time became sociably acquainted. Her sister, Mrs. Catherine Gurney, was with them at the Cliff House ; she saw much of the beloved residents at Northrepps Hall, Northrepps Cottage, and Sheringham. Two summer months thus passed pleasantly away.

On her way home, she stayed for a few days at

the Bank House at Lynn with her children—her last visit. Never was she more bright or lovely in spirit. She had a wise, kind word for all—children, servants, dependants. All loved her, all felt that her message was not from herself, nor of man's invention; but that in her Master's name she invited others to 'love and to good works.' How she condescended to all; listening to the minutest details of their cares and pleasures. How ready in devising means for helping others, not merely in the great, but the little things of life; for who so prompt in expedients? in the sick-room? in the nursery with an unmanageable child, or a froward servant? She returned home at the end of October.

As the spring of 1843 advanced, bringing with it something of restored health, Elizabeth Fry believed it her duty once more to visit the Continent. Her attraction was peculiarly to Paris. Matters of importance that she earnestly desired to have completed awaited her attention, and there appeared an opening beyond anything she had known before for usefulness in that great capital. There were Christian and benevolent persons whom she desired to see again 'in the flesh,' and build them up, if enabled, in faith and hope. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Jos. J. Gurney and Mr. Forster, her eldest daughter went as her mother's especial companion, to watch over and care for her health.

At Clermont-en-Oise the ladies were permitted to inspect the Great Central Prison for women, calculated to contain twelve hundred, although nine

hundred only were in confinement when they were there. It is under the charge of a Supérieure and twenty-two nuns, no men being allowed to enter. The Supérieure was an intelligent, powerful-minded woman, greatly afraid of the abuses to which the solitary system is liable, and the silent system also, when carried to extremes. The prisoners work in large cheerful rooms, a hundred together, under the closest inspection of the nuns, who relieve the monotony by not unfrequently uniting in singing hymns. But a splendid prison extremely well managed, is not so rare a scene as that which concluded the visit. On first arriving, Mrs. Fry had expressed a great wish to see all the nuns, but the Supérieure considered it impossible, as they never leave the women; however, just before quitting the prison, Mrs. Fry was conducted into an apartment around which sat, some on chairs, some on extremely low seats, some apparently on the floor, the twenty-two nuns in their grey dresses, and the lay sisters in black; placed in the middle were Mrs. Fry and her sister, Mrs. Joseph John Gurney, the Supérieure between them, holding Mrs. Fry by the hand, whose daughter was requested by the Supérieure to interpret for them. It was no light or easy task to convey exactly her mother's address, on the deep importance of endeavouring to lead them to living faith in Christ as the only Mediator between God and man, and through whom alone they could be cleansed from the guilt and power of sin. At His name every head bowed. She then

went on to tell of Newgate, and the effects of the gospel there ; many tears were shed at this recital. She concluded by a lively exhortation to these devoted nuns, whom she could 'salute as sisters in Christ,' to go forward in their work, but in no way to rest upon it, as in itself meritorious. Here the Supérieure interposed, 'Oh non, mais il y a un peu de mérite, l'homme a quelque mérite pour ce qu'il fait.' An old nun, who probably understood English, rejoined, 'Ma mère, Madame thinks that if the love of God does not sufficiently animate the heart to do it without feeling it a merit, or desiring reward, it falls short.' 'Ah, c'est bien ! comme elle est bonne !' replied the Supérieure. Mrs. Fry concluded by a short blessing and prayer in French. It was a curious scene, and a solemn feeling pervaded the whole.

Mrs. Fry had strong hopes of effecting much during her stay at Paris ; another spirit prevailed there—M. Guizot, in fact head of the Cabinet, though the Duke of Dalmatia was President of the Council, having proved himself ready to support any measure for the moral benefit of the people and their advance in sound knowledge and civilisation.

On the 25th, Mrs. Fry waited, by appointment, on the Duchess of Orleans, at the Tuileries ; but finding some difficulty in fully conveying her meaning, her daughter was sent for to interpret. In a letter to her sisters, Miss Fry describes herself ushered into an immense drawing-room, the size and heavy crimson and gold magnificence of which

exceeded any room she had ever seen. On a sofa, about half-way up the room, against the wall, was seated her mother; by her side a young lady, in deep mourning, over whose white and black cap hung a large long crape scarf or veil that reached the ground on either side; her figure tall and elegant, her face and features small and delicate, her eyes blue, and her complexion very fair—a lovely blush came and went as she spoke. From her dress and appearance no one could for a moment doubt but that it was the widow of the heir of France. Opposite to her on a chair was an elderly lady, the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, her stepmother, who had brought her up from childhood. These three were the only occupants of that vast saloon. The conversation at first was upon the Duchess of Orleans' affliction; they had each a Bible in their hand. Mrs. Fry read to them a few verses, and commented on them, on affliction and its peaceable fruits afterwards. They then spoke of the children and the House of Orleans, and the importance of their education and early foundation in real Christian faith. The Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, an eminently devoted, pious woman, deeply responded to these sentiments. It was long before this interesting conversation came to a close.

