

see him. My visit was highly interesting. I often wish for the pen of a ready writer and the pencil of an artist to picture some of the scenes that I am brought into. A man of pleasing countenance, greatly emaciated, lying on a little white bed, all clean and in order, his Bible by his side, and animated, almost beyond description, at seeing me. He kissed my hand, the tears came into his eyes, his poor face flushed, and he was ready almost to raise himself out of his bed. I sat down and tried to quiet him, and by degrees succeeded. We had a very interesting conversation. He had been in the practice of frequently attending my readings at Newgate, apparently with great attention. Latterly I had not seen him, and was ready to suppose that, like many others, his zeal was of short duration; but I had lately heard that he had been ill. He is one of those Jews who have felt perfectly liberated from keeping any part of the Law of Moses, which some other converted Jews yet consider themselves bound to observe. I found, when he used to come so often to Newgate that he was a man of good moral character, seeking the truth. But to go on with my story. In our conversation he said that he felt great peace, no fear of death, and a full reliance upon his Saviour for salvation. He said that his visits to Newgate had been to him beyond going to any church—indeed I little knew how much was going on in his heart. He requested me to read a Psalm that I had read one day in Newgate, the 107th. This I did and he appeared deeply to feel it, particularly as my dear friends and I made our little remarks in Christian freedom as we went along, truly, I believe, in the life. The poor Jew prayed very strikingly; I followed him and returned thanks. What a solemn, uniting time it was. The poor Jew said 'God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship in spirit and in truth,' as if he felt the spirituality of the Christian administration. His countenance lightened with apparent joy when he expressed his undoubted belief that he should soon enter

the Kingdom, and that I should, before long, follow him. Then he gave me his blessing and took leave in much tenderness, showing every mark he could of gratitude and love. He did not accept any gift of money, saying that he wanted no good thing, as he was most kindly provided for by serious persons in the neighborhood. After about two weeks I received an account of the peaceful end of this poor Jew.

"*First Month, 2nd, 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. We have had the subject of marriage much before us this last year; it has brought us to some test of our feelings and principles respecting it. That it is highly desirable and important to have young persons settle in marriage, particularly young men, I cannot doubt; and that it is one of the most likely means of their preservation, religiously, morally and temporally. Moreover it is highly desirable to settle with one of the same religious views, habits and education as themselves; more particularly for those who have been brought up as Friends, because their mode of education is peculiar. But if any young persons, upon arriving at an age of discretion, do not feel themselves really attached to our peculiar views and habits, then I think their parents have no right to use undue influence with them, as to the connexions they may incline to form; provided they be with persons of religious lives and conversation. I am of opinion that parents are apt to exercise too much authority upon the subject of marriage, and that there would be more really happy unions, if young persons were left more to their own feelings and discretion. Marriage is too much treated like a business concern, and love, that essential ingredient, too little respected in it. I disapprove the rule of our Society



that disowns persons for allowing a child to marry one not a Friend—it is a most undue and unchristian restraint, as far as I can judge of it.”

The regulations of the Society in respect to marriages have been greatly modified since that time.

In 1832 Mrs. Fry together with her sister-in-law of the same name visited the Half-Year's Meeting in Wales, and some places in Ireland, with the usual happy results.

In the autumn of this year a son and also a daughter were married—both out of the Society—which left the little band at Upton Lane much reduced. Soon afterward with her husband and two remaining daughters she visited her sister Mrs. Cunningham at Lowestoft. The latter lady, wife of an able and pious clergyman, gave a long account of this visit, from which I cannot forbear making a few extracts showing the wonderful charm and power of Elizabeth Fry's personality on all who could appreciate spiritual beauty.

