

## OUTSIDE THE GATES.

### WOMEN.

It is interesting to observe how often those who are destined to do a great work in the world are endowed by Nature with much physical charm, as if, knowing the almost insuperable obstacles with which they will have to contend, she desires to minimise these difficulties. So it was with Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, the gracious and intrepid humanitarian, through whose instrumentality reforms were introduced into the prisons, which only a century ago were dens of vice and depravity.

In her zeal for reform and for the betterment of a class, Mrs. Fry never overlooked the individual, and her great heart sympathised with the most repulsive and abandoned of her sex, so that her presence amongst them in the cells of Newgate brought healing and hope where before all was hopeless, as she sought for and cultivated the germ of goodness which lies deep at the root of so many characters which, on the surface, appear unlovely and unloveable.

It is one hundred years ago this month since Mrs. Fry first began her ministrations to the unfortunate members of her own sex in Newgate, and, although the conditions in our prisons to-day bear no resemblance to those which prevailed, to our shame, in those days, yet much remains to be done. Especially is it necessary that in every prison trained nurses should be appointed, and it is most desirable that prison Matrons should be recruited from their ranks, for it must always be remembered that many of those who are at present incarcerated in our prisons are drawn from the ranks of the feeble-minded, the mental degenerates, the potentially insane, who, under a better and more humane system of classification than that now adopted would receive remedial instead of punitive treatment. No class are better able to urge or to carry out humane methods of treatment in a disciplined manner in regard to prisoners than trained nurses, and it is work which needs their attention and assistance. Some years ago we proposed the formation of an Elizabeth Fry League, with the object of securing trained nursing in our prisons, but no nurse so far has come forward

to organise this bit of work. We still hope that the seed will fall into good ground and bring forth fruit.

The Editor will be glad to hear from any member of the National Council of Trained Nurses who would like to accompany her to the Friends Burial Ground at Barking, on Thursday afternoon, February 27th, when, as President of the National Council, she will place a wreath of laurels on the grave of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, who one hundred years ago this month paid the first of those visits to Newgate which had such far reaching results in the reform of prison management.

The arrogant politician man—usually a poor thing who arrogates to himself the powers of the Deity where the bodies and souls of women are concerned—would impiously deny to women the powers of thought and feeling. Do not dare, he says in effect, to raise your eyes to the horizon or let your vagrant heart go bounding out over seas and snows. How one would smile if one did not so bitterly resent the ignorance and meanness of it all.

We ask you what woman's heart has not leapt in her bosom, and flamed with the pride and the glory of it all, as in imagination she has followed step by step the deathless struggle of those heroes in the Antarctic, who in their manner of life and death have shed such fame immortal upon the human race? Born of woman—born of woman our hearts have kept

throbbing out—and have we not therefore the right to stand in the effulgence of their imperishable glory and feel the thrill of it? That is what we women have done, and who can say us nay?

The National American Woman Suffrage Association intends, by a magnificent pageant, to outrival the Presidential procession at Washington on March 3rd. A herald will proclaim the message of this new crusade. The first division of the pageant will show that the demand of women is world-wide. Countries having equal suffrage will be represented by decorated cars. The second division will illustrate the growth of the suffrage movement, while the third will show, by a series of tableaux, the co-operation of men and women in all human activities.



MRS. ELIZABETH FRY.

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