Wednesday—Dinner at Count Pelet de la Lozère's. Thursday, at M. Guizot's; seated by their celebrated host, this dinner was felt by Mrs. Fry to be an occasion of great responsibility. She was encouraged

by his courteous attention unreservedly to speak to him on the subject which had so long been near to her heart. They spoke of crime in its origin, its consequences, and the measures to be adopted for its prevention, of the treatment of criminals, of education, and of scriptural instruction. Here Mrs. Fry urged the diffusion of scriptural truth and the universal circulation of the Scriptures as the one means capable alone of controlling the power of sin, and shedding light upon the darkness of superstition and infidelity.

The following evening Mrs. Fry and her brother received at their hotel a large party of Greeks, amongst others, their Ambassador, M. Coletti. When in Paris in 1839, Mrs. Fry had been interested by a numerous company of Greeks who met at her hotel. On the present occasion that interest was confirmed. The want of even elementary books in Greece was fully discussed, and it was decided to form a plan to supply this want. To do this effectually, a second evening was appointed for the purpose. A committee of Greeks, French, and English was formed to draw up rules, and endeavour to raise subscriptions, the young Greek students in Paris undertaking to translate some works of elementary instruction. A spelling-book with pictures was to be the first thing attempted, a desideratum not existing in that country.

Several large parties succeeded each other, and religious communications were blended with social intercourse.

It being the period of the annual meetings, many pastors were assembled ; about thirty of them were invited by Mr. J. J. Gurney to breakfast at the Hôtel Meurice.

A solemn time of religious communication, exhortation and prayer, was followed by really a delightful meal.

One evening M. Guizot dined with Mrs. Fry's party. The topics before discussed were then resumed,—the state of Protestants in France, 'La liberté des cultes,' and Negro Slavery. Mrs. Fry entreated M. Guizot's attention to the state of the Sandwich Islands. She had received from Kamehameha III., the King, a letter a few months before, entreating her good offices to second his endeavours to prohibit the importation and use of spirituous liquors in his kingdom, the baneful and demoralizing effects of which he stated to be lamentable.

'Paris, Fifth Month 21st, First-day, 1843.—My birthday, sixty-three! My God hath not forgotten to be gracious.

'The last week has been an interesting one. We were sent for by the King. My brother, sister, and I paid rather a remarkable visit to him, the Queen, and the Princess Adelaide. To my surprise and pleasure yesterday, there arrived from the Queen a most beautiful Bible with fine engravings, without note or comment, given me as a mark of her satisfaction in our visit.'

A quiet resting day was spent at Passy with her old and valued friends the Delessert family, with

whom she had some solemn religious communication on this, the last day she spent amongst them.

On returning home, she was able to attend one or two of the Yearly Meetings in London, and for a short time to encounter the current of life better than before her journey.

CHAPTER XIX.

1843-1845.

Last journey on religious service—Increased illness—Sandgate—Tunbridge Wells—Bath—Return to Upton Lane—Death of her sister Elizabeth Fry—Attends the Meeting at Plaistow—Stay at Walmer—Death of a grand-daughter—Of her son William Storrs Fry—Of another grand-daughter—Deep affliction—Return from Walmer—Death of Sir T. F. Buxton—Visit to Earlham, Northrepps, Runceton—Yearly meeting.

ON the 21st of July 1843, Elizabeth Fry attended the Quarterly Meeting at Hertford, accompanied by her brother Samuel Gurney, and one of his daughters. It was the last time she left home on a mission of this character, expressly for religious service.

The following evening a large party of the Delegates from different parts of the world, assembled in London to attend the Anti-Slavery and Peace Society Meetings, came to Upton Lane; the evening was closed by Scripture-reading and prayer.

Journal resumed.—‘Last First-day was not one to be forgotten. My dear brother and sister Buxton were at Meeting. I felt it my duty to encourage the weary, and enlarged upon our foolishness, yet how the Lord is made unto His people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. There were some who appeared much impressed. Through the

whole of that day and into the next, renewed peace rested on my spirit.'

In July Mrs. Fry feeling increased symptoms of illness, chiefly the result of over-fatigue and stress upon her body and mind, was moved to Sandgate.

