

others she referred them to a Fountain of which she was in the habit of herself drinking largely. Perhaps something of this kind was needful to her, like the thorn in the flesh which kept Paul weighted down for his work. After the passage given above, Mrs. Corder remarks:

"Perhaps few will read the preceding extract without perceiving something of the deep and hidden sorrow which often weighed down the spirit, and preyed also on the bodily frame of this precious follower of the Lamb. It is not needful to attempt to penetrate the veil that conceals from the eye of the stranger the circumstances that rendered her path of life a tribulated one: it is enough to know that her perplexities and distresses were endured with meek submission, and a degree of forbearance that could only be the effect of that state of watching unto prayer with all perseverance in which she was so remarkably preserved; and by which she was kept, through all her mental vicissitudes as in a region of love."

In deference to this judgment we may well repress our curiosity while giving increased love and admiration to one who could thus, out of her own heart's experience, comfort the poor and the afflicted.

I again quote from Mrs. Corder's notes, which sometimes supplement the information contained in the original memoir.

"The weighty responsibilities of Newgate did not preclude other objects of public interest, to some of which Elizabeth Fry devoted much attention. Among these was a 'nightly shelter for the houseless.' During the rigorous winter of 1819-20, the sufferings of houseless wanderers called for prompt relief. The heart of this Christian phil-

anthropist was deeply touched by some affecting cases. In one instance a little boy who had in vain begged at many houses for the few half-pence required to procure admittance to some passage or cellar, was found frozen to death on the step of a door! An asylum was immediately provided. It was well warmed, nutritious soup was prepared night and morning, with a ration of bread for each of the inmates, who were also furnished with beds. Employment in various ways was procured; and the bounty of the public flowed in to encourage the hearts and strengthen the efforts of the benevolent persons who united in laboring for the management and success of the establishment. Many hundreds were, night after night, admitted—great numbers who could not be accommodated at the 'Shelter,' were supplied with food, clothing and the means of procuring lodgings elsewhere. The females were placed under the care of a 'Ladies' Committee,' with Elizabeth Fry at their head."

The following brief review, bears date August 1820.

"19th.—I have this day been married twenty years; my heart feels much overwhelmed at the remembrance of it—it has been an eventful time. I trust that I have not gone really backwards spiritually, as I think I have, in mercy, certainly increased in the knowledge of God and Christ Jesus our Lord; but this has been through much suffering. I doubt my being in so lively a state as ten years ago, when first coming forth in the ministry; but I believe I may say that I love my Lord above all—as far as I know—far above every natural tie; although in His infinite wisdom and mercy He has been pleased, at times, to look upon me with a frowning Providence. If I have lately grown at all, it has been in the root, not in the branch, as there is but little appearance of good, or fruit, as far as I can see. In the course of these twenty years my abode has often been in the valley of deep humiliation; still the Lord has been my

stay, and I may say through all has dealt bountifully with me. Assuredly He has raised me up from season to season, enabled me to speak well of His name and led me to plead the cause of the poor and those that are in bonds, naturally and spiritually."

After a visit to the Monthly Meeting of Essex in the fall of 1820, she writes:

"4th.—I returned yesterday from finishing visiting the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in Essex. I was carried through the service to my own surprise; I felt so remarkably low, so unworthy, so unfit, and as if I had little or nothing to communicate to them; but I was marvelously helped from meeting to meeting; strength so arose with the occasion that the fear of man was taken from me, and I was enabled to declare gospel truths boldly. This is to me wonderful; and unbelievers may say what they will, it must be the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes—how He strengtheneth them that have no might, and helpeth them that have no power. The peace I felt after these services seemed to flow like a river, for a time covering all my cares and sorrows, so that I might truly say, 'There is even here a rest for the people of God.' I am sure, from my own experience, there is nothing brings the same satisfying, heart-consoling feeling. It is to me a powerful internal evidence of the truth of revealed religion, that it is indeed a substantial truth, not a cunningly devised fable. My skeptical doubting mind has been convinced of the truth of religion, not by the hearing of the ear, but by what I have actually handled and tasted and known for myself, of the word of life, may I not say of the power of God unto salvation."

Another milestone on this eventful journey reads as follows:

"*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, 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 fullness of blessing, and also some of its most sorrowful and most painful reverses. I have known the abounding of the unspeakable and soul-satisfying 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, and 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 unspeakable blessings, to pass through unutterable sorrows, known only to the full extent by Him and my own soul, yet hath He been an all-sufficient Helper. His right hand hath sustained me and held me up, blessed be His name forever. 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 a most blessed thing to serve Him, even if it be by way of the cross; for He is indeed worthy to be served, worshipped and obeyed now and forever. Above all I pray for myself, that whatever dispensations I may yet pass 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.