“November, 22nd.—We had the treat and great advantage of a visit from our dearest sister. She was encouraged to come and assist us in the formation of our District Society which in this large place we find to be essential for the right working of the parish. We are most thankful for the assistance of our dear sister, (our brother and two of our nieces accompanied her) it is almost like having an angel visitor, so full of loveliness and grace is she. On Sunday my dearest sister being at Pakefield with the Friends induced my remaining all day there. She drank tea with me at the Hawtreys. Mr. Hawtreys and she had some animated and delightful conversation before we went down to the lecture in the school-room; dearest Betsey accompanied us, and some of the other friends joined us. After the usual singing and prayer Mr. Hawtreys read very impressively

the latter part of the third of Ephesians; we then had silence, after which she arose and beautifully addressed the meeting on the necessity of domestic and private religion, and enlarged a good deal on the duty, spirit and manner in which scripture should be read and studied; it would not do to hear it only in public service. After the powerful outward means which had been granted to the people of Pakefield how were they called upon to examine and digest for themselves the written *word* of God. Then in a full and beautiful prayer she seemed to bring the blessing of Heaven upon us. I hardly know any scriptural treat so great as uniting with her in *prayer!* it is such a heavenly song—so spiritual, so elevating, enjoying glimpses, as it were, of the eternal world. Oh! may we long retain the power and the blessing of it!

“On Monday we were all in movement, in preparation for our District Society Meeting; this was held at our house and well attended. Our dear sister displayed much of her tact and power, and gave us the *greatest* assistance. How marvelously gifted she is! Through her influence all parties were brought together, and the District Society begun under the most favorable auspices; the town was divided and every arrangement made according to her advice. Our meeting was highly satisfactory and promised the most favorable results; every one seemed willing to yield to her wisdom and eloquence. What a power of communicating good she possesses! what a faithful steward in that which is committed to her!

“Surely these times do leave a peculiar savor which is not to be forgotten; it adds to the precious seasons which are foretastes of Heaven. Her mind appears to me in more lively exercise and more gifted than ever; rich both in grace and gifts. She is indeed beloved of the Lord, and dwells in safety by Him. . . . Nothing can be more benevolent and beautiful than her spirit, overflowing with love and tenderness.”



Leaving this sister, they visited the old home at Earham, and went thence to North Repps Hall, the home of her brother-in-law, Thomas Fowell Buxton, who was now in the midst of his great struggle for the emancipation of slaves in the British Colonies. Her warm interest and sympathy in his heroic efforts were a timely encouragement as he was confronting the influence of a selfish Government in the House of Commons, supported without by the stirring eloquence of Wilberforce, to effect what has honored England more than any other national act.

In 1833 Mrs. Fry spent several months at a quiet retreat in the island of Jersey, with her family, in order to rest and recruit her health. She enjoyed the retirement as only those can do who have accomplished their appointed tasks. But idleness was not rest to a spirit like hers. The hand and heart did not forget their congenial employment. It was her meat and drink to do the will of Him that sent her. When the happy party went out for a picnic, or to spend the day amongst the secluded and romantic bays of the island, "the tract bag was not 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." At first she held meetings in private houses with poor accommodations, but at length a room was fitted up in the town and large congregations assembled, including many of the gentry and principal inhabitants. "Philanthropic objects also presented themselves to her notice, especially the state of the Hospital, including the Workhouse and Lunatic Asylum, and the Prison."

"*Eighth Month, 12th.*—We feel much at home in this lovely island, and in rather a remarkable manner our way opens in the hearts of those amongst whom we are residing. A very extensive field of service appears before us, in many ways. To try thoroughly to attend to the prisoners, to strive to correct the evils in the Hospital, to assist in various ways the Friends and those who attend Meeting, to visit several in Christian love and try to draw them nearer together—oh! gracious Lord, grant Thy poor unworthy servant the help of Thy Spirit, to do Thy will, and let not her labor be in vain in Thee, her Lord and her God! but through Thy unmerited mercy in Christ Jesus grant that her way may be made *very* clear before her, and ability given her to walk in it to Thy praise, her own peace, and the real edification of those among whom her lot may be cast. Amen!

"*Jersey, Ninth Month, 10th.*—I have much enjoyed and valued the pleasant retreat we have here. I desire, in deep gratitude, to acknowledge the renewed capacity to delight in the wonderful works of God. The scenery, and feeling fully at liberty to spend part of many days in the enjoyment of this beautiful country and weather, and my beloved husband and children, has been very sweet to me! What has not religion been to me? How wonderful in its operation? None but Him who knows the heart can tell. Surely it has brought me into some deep humiliations; but how has it raised me up, healed my at times wounded spirit, given me power to enjoy my blessings, in what I believe an unusual degree, and wonderfully sustained me under deep tribulations! To me it is anything but bondage, since it has brought me into a delightful freedom; although I had narrow places to pass through before my boundaries were thus enlarged; so that from experience I wish to be very tender over those still in bonds."