She returned to Upton the end of September, very reluctantly renouncing the hope of spending part of the autumn in Norfolk. She often told those around her, in her great bodily suffering, that the everlasting arms were always underneath her; that the under current was peace and comfort, though the surface was so much tempest-tossed.

In a letter, dictated October 2d, she thus expresses herself—

'I have been very much struck in this illness with the manner in which my children have been raised up as my helpers, and when I look back upon the deep and unutterable travail of spirit I have had on their behalf; and now that it has pleased the Lord that His hand should, in some respects, be heavy upon me, how it has pleased Him to enable them to minister to my support and help. I think it should be to all of you as parents, an encouragement to do your best, and commit the rest to God. I think this is more especially to be felt as respects our sons, that our first aim must be (in asking for a blessing on our endeavours) that we bring them up for the kingdom; and little can we calculate how the Lord may bless

and deliver them and make them a blessing to ourselves.'

In lesser matters, the tendency of her mind was perceptible throughout her illness; it prevailed over all suffering and all infirmity. Her habits, too, continued to exert a powerful influence over her daily life, even when the failure of physical power precluded her carrying them out. She was most particular in everything which conduces to bodily health and vigour. She considered the mind and temper to be indirectly benefited by careful attention to the duties of the toilet, opened windows, sufficient exercise, and moderation in living.

On Sunday, November 6, her son William remained from church to be with his mother. After reading a chapter in Job, and the 3d of St. John, she prayed in a very striking manner, that after all the sorrows and fluctuations of time were ended, 'we might behold His face in glory; that whilst here we might not deceive ourselves, but be true and decided followers of Him, who, in His own good time, would arise with healing on His wings, to deliver us from all our pain.'

13th.—Her nephew, the Rev. Edward Hoare, came to see her. He sat down by her sofa and said to her, 'My dear aunt, what a consolation to know you to be of the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.' After a little pause she said with great humility, 'But we must avoid false confidence.' He replied, that there could be no false confidence when our hope is fixed on Christ

alone. She said with emphasis, 'There, indeed, is no false confidence;' and added, that in this illness she had entirely felt without carefulness; so able to commit every person and everything, and leave them in His hands; that she felt no service now called for from her, only to endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

She expressed in a tone of the deepest feeling her 'perfect confidence, her full assurance, that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should be able to separate her from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;' adding 'my whole trust is in Him, my entire confidence.—I *know* in whom I have believed, and can commit all to Him, who has loved me and given Himself for me, whether for life or death, sickness or health, time or eternity.'

In the course of the same day, she said very emphatically, 'My dear Rachel, I can say one thing—since my heart was touched at seventeen years old, I believe I never have awakened from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or by night, without my first waking thought being, how best I might serve my Lord.'

In one of the remaining entries in her journal, she thus writes:—

'*Upton, Twelfth Month 7th, 1843.*—Lord, undertake Thyself for me; Thy arm of power can alone heal, help, and deliver; and in Thee do I trust, and hope, though at times deeply tried and cast down

before Thee : yet, O Lord, Thou art my hope, and be therefore entreated of Thy poor sorrowful and often afflicted servant, and arise for my help. Leave not my soul destitute, but, through the fulness of Thine own power, mercy, and love, keep me alive unto Thyself, unto the end ; that nothing may separate me from Thy love, that I may endure unto the end ; and when the end comes, that I may be altogether Thine, and dwell with Thee, if it be but the lowest place within the gate, where I may behold Thy glory and Thy holiness, and for ever rest in Thee.

‘ I do earnestly entreat Thee, that to the very last I may never deny Thee, or in any way have my life or conversation inconsistent with my love to Thee, and I most earnestly desire to live to Thy glory ; for I have loved Thee, O Lord, and desired to serve Thee without reserve. Be entreated, that through Thy faithfulness, and the power of Thy own Spirit, I may serve Thee unto the end. Amen.’

One day it was said to her, ‘ that many a Christian had slept in this world and to their own surprise had awakened in glory ;’ she exclaimed directly, with most striking emphasis, ‘ Oh ! what a sweet thought.’ She spoke occasionally of her ‘ timid nature ;’ of her ‘ natural fear of death ;’ but on Monday night, the 19th, when very low in body and spirit, she said emphatically, ‘ should I never see the light of another morning, remember I am safe.’

She was comforted, as were her attendants, by occasional visits from members of her own religious

persuasion, and other Christian friends. Prayer was offered from time to time in her chamber. The visits of her sister, Lady Buxton, were a true solace to her; she clung to her with inexpressible tenderness. She was also very dependent on the services of her faithful attendant Christiana Golder. On one occasion she was heard to say, 'Dear Chrissy, how little I thought when thou wast a little girl what a comfort thou wouldest become to me; how many are my mitigations!' She often repeated those words of Shakespeare—

'Come what come may,
Time and the hour run through the roughest day.'

