

tion of the criminal, and to lead him back to the bosom of the society against which he has sinned. This, as a matter of justice, is due to the criminal, who is too often made so by the circumstances in which he has been brought up, by his want of training, and by the unequal laws which society has enacted.

Before, society took its revenge upon criminals, and treated them like wild beasts; now, a milder treatment is adopted, with a view to their reclamation. The governors of the Sing Sing Penitentiary, in the State of New York, led the way in the reformatory treatment of criminals. Their attention was directed to the subject by the reports of Mr. Edmonds. He said that "he had no faith whatever in the system of violence which had so long prevailed in the world—the system of tormenting criminals into what was called good order, and of never appealing to anything better than the base sentiment of fear. He had seen enough in his own experience to convince him that, degraded as they were, they had still hearts that could be touched by kindness, consciences that might be aroused by appeals to reason, and aspirations for a better course of life, which needed only the cheering voice of sympathy and hope, to be strengthened into permanent reformation." A new system of criminal treatment was, accordingly, in conformity with Mr. Edmonds' recommendations, commenced at Sing Sing prison, and was soon attended by the happiest effects. The rule now was, to punish as sparingly as possible, and to encourage where there was any desire for improvement. Many criminals, formerly regarded as irreclaimable, were thus restored to society as useful and profitable citizens, and but a very small proportion of these were found to relapse into their former habits.

The system was found especially successful in the case of women. One of the matrons addressed them in the chapel on the duty of self-government, and the necessity of a reformation of character if they wished to escape from misery, either in this world or the next. "The effect of this little experiment," says the matron, in an after statement, has been manifest in the more quiet and gentle movements

of the prisoners, in their softened and subdued tones of voice, and in their ready and cheerful obedience. It has deepened my conviction that, however degraded by sin, or hardened by outrage or wrong, while reason maintains its empire over the mind, there is no heart so callous or obdurate that the voice of sympathy and kindness may not reach it, or so debased as to give no responses to the tone of Christian love."

Captain Pillsbury, governor of Westbury prison, in Connecticut, was also remarkably successful in his treatment and reclamation of criminals by humane methods. He possessed a moral courage which approached almost to the sublime. Previous to his appointment the usual harsh mode of treatment was enforced, with the usual hardening and debasing effects upon the prisoners, producing in them a "deep-rooted and settled malignity." Crime was increasing in enormity, and the prison was every year running the State into deeper debt. Captain Pillsbury completely altered the mode of treatment; he directed his efforts to the reformation of the prisoners by means of kind treatment. He encouraged them in a course of good conduct; he cheered them on in their return to virtue. He at once liberated the worst convicts from the degradation of irons, and told them *he would trust them!* The policy was magical in its effects. The men gave him their confidence; they manifested the greatest respect for his rule; order and regularity prevailed in the prison; and the institution soon began to pay for itself by its own labor.

His treatment of one of the prisoners was remarkable. The man was of herculean proportions, a prison-breaker, the terror of the country, and had plunged deeper and deeper into crime for seventeen years. Captain Pillsbury told him when he came that he hoped he would not repeat the attempts at escape which he had made elsewhere. "I will make you as comfortable as I possibly can, and shall be anxious to be your friend; and I hope you will not get me into any difficulty on your account. There is a cell intended for solitary confinement, but we never use it; and I should be very sorry ever to turn the key upon anybody in

it. You may range the place as freely as I do if you will trust me as I shall trust you." The man was sulky, and for weeks showed only very gradual symptoms of softening under Captain Pillsbury's influence. At length information was given him that the man intended to break out of prison. The captain called him, and taxed him with it: the man preserved a gloomy silence. He was told that it was now necessary that he should be locked up in the solitary cell. The Captain, who was a small, slight man, went before, and the giant followed. When they had reached the narrowest part of the passage the governor turned round with his lamp, and looked in the criminal's face. "Now," said he, "I ask you whether you have treated me as I deserve? I have done everything I could think of to make you comfortable; I have trusted you, and you have never given me the least confidence in return, and have even planned to get me into difficulty. Is this kind? And yet I cannot bear to lock you up. If I had the least sign that you cared for me." The man burst into tears. "Sir," said he I have been a very devil these seventeen years; but you treat me like a man." "Come, let us go back," said the captain. The convict had the free range of the prison as before. From this hour he began to open his heart to the captain, and cheerfully fulfilled his whole term of imprisonment, confiding to his friend, as they arose, all impulses to violate his trust, and all facilities for doing so which he imagined he saw.