In the spring of 1834 she made a brief religious visit in



Dorset and Hants, accompanied by two of her nieces, one of whom, the daughter of Sir Fowell Buxton, made the following statements, illustrative of Elizabeth Fry's character and methods of doing good.

"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, hopeful spirit. Bitterness of every kind died when entrusted to her; it never re-appeared. The most favorable 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 must have felt that 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 traveled round by Shanklin, Bonchurch and Undercliff. She was zealous 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."

This is perhaps a suitable place to mention the work of Christian philanthropy above referred to, which consisted in furnishing the five hundred Coast Guard Stations of Great Britain with libraries of suitable reading for the men and their families. That such a task required, not only great labor and perseverance, but a large outlay of personal influence for its successful accomplishment, is obvious. The results are concisely stated in the Report of the Committee acting under the sanction of the Government for carrying out the object. It is as follows:—

"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 and also with school books for the families of the men employed in that service, having, by the blessing of Divine Providence completed that object, it becomes their pleasing duty to lay before the subscribers a Report of their proceedings.

"In the commencement of this duty it is proper gratefully to acknowledge that the idea of furnishing these libraries first suggested itself to the benevolent mind of Mrs. Fry, whose active and charitable exertions, on all occasions affecting the benefit of mankind, are too well known and too highly estimated to need further remark on the present occasion, and who, having previously succeeded in inducing His Majesty's Government to establish libraries for the use of the patients in the naval hospitals, was induced by the observations she had made on the subject, to endeavor to



extend the same beneficial measure to the Coast Guard Service, and after several unsuccessful efforts arising from the expense which it would occasion, a sum of 500 pounds was obtained in 1835, from the First Lord of the Treasury (Sir Robert Peel) for this purpose, which munificent donation has since been followed by subscriptions from charitable individuals, and grants from several book societies, but as the whole of these funds were not sufficient to meet the object in view, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Spring Rice) kindly granted two further sums amounting together to 460 pounds to effect its completion.

"The means thus so liberally afforded have enabled the committee to provide and forward to the coast,—

498 libraries for Stations on shore, containing	25,896	vols
74 Ditto Districts	12,880	"
48 Ditto Cruisers	1,867	"
School books for the children of crews of Stations	6,464	"
Pamphlets, Tracts, &c.,	5,357	in nos

Making a total of 52,464 vols.

and thereby to furnish a body of deserving and useful men and their wives and families, (amounting to upwards of 21,000 persons,) with the means of moral and religious instruction, as well as profitable amusement, most of whom, from their situation in life, have not the means of procuring such benefits from their own resources, and who in many instances, are so far removed from places of public worship and schools as to prevent the possibility of themselves or their families deriving advantage from either."

Mrs. Fry's only note on the journey last referred to is as follows:—

"*Upton, Fourth Month.*—At Portsmouth we paid an interesting visit to Hasler Hospital, the Hulks Hospital Ship,

and some prisons; we also paid a delightful little visit to the Isle of Wight. I felt more able to enjoy the great beauties of nature, from having been owned by my Lord and Master in my religious services. What a relish does true religion give for our temporal as well as spiritual blessings! I have still much to feel respecting the offer of marriage made to my dear L——. It is a very serious thing, my children thus leaving Friends; and I have my great fears that in so doing they are leaving that which would be a blessing and preservation to them. At the same time I see there is no respect of persons with God; nor in reality is there the difference some would make out of the different administrations of religion, if there be but a true, sincere love of our Lord, and endeavor to serve Him. What is above all to me I have felt peace in it rather peculiarly: still we at present are exceedingly feeling the weight of the affairs. It is also a considerable pain to me to go through the discipline of the Society respecting it—but in bearing it patiently and humbly I may in that way be enabled to preach Christ. Lord, be it so—Help me Thyself through all these rather intricate paths, and make a way for Thy servant in all these things; that she may do right in Thy sight, and not offend even the weakest of her brethren and sisters in religious connection with herself—help, Lord, or we perish!