As March advanced, there was perceptible improvement, and she began strongly to wish to be taken to Bath for the benefit of the waters.

After many weeks of difficulty and doubt, the decision was come to, and her husband accomplished her removal there. Sir Fowell and Lady Buxton were already there; and though he, like Mrs. Fry, was bowed under infirmity, yet the closeness of the union, natural and spiritual, which existed among them, rendered their being near one another an important solace to them all.

She gained strength at Bath, and was unquestionably in better health on her return home. But she was closely touched by the rapid decline of her sister, Elizabeth Fry. They had been affectionately united for a long course of years. They had travelled together as ministers among Friends; they had, year after year, sat side by side at the meeting-house

at Plaistow ; and now in her low and weakened condition, the severing of this tie was to her very painful.

Her sister died on the 2d of July, rejoicing that the hour of her deliverance had arrived, to lay down her frail tabernacle, and appear in the presence of her God and Saviour.

A change of scene and air seemed so important for her, that her son William's success in obtaining a very suitable house at Walmer was a real matter of gratulation. But there was another office of love for that beloved one to perform by his mother, singularly suited to the bond of love and sympathy which had so long united them, and eminently fitted to be his last.

She had long and earnestly desired again to attend the meeting for worship at Plaistow. It was proposed from Sunday to Sunday, but the difficult process of dressing was never accomplished till long after eleven o'clock, the hour when the meeting assembled. An attempt was made on the 28th of July, but totally failed. Her disappointment was extreme, and the hold it took of her spirits so grievous, that it was resolved to make the effort at any cost the following Sunday. Her son William undertook to carry out her wishes : drawn by himself and a younger son in her wheeled chair, she was taken up the meeting a few minutes after the Friends had assembled, followed by her husband, her children, and attendants. Her son William seated himself closely by her side, and the rest near her.

The silence that prevailed was singularly solemn. After some time, in a clear voice she addressed the assembly. The prominent topic of her discourse was 'the death of the righteous;' she expressed the deepest thankfulness, alluding to her sister Elizabeth Fry, for the mercies vouchsafed to 'one who having laboured long amongst them, has been called from time to eternity.' She quoted that text, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they cease from their labours, and their works do follow them.' She dwelt on the purposes of affliction, on the utter weakness and infirmity of the flesh; she tenderly exhorted the young, 'the little children amongst us,' referring to the death of little Gurney Reynolds. She urged the need of devotedness of heart and steadiness of purpose; she raised a song of praise for the eternal hope offered to the Christian, and concluded with those words of Isaiah—'Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land that is very far off.' Prayer was soon afterwards offered by her in much the same strain. He joined her in that solemn act who never was to worship with her again, till before the throne and the Lamb they should unite in that ineffable song of praise which stays not night nor day for ever.

Her removal to Walmer was accomplished without much difficulty; from thence she wrote:—

'I walk in a low valley, still I believe I may say the everlasting arm is underneath, and the Lord is near to me. I pass through deep waters, but I trust, as my Lord is near to me, they will not overflow me.

I need all your prayers in my low estate ; I think that the death of my sister, and dear little Gurney, have been almost too much for me.'

Thus was this servant of God permitted to go sorrowing upon her way. But the storm had not blown over ; again the thunder-clouds rolled up. On the 15th of August little Juliana, the second daughter of her son William, one of the sweetest blossoms that ever gladdened parents' hearts, was cut off after thirty hours' inexplicable illness. Another day, however, sufficed to solve the doubt, three of the servants at the Manor House being attacked by scarlet fever. But all preceding sorrows seemed light in comparison, when the beloved and honoured head of that happy home was himself laid low by the tremendous malady. He had written on the death of his aunt shortly before—'Yesterday, we followed the remains of our dear aunt to the grave. We have the comfort of feeling assured that she has entered into the joy of her Lord. May such be the case with us all. But if we would "die the death of the righteous," as the righteous we must do our day's work in the day.'

The children were removed to Plashet Cottage, vacant from the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry. As one and another showed symptoms of fever, they were carried back to Manor House. The servants continued to sicken successively, and were conveyed to a ward prepared for them at Guy's Hospital. The help of the nursing sisters became invaluable, two or three being in constant attendance. For about a

week strong hopes were entertained that William's most precious life would be spared to his family. On the day of the funeral of his little Juliana, he had asked to have his door open, that he might see the coffin as it was borne by, when, to the nursing sister by his side, he exclaimed, 'I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me.'