Captain Pillsbury is the gentleman who, on being told that a desperate prisoner had sworn to murder him, speedily sent for him to shave him, allowing no one to be present. He eyed the man, pointed to the razor, and desired him to shave him. The prisoner's hand trembled, but he went through it very well. When he had done the captain said, "I have been told you meant to murder me, but I thought I might trust you." "God bless you, sir!" replied the regenerated man. Such is the power of faith in man.*

Major Goodell, governor of the State Prison at Auburn,

* "Western Travel," by Miss Martineau.

New York, and Mr. Isaac T. Hopper, another prison inspector, were equally successful in the treatment and reclamation of criminals. Of fifty individuals whom this last named admirable man succeeded in reclaiming, only two relapsed into bad habits—a fact which speaks volumes in favor of the power of gentleness.*

One of the greatest difficulties that a criminal has to encounter is in getting employment after fulfilling his term of imprisonment. He is willing to work, and determined to be honest. But the policeman knows his whereabouts, and gives information against him. He is immediately turned off, and forced back upon his old habits. Thus it becomes almost impossible for a quondam prisoner to return to honesty. Thomas Wright, the philanthropist of Manchester, distinguished himself as the true friend of forlorn prisoners. He was a man of no position in society. He possessed no wealth, excepting only a rich and loving heart.

Though he was imperfectly educated, he received strong religious impressions in early life from his mother. At

* Notwithstanding the humane treatment of criminals in some of the State Prisons of the Union, William Tulloch, in a letter to the *Times* of the 3d of February, 1880, complains of the treatment of juvenile criminals in some of the States. "For example," he says, "in a recent Philadelphia newspaper there is an account of a visit to the convict establishment of the State of Georgia, where, amid the most objectionable conditions of mutual corruption, scores of convicts are worked in association in a coal mine. They are wretchedly lodged, guarded by bloodhounds, and kept in chains. Among them the visitor observed a boy of fifteen years of age, who had already endured five years of this slavery since he was ten years old, at which tender age a judge sentenced him to forty years' imprisonment for a burglary! From the journal in which this appears, and from the evident character of the writer, there is reason to fear it is too true, for there are in America innumerable prison abuses almost as bad, which are fully verified by official statements. A judge who could pass such a sentence on so young a child one would like to see himself incarcerated, though not under the easy conditions in which I once witnessed an American judge in a Pennsylvania State Prison. He was committed for two years for taking bribes; but his apartments were furnished with every luxury, and it was rather surprising that an offence locally regarded as laudably 'smart' should, even on this occasion, be thus reached by the law."

length the time came when he was loosened from her apron-strings, and had to face the world, with its labors, its pleasures, and its vices. He very soon got mixed up with the wickedest men and boys in Manchester. That lasted for some time; but at length his mind and conscience revolted against the blasphemy of his companions. The lessons imbibed from his mother's lips came to his help. He made the acquaintance of a religious young man, and began regularly to attend a place of worship.

At fifteen he was apprenticed to an iron-founder at Manchester. His wage at first was five shillings a week. Being a steady, sober, diligent fellow he gradually worked his way up, until, at twenty-three, he became foreman of the moulders, at a weekly salary of £3 10s. This was his highest income, but the good that he afterward did was altogether independent of his money wages.

His attention was early awakened to the criminal classes, the most hopeless of objects. The convict, when let loose from jail, can very rarely get employment in his old place. New masters will not employ him without a character, which he cannot give. Imprisonment has probably made him worse. It has brought him in contact with more vicious persons than himself. He is thus thrown back upon his former associates, and begins his criminal career as before.

One day a man called at the foundry, and obtained employment as a laborer. He was a steady, careful, and industrious workman. But it oozed out that the man was a discharged convict. Thomas Wright was asked whether he was cognizant of the fact. He was not, but he promised to ascertain. In the course of the day Wright incidentally asked the man "where he had worked last?" "I've been abroad," was the man's reply. At last, after some further pressing inquiries, the poor man, with tears running down his cheeks, admitted that he was a returned convict, that he was desirous of not relapsing into his old ways, and that he hoped, by perseverance, to wipe out his evil character.

Mr. Wright believed the man. He was convinced that he was sincere in his intentions. He acquainted the employers with his history, and offered to place £20 in their

hands as a guarantee for his future good conduct. The promise was then given that the convict should be retained; but on the following morning the man was missing, the order for his dismissal having, through inadvertence, not been countermanded. A messenger was at once sent to the man's lodging to bring him back to work. But the man had already left his lodging, taking with him a bundle containing all his worldly belongings.