"21st.—Yesterday (First-day) I attended Meeting rather oppressed in body and mind. Ministered to by dear Elizabeth Dudley, but had such heaviness of body as to hinder spiritual revival. In the afternoon I went, accompanied by Elizabeth Dudley, Rebecca Sturges, and some others, to visit the female convict ship; the sun shone brightly, the day delightful, the poor women rejoiced to see us, but my spirit was in heaviness from the difficulty of leaving my family, even for a few hours on that day. It was a fine sight to see about one hundred and fifty poor female convicts, and some sailors, standing, sitting and leaning round us, whilst



we read the Scriptures to them. I spoke to them and Elizabeth Dudley prayed. Surely to witness the solemn effect, the tears rolling down many cheeks, we must acknowledge it to be the Lord's doing. Still I fell flat, though the others thought it a very satisfactory time; but in the evening I became more revived, and comforted, and thankful that it has pleased the Lord to send me to the poor outcasts, although at times feeling as if I went more as a machine moved by springs, than in the lively state I desire; but at other times it is different, and there is much sense of life, light, love and power. To-day I expect to go to the Duchess of Gloucester, and amongst some of the high in this life. May the Lord be with me that my intercourse with these may not be in vain in Him. I feel it no light responsibility having the door so open with the Government of our country, and those filling high places; I am often surprised to find how much so; and yet the Lord only knows the depth of my humiliations, and how it has been out of the depths that I have been raised up for these services. At the Admiralty I have lately had important requests granted; at the Home Office they are always ready to attend to what I ask; and at the Colonial Office I expect that they will soon make some alterations in the arrangements for the female convicts in New South Wales.

"Who has thus turned the hearts of those in authority? Surely it is the Lord. May He grant me wisdom and sound discretion rightly to use the influence He has given me. Be near to Thy servant, this day, gracious Lord, in every place; and so help her by Thy Spirit that she may do Thy will, and not bow to man, *but alone to Thee her God*; doing all to Thy glory. We made several other calls and dined at my Brother Buxton's where we met some gentlemen. I felt, as I mostly do after such days, fearful and anxious, lest I had done any discredit to the vocation wherewith I am called; or in any degree, in my own heart or conduct towards God, done amiss. It caused me rather a watchful

fearful night. I see it much easier, and in many respects safer, in the religious life to be quiet, and much at home; yet I also feel that in a more general association there are great advantages—enlarging our spiritual borders and removing our prejudices; and if we are really enabled to stand our ground as Christians, in the meekness of wisdom, and so adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour it may be the means of promoting the good of others.

"24th.—We dined at Lord Bexley's and met Captain Mangles the great traveler, several clergyman, and others. I desired to maintain the watch, but the company of serious, intellectual and refined persons is apt to draw me a good deal forth in conversation and mind, and often leads me to many fears afterwards, lest there should imperceptibly be anything of showing off, and being exalted by man; but I may truly say, inwardly I mostly feel reduced and humbled after such times, and fearful lest I should have a cloud over me so as to hinder my near communion with my Lord.

"A few words in the Proverbs rather encouraged me. 'Reproofs of instruction are the way of life.' I see it well to be reproofed; may I profit by it. I often fear for myself lest I am forsaking my first love, or becoming lax, because I certainly feel far more liberty than I used to do in uniting with others in their prayers, grace, &c., &c., and less in bonds generally: in short my borders are greatly enlarged. May this arise not from my love becoming cold, but from experiencing the service of my Lord to be already to me perfect freedom. Oh dearest Lord! make manifest in Thy own light, if this be in me laxity, that I may be reproofed, and amend my ways; if, on the contrary, it be the liberty wherewith Thou hast made me free, cause me in Thine own power firmly and fixedly to stand in it, even if some of my fellow-mortals whom I love and esteem appear to remain under a different dispensation.

"A few days ago I visited Plashet: it was almost too much for my natural spirits. When I saw our weedy walks