"*Twelfth Month, 2nd* (1822).—Yesterday, at Meeting, the truth rose into much dominion, blessed be the name of the Lord. I was enabled to supplicate and minister, to my own relief, and I trust to the refreshment of others; also my dearest brother Joseph, Rebecca Christy, and my sister, Elizabeth Fry, in prayer. It appeared a solemn time; the day, generally speaking, a favored one; but in the night I was deeply brought to a sense of my own weakness. If the beautiful garments spiritually were put on in the morning, surely they were taken off at night. What are we, but instruments, however, for a season decorated with the Lord's ornaments? Self cannot boast when left to ourselves, and our ornaments taken off. How wonderful is the work of the Spirit!—how it heals and raises up body and soul when they are brought into service! None can tell, but those who have experienced something of it, how the anointing is poured forth from on high. It is an honor I am unworthy of, to be thus helped spiritually, particularly in the ministry. But how deeply doth my spirit crave that I may also be aided in all the practical duties of life."

During this period Elizabeth Fry was earnestly engaged with her Newgate readings, and it is remarkable how rapidly her intellectual powers developed under the influence of this powerful stimulus. She was about thirty-seven years of age when this work began which brought her at once into a notoriety that placed an immense strain on her whole being. Had she not been well endowed with natural force of mind she would soon have shrunk, with her accidental fame, into retirement. And, beyond this, had she not had strong religious faith, which brought her inward

support, and a stimulus equally powerful, the same result must have followed. But between the inward and the outward fires her mental and moral being blossomed out with a tropical luxuriance most admirable to witness, and worthy of the reverent applause so freely bestowed upon it. So far from exciting vanity, this only increased her modesty and her humble dependence on what she well knew to be the real Source of her strength. There was not the slightest cant in her humility or her ascriptions of praise. God was *known* in her heart for a refuge and a very present help; and pure love and gratitude, no less than her sense of justice, made it the crown of her joy to glorify her Lord for the grace and wisdom so evidently bestowed. She says:

"In nothing has the work of grace been so marvelous to me as in the ministry. It surely is not my work;—I know enough of myself to believe it to be quite impossible. Oh, what an unction I now and then feel! It is as much to be felt strengthening the soul, as the body is felt to be refreshed after wholesome good food. The work of the Spirit is a wonderful work; and to my naturally doubting and skeptical mind astonishing."

"*Plasbet, Second Month, 13th*.—I attended Tottenham Meeting on the 2nd. I went low, and under deep exercise of mind; I returned in measure relieved, though naturally upset with many fears. I hardly ever remember being engaged in a service where doubts and fears beset me to an equal extent. On First-day, the 9th, we were at Devonshire House; it was an extraordinary meeting. I desire in more simplicity of faith to attend the other meetings. I think I have been too anxious, too fearful. If the work be not ours why worry and perplex myself about it?

"*19th*.—Since writing the above I attended the Peel

Meeting on First-day, which was to the great relief of my mind. Since that time my bonds have appeared wonderfully broken, my spirit has had to rejoice and be glad, and my fears have been removed, so that I can indeed say, how marvelous is the work of the Spirit!

"On Second-day I dined at the Mansion House, with my husband; a change of atmosphere, spiritually, but if we are enabled to abide in Christ, and stand our ground, we may, by our lives and conversation, glorify God, even at a dinner visit, as well as in more important callings. Generally speaking, I believe it best to avoid such occasions, for they take up time and are apt to dissipate the mind; although it may occasionally be the right and proper calling for Christians thus to enter life; but they must then keep the eye very single to Him who, having placed them in the world can alone keep them from the evil.

"*Third Month, 5th.*—I have lately been remarkably full of occupations, and yet they have appeared right and almost unavoidable. On First-day I attended Southwark Meeting; mercy and peace eventually accompanied it. On Fifth-day I went to town to meet the Secretary of State, (Sir Robert Peel,) and the Speaker of the House of Commons, at Newgate, with my brother, Fowell Buxton, and my husband; I trust the time was blessed to the good of the cause.

"Sixth-day in town again to Newgate; one of the bishops, and many others there. It was a solemn time—a power better than ourselves seemed remarkably over us. I visited another prison and then returned home. Besides these out of door objects I am much engaged in nursing my babe which is a sweet employment but takes time; the rest of the children, are comfortably settled in with dear Mary Ann Davis who is now once more with us. Upon sitting down to write, and locking round me, surrounded as I am with my family, supplied with so many temporal comforts, spiritual blessings not withheld—for I trust there

is rather an increase than decrease of the best things amongst us—I thought, as the query arose in my heart, 'Lackest thou anything?' I might indeed say, 'Nothing, Lord,' except a further establishment for us all in the ever blessed truth as it is in Jesus: What can I render to Thee for all Thy benefits? Grant, dearest Lord! in Thy child and servant, a heart fully and entirely devoted unto Thee and Thy service. Amen.