He was calm, even cheerful; there appeared to be little, if any suffering, and he perfectly knew his danger. He said that he 'should like to recover, if it were right, but he was quite willing to leave it in God's hand.' When remarked to him how great the mercy that sustaining patience had been granted him, he held up his hand with a great effort and most emphatically replied, 'God never has forsaken me; no, not for a moment, and He never will.' As his last day commenced upon earth, his window wide open by the bed-side, and the sweet morning air blowing freshly in, he spoke of the fair view to be seen from it, and listened with interest as the scene was described to him, the grey tints passing from the garden and terrace, and leaving them in light and sunshine. He spoke of his place, of his family, of his many blessings. Some little effort exhausting him, a stimulant was given; as he recovered, with a bright smile he exclaimed, 'God is so good;' and they were his last words. Never was a dying bed more favoured, more wonderful the evidence that 'God was with him of a truth;' a most solemn calm prevailed, beautiful was the smile which lingered on his dying features. Unseen realities

were felt and understood then ; it had been heard before, but now was known and appropriated, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.'

'Can our mother hear this and live?' was the natural exclamation of her children. The Christian's faith, however, proved stronger than the mother's anguish. She wept abundantly, almost unceasingly ; but she dwelt constantly on the unseen world, seeking for passages in the Bible which spoke of the happy state of the righteous. She was enabled to rejoice in that rest upon which so many of her beloved ones had entered, and in a wonderful manner to realize the blessedness of their lot.

Early on Tuesday morning, Emma, the eldest daughter, followed him to that Saviour whom her young heart had loved and desired to obey, just one week after his departure, and eighteen days from the death of her sister.

The following Sunday was a memorable one ; the two last chapters of the Revelations were read, and then some memoranda concerning the beloved departed, and their closing hours upon earth. The service was concluded by solemn thrilling prayer, offered by their mother for those who remained, and for herself in her 'low estate ;' for such as had fought the good fight, kept the faith, and obtained the victory, thanksgiving, and praise !

Her own journal tells her feelings :—

'*Walmer, Eighth Month 29th.*—Sorrow upon sorrow ! Since I last wrote, we have lost by death, first, my beloved sister, Elizabeth Fry ; second,

Gurney Reynolds, our sweet, good grandson ; third, Juliana Fry, my dearest William and Julia's second daughter ; and fourth, above all, our most beloved son, William Storrs Fry, who appeared to catch the infection of his little girl, and died on Third-day of scarlet fever, the 27th of this month. A loss *inexpressible*—such a son, husband, friend, and brother ! but I trust that he is for ever at rest in Jesus, through the fulness of His love and grace. Oh, dear Lord, keep thy unworthy and poor sick servant in this time of unutterable trial ; keep me sound in faith and clear in mind, and be very near to us all—the poor widow and children, in this time of *deepest distress*, and grant that this awful dispensation may be blessed to our souls. Amen.'

'Sorrow upon sorrow' was the language of her wounded spirit. In an unusual manner was this devoted servant permitted to partake of the Master's cup, and through much tribulation to enter the Kingdom.

The regulation of her mind, and her established self-discipline, were at this period very instructive ; in no degree refusing to be comforted, willing to be diverted, driving out in the carriage, or on fine days drawn in the beautiful little pony-chair that her son Joseph had given her, whilst some of the party walked by her side. But after a little while she became irresistibly desirous of returning to Upton, principally that she might see her bereaved daughter and her children. The return home was sorrowful indeed ; all outwardly the same, but the void, the

want so great, of a member of the circle, who, whilst he was the tried friend and faithful counsellor, was wont to bring with him an atmosphere of cheerfulness and love.

As the winter wore away, there was some revival in Mrs. Fry's health; she resumed many of her former pursuits; she wrote more letters and took more part in the daily interests of life. For the sake of her grandchildren, in whom she was anxious to encourage a taste for such objects, she endeavoured to re-arrange her collections of shells, minerals, corals and other natural curiosities.

She was generally carried down-stairs in a chair about noon and wheeled from room to room; she was dressed as usual, sometimes joining her family at table, and was able to look occasionally at a book. She now generally attended meeting once on Sunday, her ministry often very beautiful, and not at all partaking of the sort of infirmity which clouded all earthly matters. She enjoyed occasional visits from her friends, and conversed upon various topics.

