



Frontispiece.]

THE LADY WITH THE LAMP.

[*See page 25.*

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ELIZABETH FRY AND ANNA BUXTON IN NEWGATE GAOL.

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motive of my visit, her guilt, and her need of God's mercy, she burst into tears and thanked me, whilst I read to her the story of the thief on the Cross, who, although suffering justly from man's judgment, sought and found mercy from the Saviour."

From that day the thoughts and energies of Sarah Martin's life were given up to the service of the prisoners in Yarmouth Gaol. She could not give up her dressmaking, for on that depended her sole means of support; but, as before, she set aside one day in the week for their instruction and improvement. At first she contented herself with reading portions of Scripture to them; but after a time she began to teach them to read and write. Gradually she won her way into the affections of the most hardened criminals; she quelled the riotous, and inspired the hopelessly indolent with a desire for work.

Being of a deeply religious nature, she was greatly grieved by the fact that the Sunday in prison was spent just as other days. She persuaded the prisoners to meet together to read aloud to one another. This plan was far from satisfactory, and as there was no one else, she took the duties of chaplain upon herself.

At first she read sermons from a book; but as it soon became a matter of no slight difficulty to find subjects adapted to the needs of her hearers,



READING TO THE PRISONERS IN GAOL.



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THE COFFEE BAR, DEVONPORT SAILORS' INSTITUTE.

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for the benefit of those embarking or disembarking. This was the means of drawing the attention of the Government to the state of affairs, and in 1877 she received permission to erect an iron shed, to take the place of the cart. Afterwards permanent waiting-rooms were built by the authorities, and the old order of things passed away for ever.

The Soldiers' Institute, which Sarah Robinson established at Portsmouth, is one of the sights of the town, and has been the means of doing an incalculable amount of good. It contains a large lecture hall, reading, smoking, and recreation rooms, and seventy beds. She also established a Sailors' Welcome near the dockyard, which, as well as the Institute, is free to soldiers and sailors.

Sarah Robinson next turned her attention to the poor of the town. She formed a temperance society called the Helping Hand for their benefit, and opened the Blue Ribbon Coffee-House in connection with it. Even in this she indirectly benefited the soldier. Adjoining the coffee tavern she built a free laundry, where any woman can go and do her washing. The place is fitted up with wooden tanks, wringing-machines, and coppers, and a plentiful supply of water. Many of the soldiers' wives living out of barracks take in washing, to eke out their husbands' scanty pay, and to them the laundry proved a great boon. One man told Miss Robinson



THE READING ROOM, SOLDIERS' INSTITUTE, PORTSMOUTH.