

of that time. The poor in many places lived on a diet of potatoes and chaff. The Quaker conscience was aroused, and a meeting of the Friends was called, in St. Martin's Lane, for thieves, prostitutes and such like. Mr. Grellet, the promoter of the meeting, was greatly saddened to see that they were all young people. He succeeded, after some difficulty, in getting permission to visit the women's quarters in prison, and was greatly shocked at what he saw—the sick lying on the bare floor with but a scanty allowance of old straw and the children naked though the weather was cold. He went to consult Elizabeth Fry about these poor sufferers. Immediately she sent for a large supply of flannel, collected a number of young friends, and such was their energy that next day she arrived at the prison with a supply of warm clothing for the little naked children. Thus came the call to Elizabeth Fry.

Newgate Prison was built in 1782. It had no windows to the outer world, but looked inward on a narrow ill-drained court. Men goalers attended both sexes, and the condemned cells were peculiarly forbidding and fearsome. It is to Stephen Grellet that we owe a most vivid description of all the horrors of this famous prison. In the *London Chronicle*, one gentleman wrote: "Of all the seats of woe this side of hell, few exceed or equal Newgate." Miss Tipper described the horrors of the place, and then most vividly the first arrival of Elizabeth Fry and her friends in a hackney coach, laden with parcels, and their reception by the poor wretches to whom they brought, of their charity, clothes and other comforts.

A description was given of some of the punishments of that time, as, for instance, of the fate of the poor wretch who had purchased two trusses of hay, not knowing that they had been stolen: he was whipped for two miles in public. Several men, in the pillory, were killed by the missiles of the passers-by. The punishment in these days was the same for killing one's father as for stealing a rabbit. There were no factory laws, and no Trade Unions, and long hours, low wages and lack of education reduced the labouring classes to a very low level of existence. Gin shops invited people "to get drunk for a penny, and dead drunk

for two pence." An account of the transportation of prisoners was also given which made one realise that the world had progressed after all in the direction of mercy.

Caroline Fox, in her journal, tells of her experiences in being taken to visit a prison by Elizabeth Fry; it was supposed to be one of the best, although whipping and the treadmill were still allowed. She tells how sad it was to see the poor exhausted women on the treadmill toiling upward without a chance of progress. She tells too of how beautiful it was to hear her cousin talking to and comforting these poor creatures, and trying to give them hope and courage to meet the future. Mrs. Fry had a great

fight to get a school-room for the women prisoners, and to find them occupation. She was most strongly opposed always to solitary confinement. Here she differed from her great predecessor, John Howard. Reforms, by co-operation with the women, were brought about by Elizabeth Fry. Each rule, suggested at the meetings she organised in the prison, was carried, or otherwise, by a show of hands. A matron was appointed, work materials were provided, and classes were formed with monitors chosen from among the prisoners. Mr. Fry always approved of his wife's work, and gave her his support to the full. She was the first woman to be called to give evidence before a Parliamentary Committee, and later she also gave evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords. She is one of a group of women, such as Florence Nightingale, Harriet Martineau, and a few others, who have left their mark

upon English law and English history. They were women not inspired by personal wrongs.

A short account was given of the initiative of Elizabeth Fry in founding the first institution for private nurses.

We have been able to give but a short report of the lecture, but it was one which met with very great appreciation, and was followed with great attention. Miss Tipper is a Quaker and a nurse; she is also a very accomplished lecturer, so that she was able to bring a real picture before us of the great and fascinating figure of Elizabeth Fry.

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