On one of these occasions, to a friend who found her very ill and low, and who expressed a hope that she might yet be better, she said, 'I have not yet seen how it will terminate. Sometimes I have thought perhaps I may be partially raised up, but I lay no stress on it.' Afterwards she said with tears, 'Oh, He is a covenant-keeping God, He keepeth covenant and mercy. Oh, may I ever keep hold of His mercy!' On the 29th, the same friend being

again with her, and perceiving that she was much depressed, remarked, 'I believe there is an open door set before thee, although thou mayst not always be able to perceive it open.' The precious invalid wept much, and after a time said, 'Oh yes, it is an open door.' Presently she continued, 'The Lord is gracious and full of compassion; I believe He will never leave nor forsake me;' and after a solemn pause, she added, 'I have passed through deep baptisms of spirit in this illness. I may say, unworthy as I am to say it, that I have had to drink in my small measure of the Saviour's cup, when He said, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" Some of my friends have thought there was a danger of my being exalted, but I believe the danger has been on the opposite side—of my being too low. I trust He will never suffer me to dishonour His holy name.' And on another occasion, she dwelt in a very clear and instructive manner, upon her own state bodily and mentally. She expressed her belief that her illness was permitted for some special purpose, as it regarded herself, her family, and perhaps many others; she said she could not see what the termination of it was designed to be, adding, 'I have had to look over all my life, and to review all the engagements which I have been led into.' She spoke of her visit to the Mansion House, and of her meeting the King of Prussia there, and said she had never known a more deeply humiliating occasion; adding, 'I cannot doubt that I was rightly led there, and none can think

what I went through.' Soon afterwards she said to the same friend, 'My life has been one of great vicissitudes; mine has been a hidden path, hidden from every human eye. I have had deep humiliations to pass through. I can truly say I have wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way and found no city to dwell in; and yet how wonderfully I have been sustained! I have passed through many and great dangers, many ways; I have been tried with the applause of the world, and none know how great a trial that has been, and the deep humiliations of it; and yet I fully believe that it is not nearly so dangerous as being made much of in religious society. There is a snare even in religious unity, if we are not on the watch. I have sometimes felt that it was not so dangerous to be made much of in the world as by those whom we think highly of in our own Society. The more I have been made much of by the world, the more I have been inwardly humbled.' She added, 'I could often adopt the words of Sir Francis Bacon, "When I have ascended before men, I have descended in humiliation before God."' "

In February, she paid her first visit to Manor House since all was so changed there. She greatly shrunk from the pain of this visit in prospect, but in fact bore it far beyond expectation. The children won her attention; their delight at seeing her gave her pleasure, and, to a certain extent her thoughts were occupied. The touch of infirmity which had attended her illness certainly had its

effect as to the manner in which she felt her affliction, for she was more easily diverted by little things, and for the moment interested in them.

The 19th of February, her brother, friend, and early coadjutor, Sir Fowell Buxton, quitted this world, who can doubt—

‘To be a glorious guest
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest’?

These successive departures could but tend to wean from earthly things, and make it of less import whether a little sooner or a little later summoned to join the band which was mustering so strongly on the other side Jordan. On the mind of this way-worn traveller the effect was very perceptible. She dwelt more in spirit with those who were gone. Unseen realities increasingly opened upon her view. Many so near and dear had been gathered round the throne, that her heart and soul continually ascended thitherward.

There was one thing which rested upon her mind—an intense desire again to visit Norfolk, and stay once more at Earlham. With great difficulty it was accomplished, her husband and daughter Louisa taking her there. She remained at Earlham many weeks, often able to partake of enjoyment, and highly valuing the communion with her brother, Joseph John Gurney, his wife, and her beloved sister Catherine.

She went frequently to meeting at Norwich. She was drawn up the meeting, seated in her wheeled

chair, and thence ministered with extraordinary life and power to those present; her memory in using Scripture in no degree failing her, or her power in applying it.

What a history had hers been, since the time of the scarlet riding-habit—since she sat and wept under the ministry of William Savery! Her ardent aspirations had been strangely granted; she had passed a long life of blessing to others, but by a path singularly chequered to herself. She had been eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; when the ear heard her then it blessed her. She had trodden regal halls to plead for the afflicted and the destitute; she had not withheld unpalatable truth, when the language of warning was called for at her lips. She had penetrated, nothing daunted, the gloom of the felon's dungeon, nor had she shrunk from the touch of the unclothed maniac; she had nourished and brought up children, and they had risen up to call her blessed; and now, helpless and suffering in body, enfeebled in memory, all that could be shaken tottering to its base, she came again to take a last look at the home and the haunts of her childhood.

She went for ten days to Northrepps; the atmosphere of that place was very genial to her. Her sister and she were fellow-mourners, close participators in the greatness of their sorrows, and the vastness of their consolation. They held sweet counsel together; they dwelt on the blessedness of their departed ones, and together sought and found comfort in the Book of Life.