Having ascertained that the man had set out in the direction of Bury, Mr. Wright immediately followed him on foot. He found the fugitive sitting by the roadside a few miles from Manchester, heart-broken, wretched and despairing. Wright lifted him up, shook him by the hand, told him that he was retained in his employment, and that everything now depended upon himself, whether he would maintain his character as a respectable workman. They returned together to Manchester, they entered the shop together, and the future conduct of the man amply and nobly justified the guarantee into which the foreman had entered.

This circumstance greatly affected Mr. Wright himself. He saw how much could be done by sympathy and human affection to rescue these poor criminals from the depths of misery into which they had fallen. He felt that they should not abandon all hope of recovery, and that it behoved every Christian man to give them a helping hand toward re-entering industrial life. This subject became the great idea of his soul. It was his mission, and he endeavored to fulfil it. He was as yet without a helper. But he had strong faith, and he persevered until he succeeded.

Mr. Wright lived near the Salford prison, and desired to have access to the prisoners. For a long time he failed in his application. At last one of the young men in the foundry, whose father was a turnkey in the jail, obtained for him an introduction to the governor. He was then permitted to attend the Sunday afternoon services. He was not permitted, as yet, to see the prisoners individually. But he had the patience to wait.

At length, one Sunday afternoon, the chaplain stopped Mr. Wright on leaving the prison chapel, and asked him if

he could procure a situation for a prisoner whose term of office had nearly expired, and who desired to have the chance of proving the reformation of his character. "Yes," said Wright; "I will do my best, I will endeavor to find a situation." He succeeded, and work was found for the discharged prisoner.

The governor now gave him a freer run of the jail. He allowed him to visit the prisoners personally. Wright advised and counselled them. He strengthened their determination to amend. He conveyed messages home to their families, and made himself their friend and benefactor in many ways. He made it a practice to meet the prisoners on their discharge. He took them to their homes, and helped them, out of his scanty means, to subsist, and then he endeavored to find employment for them.

He was in most cases successful. Employers of labor came to believe in Thomas Wright. They knew him to be a good and benevolent man, and that he would not counsel them wrongly. He took the employers into his confidence, and they usually employed the released felons. Where they had doubts, he guaranteed their fidelity by deposits of his own money—gathered together out of his foreman's wages of seventy shillings a week.

He went on quietly and unostentatiously in this way—preferring that no notice should be taken of his name, lest it might interfere with the good that he was doing; until he had succeeded in a few years in finding employment for nearly three hundred discharged prisoners! He even succeeded—the worst task of all—in reclaiming women from drunkenness. He would sometimes go miles into the country to plead with husbands, even on his knees, to take back the wife who was no longer drunken, but who was penitent and longing for home.

A remarkable case is mentioned by one of his friends.* A man who had been undergoing penal servitude at Portland was discharged, and repaired to Manchester with a ticket of leave and a letter from the chaplain to Thomas

* The author of "Lives that Speak."

Wright. Employment was found for him as a scavenger. Mr. Wright had him promoted to be a mender of roads; and here also his conduct was approved. He obtained admission for him to the late Canon Stowell's Sunday and weekday night schools, in both of which he became a teacher. He showed so much capacity for learning that Canon Stowell felt a great interest in him. The Canon was made acquainted with his antecedents. Nevertheless he made arrangements for "reading" with him, and in due time the Portland convict was ordained a clergyman.

In another case a young man, engaged in a position of trust in a warehouse, had fallen into bad company, and embezzled his employer's money. The theft was discovered, and he was about to be prosecuted. The young man's father besought the mediation of Thomas Wright. He immediately went to the employer, and succeeded in eliciting a promise not to prosecute, but to give the youth another trial. "Give him another chance," was often Thomas Wright's urgent advice. The young man was taken on again. His behavior was most satisfactory. He gave himself more to business pursuits than before. He was at length taken in as a partner, and eventually became the head of the firm. He never ceased to bless the name of Thomas Wright.

After he had been thus working on for years, his voluntary labors at length obtained official recognition. Captain Williams mentioned him in his annual reports on the state of prisons. He says, "To show the extent to which this humble and unassisted good man has carried his benevolence, and the success with which it has been crowned, it is but necessary to state that out of ninety-six criminals befriended by him, and re-established in life, only four have returned to a prison. It is delightful to witness the implicit confidence and reliance reposed in him by the guilty and wretched, and which seem to be wholly induced by his simple, unassuming, and truly fatherly way of doing good."

There were many cases in which Mr. Wright could not get employment for the released prisoners. In such cases he either lent them money of his own, or raised a private

subscription among his friends, to enable them to emigrate. In this way he assisted 941 discharged prisoners and convicts to go abroad, and to begin life under new circumstances and separated from their old companionships. In many cases the discharged prisoners themselves helped him in his philanthropic labors. They got employment for their friends, or they helped to raise subscriptions to enable others to emigrate. Thus charity begot charity.