"*29th.*—Since I last wrote I have attended Winchmore Hill Meeting to satisfaction, together with my dear sister Elizabeth, William Allen, and my brother Samuel, whose company I enjoyed. My husband has engaged Leslie, the painter to come and take likenesses of him and me, to which, from peculiar circumstances, I have appeared obliged to yield; but the thing and its effect on my mind are unsatisfactory to me; it is not altogether what I like, or approve; it is making too much of this poor tabernacle, and rather exalting that part in us which should be laid low and kept low. I believe I could not have yielded the point had not so many likenesses of me already appeared, and it would be a trial to my family only to have these disagreeable ones to remain. However, from one cause or another, this has not been a satisfactory week—too much in the earth and the things of it, too little in the spirit; though not without seeking to take up my cross, deny myself, and follow my Lord and Master. I feel particularly unfit and unworthy to enter again upon my religious engagement: we propose going to Uxbridge this evening. My only hope is in Him who can alone cleanse, fit, strengthen and prepare for His own work. Under a deep feeling of my short-comings may I not say, dearest Lord, undertake for me.

"*Fourth Month 7th.*—We went to Uxbridge, though naturally rather a low time, yet it ended to my real comfort. The Morning Meeting was a very solemn one, a deep feeling of good, and the anointing of the Spirit appeared freely poured forth. The Evening Meeting was satisfactory; and

in several religious opportunities in the families my heart was enlarged in much love to the dear Friends there, whom, I think I may say, I love in the Lord."

Her next religious visit is thus briefly recorded. It was in the autumn of 1823.

"*Earlham, Tenth Month, 1st.*—My beloved husband left me this morning for London, and I am here, with nine children and my little grandson. Since I last wrote the face of things has brightened. I went to Bristol to attend the Quarterly Meeting there, accompanied by my brother Joseph John Gurney, and my sister E. F.; we left home on Sixth-day, the 11th of last month, and returned on Fifth-day, the 17th. In this short time we traveled about 280 miles, visited the meeting at Bath and the Bristol Quarterly Meeting, held two Public Meetings, visited the prison, attended to the magistrates and the committee; visited Hannah More, my cousin Priscilla H. Gurney, and several others. The last few days my husband and I have been at Cromer and paid an interesting visit to my much loved brothers and sisters there. I was, at different times engaged religiously amongst them, and help was granted me in these services. I feel unworthy and unfit, and find that there is need of close, cleansing baptisms of the Spirit to make me in any degree ready thus to espouse the best of causes. I am much struck in having all my children but one now here, several of them grown up. What marvelous changes have I witnessed since I first knew this place! Wonders indeed have been done for me, spiritually and naturally. How have I been raised up as out of the dust! I am surrounded by a numerous fine and healthy offspring; one only taken from me, and that one with a peculiar evidence of going to an everlasting and blessed inheritance. Spiritually also how has mercy been shown me! Has not the Beloved of my soul said 'live?'—and how has He been with

me in many tribulations and sanctified many blessings. Indeed I have found that my Lord is a wonder-working God, and has manifested Himself to be to my soul 'Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace.' What can I render for His unspeakable benefits?"

Early in 1824, she visited the Midland Counties accompanied by her brother Samuel Gurney; but returned in feeble health.

"*Plashey, Third Month, 29th.*—We reached home last Fifth-day, having accomplished the duty we had in prospect to our own peace, and I trust to the edification of those amongst whom our lot has been cast. I continued very unwell during the whole journey, and what with exercise of mind, and real illness of body I think I have seldom known such a time; nor do I ever remember being so helped through the different services that I was brought into. Visiting gaols, attending two Quarterly Meetings and many not Friends there; once in Worcester gaol, one large Public Meeting, the first I ever appointed of that description; and many other meetings. But the way I was raised up, as from the dust, was wonderful to myself; enabled to speak with power; and in the Quarterly Meetings to go from service to service. It was indeed a remarkable evidence that there is in man something beyond the natural part which, when that is in its lowest, weakest state, helps and strengthens. None can tell what its power is but those who submit to it. I now feel fully called to rest. I gratefully remember the abundant kindness shown me upon my journey. Greater enlargement of my heart in love do I never remember, or to have met more from others. I have been permitted to feel, throughout this illness, at times, very sweet consolation,—a state of rest as if the sense of pain and sorrow was taken away from body and mind, and

now and then almost like a peep into the joys of the Kingdom."

During this period in addition to her labors at Newgate the need of asylums for the reception of discharged female prisoners claimed the attention of Elizabeth Fry and her fellow-laborers.

"In 1822 a small house for receiving some of the most hopeful of the discharged prisoners was opened at Westminster under the name of Tothill Fields Asylum. It owed its existence to the Christian benevolence of one lady—Miss Neave. She has 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 her's who spoke—'Often have I known the career of a promising young woman, charged with the 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; after a few years under the name of the 'The Royal Manor Hall Asylum,' it contained fifty young women. Since its first establishment 667 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

*"In addition to this excellent Institution which continues very

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 at 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 draw up some plan for the purpose. This lady immediately applied herself to the important work; nor did she relax 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 the Government should adopt this Institution for receiving abandoned female children, and addressed 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.

prosperous, a similar one for the reception of discharged female prisoners who appear likely to prove themselves to be reformed characters is now established at Hackney, and, under the designation of the 'ELIZABETH FRY REFUGE,' is effecting much good. Both these Asylums are liberally patronized by our beloved Queen, and they have a very strong claim on the benevolence of the public.—S. CORDER."