After she left Earlham, she came for a few days to Runcton, as it was thought better than her going into Lynn. Her children met her, and stayed with her there. She had not been at Runcton since death had last entered that pleasant dwelling; she had greatly loved the mother and the daughter who had successively gladdened and adorned it; she had deeply mourned their loss, and in her weakened state of spirit, sorrowful associations mingled with the enjoyment she experienced, in being again with her brother and his children. She liked their cordial, glowing welcome, and the affectionate attentions of that young party. It was pleasant to see them occupied alternately in performing for her the little offices of love. The old servants vied in attention to her, whilst those who were married away, or lived in the villages, pressed to see her and obtain a word of counsel or kindness.

The latter part of May, accompanied by her eldest granddaughter, Elizabeth Fry, she attended two sittings of the women's Yearly Meeting of Friends in London. On the first occasion she spoke of the Saviour's declaration, 'I am the true vine; ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.' She alluded, in the course of her observations, to the day that is 'fast approaching' to every one; but urged the blessed truth on her hearers, that those 'who loved, served, and obeyed Him, who alone is worthy of all glory and praise, would find death deprived of its sting, and

the grave of its victory.' She afterwards enlarged upon the various instruments by which God accomplishes His own work in the world. She referred to the simile of the different living stones which compose the temple of God. She addressed those of every age who heard her, especially such as might be compared to the hidden stones of the building. She encouraged them to go forward fearlessly in the path of righteousness and good works, for though they might not be so much seen and known as the more polished stones in the ornamental parts of the structure—though perhaps not so fitted to shine, or to occupy a conspicuous situation—yet were their places each equally ordered, equally important, and equally under the direction and all-seeing eye of the Divine Architect. She expressed her doubts as to whether she should again be permitted to meet her beloved Friends in that place. She offered prayers, her rich full voice filling the house; and concluded with that sublime passage, 'Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy ways, thou King of saints.'

CHAPTER XX.

1845.

Removal to Ramsgate—Preparation—The End.

THE return of her youngest son and his bride to Upton Lane she wished to make as cheerful as under existing circumstances was possible, and in celebration of the event a large family party was arranged.

She received her guests in a room opening into the flower-garden, and thence was wheeled to the end of the terrace; a large circle surrounded her, many-connexions and others of her friends. It was a beautiful scene—the last social family meeting at which she presided; and although infirm and broken in health, she looked and seemed herself.

In an easy-chair, under a large marquee, she entered into an animated discourse on various and important topics with the group around her, the Chevalier Bunsen, M. Merle D'Aubigné, Sir Henry Pelly, Josiah Forster, Samuel Gurney, and others.

The week following she was moved to a house on Mount Albion at Ramsgate, which had been prepared for her. A roomy bed-chamber adjoining the

drawing-room, with pleasant views of the sea, in which she delighted, added to her hourly comfort and enjoyment. She found objects there well suited to her tastes. She distributed tracts when she drove into the country, or went upon the pier in a Bath chair. She was also anxious to ascertain the state of the Coast-guard libraries, whether they required renewing, and were properly used.

The party were scarcely established at Ramsgate, when the family of her beloved son William came to them, and remained for some weeks. She delighted in them all; but little Willie Fry was something to her, almost beyond anything left in the world. He read the Bible to her every morning on her awakening. She strove to impress upon his young mind the value and beauty of the Christian life; she endeavoured to cultivate in him a taste for natural objects; she encouraged drawing and similar pursuits. Partly his name, partly his character, so much resembling his father's in early boyhood, excited her tenderest love.

Her sister, Lady Buxton, with her daughter Richenda, went to her on the 17th of September. There was much opportunity for intercourse, after her waking in the morning, and especially during her lengthened toilet; her sister generally read the Bible with her at these times. She found her mind clear and powerful in spiritual things, enlarging upon them with comprehension of their import; her heart entirely in the things of God, choosing Him and his service only, seeking first the kingdom of

God, with deep earnest constant desires, beyond words to express, for her husband and children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, and all who were dear to her. She was wonderfully alive to all good things going on in the world, receiving with thankfulness any instance of this, without partiality or distinction.

On the 29th, the large family party dispersed. The meeting of the preceding day had been one of great solemnity, and though little imagined at the time, well fitted to be a parting occasion with so many dear to her.

Those who were present described the occasion as a very peculiar one. She had urged the question, 'Are we all now ready? If the Master should this day call us, is the work completely finished? Have we anything left to do?' Solemnly, almost awfully reiterating the question, 'Are we prepared?'