One of these forlorn emigrants, who had been sent to North America, wrote to Mr. Wright in 1864, addressing him as "My dear adopted father." He inclosed £2 as a contribution to the London Male Reformatory. The emigrant, who was now a prosperous man, said, "To your never-to-be-forgotten fatherly aid I owe my present success. You were indeed my best, my kindest, and my sole advising friend on this earth. You rescued me from a life of vice by your own unaided help. When all others had turned their faces from me as a miscreant and a vagabond, you, like the prodigal's father of old, welcomed me back to the paths of virtue and integrity of life, consoling my youthful heart with the hope of brighter days yet in store, and blending your fatherly counsel with a still purer hope beyond the grave. God bless you, dear father! God bless you for all your kindness! Tears of kind remembrances fall from my cheeks as I think upon all your noble efforts for your poor fellow-men."

In the meantime Mr. Wright was working daily at the foundry—working from five o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night; and sometimes to a still later hour. All his evening leisure and most of his Sundays were devoted to self-imposed services; either in the jail, the penitentiary, the ragged Sunday-schools, or at the homes of the unfortunate and the criminal. He was now sixty-three years old, and his health was beginning to fail. He had saved nothing. All his surplus earnings had been devoted to the relief and emigration of discharged prisoners. He frequently reduced himself to the lowest means of subsistence—always considering that while he had the means he would not be justified in withholding them from those who were in distress.

The government of the day, recognizing the value of his services, offered Mr. Wright the post of travelling inspector of prisons, at a salary of £800 per annum. Here, it would seem, was the method by which he could lay by a little money, and at the same time extend the sphere of his operations. But he unhesitatingly refused the offer. He said that it would limit his power of doing good, as he felt convinced that if he once became a government official, he would soon cease to be regarded as *The Prisoner's Friend*.

Accordingly, the attempt was made by the people of Manchester to raise a sum for the purchase of an annuity equal to the amount of his weekly wages—a mere tithe of the amount which his exertions had saved to the state. A sum of £100 was allotted from the Royal Bounty Fund in aid of the subscription. The Manchester people did the rest. They raised a sum which provided Mr. Wright with an annuity of £182, the exact amount which he had before earned by his daily toil.

In connection with the testimonial, an admirable picture of "The Good Samaritan" was presented by Mr. G. F. Watt, R. A., to the Manchester Corporation, "as an expression of the artist's admiration of, and respect for, the noble philanthropist, Thomas Wright." The picture was placed in a prominent position in the Manchester Town Hall. It is a testimony at once to the kindness and generosity of the artist, and to the nobility of the character whom his painting represented.

Mr. Wright still continued in his works of mercy. He went from town to town, like Howard, visiting the jails of the country. He inspected the Field Lane Night Refuge, the Redhill Industrial Schools, the hulks and convict establishments at Millbank, Pentonville, Portland, Portsmouth, and Parkhurst. He worked hard in the establishment of Ragged Schools. He wished to train the poor boys to earn an honest livelihood, and to thus prevent their becoming criminals. He regarded ignorance and bad examples as the fruitful parents of all evil; and he did what he could to eradicate them by secular and religious instruction. He urged upon Mr. Cobden, who was then engaged in advocating a

system of National Education, that it should be made compulsory, as the primary means of diminishing crime and pauperism. Besides his Ragged Schools, he instituted Reformatory Schools, Penny Banks, and the Shoeblack Brigade. Wherever a good work was to be done, his hand and help were never wanting. He loved to have every moment occupied. His motto was, "Work, work while it is called to-day; for the night cometh."

Thus he went on to the end. When he had arrived at eighty-five years of age his health rapidly failed. Yet he was always ready to receive those who wished to see him—especially poor persons, discharged prisoners, or returned convicts. His life gradually faded away. The twenty-third Psalm was continually on his lips, and at the end of each day's illness he felt himself "a day's march nearer home." He had fought the good fight, and was about to finish his course. He passed peacefully and calmly to his rest on the 14th of April, 1875. This was surely a "life worth living."

Wright reformed criminals by trusting them. Trust is confidence. By trusting men you bring out the good that is in them. Their heart responds to the touch. Except in the worst cases, where young people have been carelessly and dishonestly brought up, the trust will be reciprocated. Always think the best of a man. "To think the worst," said Lord Bolingbroke, "is the sure mark of a mean spirit and a base soul." You may be deceived, it is true. But better be deceived than unjust.

Not long since the mass of the English people were shut out from all public places. The principal buildings were closed on week-days, except to those who could obtain "orders," or who were willing to pay an admission fee to the beadles and showmen of the curiosities. The British Museum was closed; the National Gallery was closed; St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey were closed; Windsor Castle, the Tower, the Houses of Parliament, and all other public buildings, and collections of curiosities, and works of art, were closed, except to the few. It seems to have been believed that if the common people were admitted to these places they would forthwith whittle the wood,

chip the stone, and smash and destroy these venerable buildings.

The late Joseph Hume was, we believe, the first public man who devoted himself to alter this deplorable state of things; and the first of our public collections which he succeeded in getting thrown open to the public was the British Museum. It was not without great opposition that he thus far accomplished his purpose. There was the old cry that the collection would be irretrievably injured, damaged, chipped, spoiled, and perhaps some of its valuable contents stolen. Besides, it was *such* an innovation! Nevertheless, the British Museum, thanks to Mr. Hume's dogged pertinacity, was ordered to be thrown open to the public, and, as a matter of course, "the Deluge" was predicted. Previously to the throwing open of the Museum parties of only five or six at a time were admitted, and they were shown round by one of the officials—a sort of policeman in plain clothes—who was expected to be on his guard against the iconoclasts, and ready to pounce upon any Goth who, as a matter of course, was only waiting his opportunity of destroying the valuables placed within his reach.

Well! the fiat of Parliament went forth that the British Museum should be opened to butchers, bakers, common soldiers, sempstresses, milliners, and the commonest of common servants. And what said my Lord Stanley (the late Earl of Derby) after the irruption of the barbarian Goths had taken place? He came down to the House of Commons (of which he was then a member, as well as a Commissioner of the British Museum) on the very day after the irruption. He rose up in his place, and in an emphatic voice declared, "*I was alarmed and afraid*, but I can now state that 31,500 persons passed through the British Museum yesterday (Mary day), and there was not the value of sixpence injured!" Thus "the Deluge" did not happen, and it was found that the people at large might be admitted freely to inspect their own national collection of antiquities and works of art without causing the general overturn of society. The secret was easy to find out; the people had merely been trusted,

Mr. Hume persevered in his good work. He perpetually dinned it into the ears of public men that they should trust the people more, that they should open to them the public collections in which they could find amusement, refinement, and education; and, by dint of constant reiteration from year to year, he succeeded in getting thrown open to the public the Tower, Hampton Court, Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's. The movement gradually spread, and now parks are set apart for the enjoyment and amusement of the people, not only in London, but in most of the large manufacturing towns and cities.

Even at the time of the great Exhibition of 1851 it was a subject for grave discussion in Parliament whether London should not be surrounded by troops in order to keep the people quiet. The advice was overruled, and the Crystal Palace was not surrounded by troops. What was the result? Hardly a pennyworth belonging to the collection was stolen, not an article was wantonly injured. Colonel Rowan, one of the heads of the Metropolitan Police, was asked a question on the subject before a Committee of the House of Commons, and he answered that it was attributable to "the good conduct of the people;" and he added that much of the recent improvement had originated in the facility which had of late years been afforded in admitting the people to public places—in short, by trusting them.

This is the true way of staving off "the Deluge." Admit the people freely to inspect works of art, which are eminently illustrative of God's gift to man. Let them be allowed to contemplate forms of beauty—full of grace, devotion, and virtue—commemorative of some genuine feeling, some sublime thought, or some noble deed in history, and the gazer is unconsciously elevated, humanized, refined, and civilized. Our picture galleries might thus be made instrumental in promoting national education of the best kind, by elevating and purifying the taste, and at the same time instructing the mind. The mere fact of trusting the people, and allowing them free access to such places, is an education of the moral character. Trust a man—show that you are ready to place confidence in him as a man—exhibit by your conduct toward

him that you believe, so to speak, in his honor, and you will do far more to win the heart of that man, and to draw forth the better feelings of his nature, than by all the exhibitions of law and authority. You disarm a man's evil nature when you prove by your acts and demeanor that you have confidence in his better nature. Thus it is that evil can be overcome by good.

Indeed, we need but to trust men more to bring out the good that is in them. Trust them with privileges, and, by practice, they will learn the right use of them. The only cure for the evils of newly acquired freedom is freedom. Accustom the prisoner who has come out of his cell to the light, and he will soon be able to bear the brightest rays of the sun. To humanize men, they must be familiarized with humanizing influences. To make men good citizens, they must be allowed to exercise the rights and functions of citizens. Before a man can swim, he must first have gone into the water; before a man can ride, he must first have mounted a horse; and before he can be an intelligent citizen, he must first have been admitted to the duties of citizenship.