One morning of acute suffering, the remark was made to her, How marvellous it was that she never seemed impatient to depart, believing, as there was good ground to do, that she was through infinite mercy fitted and ready for the great change. Her inherent fear of death had probably prevented this, for there was something in her mind which caused her, whilst she desired 'the kingdom,' to shrink from the encounter with the great enemy—the last grapple before the victory can be won. But this too was altered; she expressed her entire 'willingness to stay the Lord's time;' that whilst 'there was any work for her to do, she wished to live,' but

beyond that, expressed not the smallest desire for life. She added, that she had come to an entire belief, that any remaining dread would be taken away from her, when the time came, or that in 'tender mercy to her timid nature,' she should be permitted to pass unconsciously through the dark valley.

On the 10th of October, Mrs. Fry appeared rather better than she had been the few preceding days. She brought out some sheets of Scripture selections, which she had prepared with a view to eventually publishing another Text-book on the same plan as her former one, and turned over the leaves of her small travelling Bible.

On Saturday morning, however, she awakened, suffering severely in her head. One of her grandchildren went to her at half-past seven o'clock : he read the 27th Psalm, which she asked for. Half an hour later, another went to her. She in no way referred to his brother having been there before, but again asked for the 27th Psalm. Her dressing was very slowly accomplished ; she leaned her head upon her hand, and spoke very little. A text or two out of 'Great and Precious Promises,' that excellent selection for the sick chamber, seemed all that she could receive. She had not asked for a child whilst she was dressing, the only morning she had omitted to do so, nor did she remark their absence.

About five o'clock her bell rang. She was in her own room, according to her usual custom in the afternoon, lying on the sofa, whilst an attendant

read to her. She had nearly fallen, in moving from the sofa to her chair by the fire, and help was wanted to accomplish it.

Later in the evening a few texts were repeated to her, and her daughters left her to her husband's care, who throughout her lengthened illness attended her by night; but scarcely had they reached their rooms when her bell rang loudly. Throughout the night, though occasionally for an instant confused, the mind was there. Some passages of Scripture were read to her, which she appeared to receive, and she entirely responded to any observation made to her. The morning broke at last, but it brought no comfort. About six o'clock, she said to her maid, 'Oh Mary, dear Mary, I am very ill.' 'I know it, dearest ma'am, I know it.' 'Pray for me—it is a strift, but I am safe.' About nine o'clock, one of her daughters sitting on her bed-side, had open in her hand that passage in Isaiah, 'I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.' Just then, her mother roused a little, and in a slow distinct voice uttered these words, 'Oh my dear Lord, help and keep thy servant.' These were the last words she spake upon earth, she never attempted to articulate again. A response was given by reading to her the above most applicable passage; one bright glance of intelligence passed over her features, a look of recognition at the well-known sound, but it was gone as rapidly, and never returned.

Suddenly, there was a change in the breathing ; it was but a moment. The silver cord was loosed—a few sighs at intervals—and no sound was there. Unutterably blessed was the holy calm, the perfect stillness of the chamber of death. She saw ‘the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off.’

The night had been dark and lowering, but the morning broke gloriously ; the sun rose from the ocean, commanded by her chamber windows, and, as a globe of living fire,

‘Flamed in the forehead of the morning sky.’

The emblem was too beautiful to be rejected—one of the types and shadowings offered by the material world, to illustrate the Christian’s hope.

Before evening, the greater number of her children were assembled at Ramsgate. There was much kindness and attention shown by the inhabitants. Sir Moses Montefiore was deputed to call upon the family, to propose that the hearse bearing her remains should, when taken from Mount Albion, be followed through the town by such gentlemen of the place as inclined to do so, with the shutters closed, and other marks of respect. Arrangements made in Essex prevented the proposal being accepted ; but it was none the less gratifying, as a token of the estimation in which, though so lately come amongst them, the departed had been held.

Monday at noon was fixed for her funeral. In the grey of the early morning, the loved, the revered, was brought for the last time, for a few short hours,

to her home of many years. Vast numbers of persons attended the funeral. The procession passed between the grounds of Plashet House, her once happy home, and those of Plashet Cottage. In the Friends' burying-ground at Barking her grave was prepared, close by that of her little child, whom she had loved and lost, and tenderly mourned so many years before. There is no appointed funeral service amongst Friends. A deep silence prevailed throughout the multitudes gathered there. Her brother, Joseph John Gurney, was the first to address the assembly, and by him solemn prayer was offered.

Afterwards, a meeting was held in a tent erected specially for this solemn occasion. Much was brought forward from the Treasury of Scripture, of consolation, of warning and encouragement for the listeners assembled there. Of her, whose remains were laid at rest in the 'house appointed for all living,' no language could be more descriptive in life or in death, than that glorious passage from the Revelations, then emphatically applied to her—
'And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.'

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