

expedition. Mr. Gilchrist had believed him to be a man of respectable character; but he was in reality an escaped convict. His real name was Amberley; he was the son of well-born parents, had received a gentleman's education, and had held a post of great trust and authority in the bank of Mr. Bradford, Wilfred Bradford's father. But he had got among bad companions, and had become a gambler; and just when he was greatly in want of money through his own ill-doing, temptation had come in his way at the bank. He had fallen, and cheated his employer. Detection had followed, and after that, conviction and transportation. He had escaped, however, and as we have said, become Mr. Gilchrist's confidential servant.

It happened that there was between Mr. Gilchrist and this man Amberley one of those fortuitous likenesses which we sometimes see between people who are in no way related to each other; thus it had come into Amberley's brain, fertile as it was in deceit and trickery, when Mr. Gilchrist died in the wilds of Africa, to personate him. He knew much of his past history through constant intercourse with him, and he had gained possession of many of his papers. The deception had been successful with Miss Champney, Mr. Gilchrist's step-daughter; but Amberley had been fearful how the fraud would turn out if he went to England, where he would have to meet many old friends of Mr. Gilchrist's, who used to know him personally; he therefore put off going to England as long as he could. Amberley had been greatly startled when he heard that Wilfred Bradford, the son of his old employer, was the accepted lover of Elgiva Champney. He naturally both feared and hated all the Bradford family; and in order to break off the marriage he had invented that fiction about Elgiva's mother having expressed a wish that her daughter should not think of matrimony before she was twenty-one.

Miss Mavisyn—to use the expression of her soldier father, whose sayings she so often quoted—had kept one eye open with regard to Mr. Gilchrist, as he called himself, to some

purpose. From the very first it had struck her that all was not right concerning this man who came to the villa as Elgiva's stepfather. Her suspicions were aroused by many things in him, such as his evident ignorance of various circumstances regarding Elgiva's mother and her family; and she had written to Wilfred Bradford privately, telling him of all her uncomfortable doubts, and asking him to set on foot an enquiry through the police which might give light on the matter. The personal description given in Miss Mavisyn's letter of the man who had arrived at the villa had at once called up in Wilfred's mind the man who had cheated his father; moreover, Elgiva had once shown him a photograph of her stepfather, and it had then struck him that there was a certain resemblance between it and Amberley. He had set the detective police secretly but vigorously to work in the business, and the result had been the discovery of the whole fraud. It was found out that Amberley the convict had escaped, and step by step he was traced out to be the man who, under the name of Gilchrist, was now residing in the villa at San Remo.

This being fully proved, Wilfred Bradford had hastily started for San Remo in great distress and trouble of mind at the thought of Elgiva being in the power of such a man as Amberley. As we have seen, he met Miss Mavisyn immediately on his arrival, and was greatly relieved to find that Amberley's conduct had as yet been in no way aggressive towards the girl. That evening Wilfred was expecting to be joined by two policemen, and it was settled between him and Miss Mavisyn that that very night he and the policemen should come to the villa and arrest Amberley. Miss Mavisyn promised to sit up and await their arrival, and quietly admit them into the house, so that there might be no possibility of Amberley's escape. As we have seen, she said nothing about the matter to Elgiva, as she thought it would be better for the girl to know nothing till the next morning, when the arrest would have been completed and the whole affair, she hoped, happily ended. Elgiva's

bedroom was, as we know, separated from the rest of the house, and exactly on the opposite side of it from the apartment occupied by Amberley and the door by which she intended to admit Wilfred and his companions.

This plan would no doubt have been successfully carried out, if it had not been that one of Amberley's old comrades in evil, who was still in London, and who knew his present whereabouts, had found out that the police were on his track, and had at once telegraphed the news to him. He had then determined on immediate flight, but he was resolved that he would not go quite empty-handed. He had heard Elgiva speak of certain valuable ornaments which had belonged to her mother, and which she had with her at San Remo, and of these he made up his mind to get possession. The result of his attempt to do so we already know. Wilfred Bradford and the two policemen were just approaching the villa, having entered the garden by the little side gate by which Miss Mavisyn had bidden them enter, when the sound of a shrill whistle had reached them, and Wilfred, still full of uneasy fears for Elgiva, had hurriedly called out, and had found that he had arrived just when she was in sorest need.

There is little more to be said. Amberley is still suffering for his evil-doing as a convict, but the thought of the young girl who stood there before him that night, strong in the strength, bright in the brightness, of her goodness and truth and innocence, the brave Christian words which she then spoke have been as good seed dropped into his heart, and the chaplain, who sees and talks with him frequently, speaks hopefully of his future when the time of his release comes.

Elgiva is now the happy wife of Wilfred Bradford, and her old, dearly loved, motherly friend Miss Mavisyn is still at her side; and in her life she still proves, as did the story of her girlhood, that a Christian woman can be at once brave and gentle, sweet as a flower, yet firm as a green tree of the forest.

[THE END.]

## PRISON FLEDGELINGS.

By ANNE BEALE.



seven-leagued boots of the old fairy-tales are now at everybody's beck and call.

We hear of "giant strides" made in all parts of the world by science, merchandise, civilisation, and the like; but here in England charity outstrips them all. She is for ever putting on those fabulous boots, and no sooner do you leave her in one corner than she foots it in another.

It seems but the other day that she began a work among what is called "the dangerous classes," and now there are houses and halls here, there, and everywhere open to receive them as soon as they declare their intention of being dangerous no longer. Five years ago a house was opened in Brooke Street, Holborn, for men who, having been in prison, wished to begin a new life; now in the same street there is one for boys, which the founders of the so-called Prison Mission kindly invite us to visit. Before doing so, however, let us glance

at what those said founders have achieved by means of the seven-leagued boots aforesaid.

The boys' homes are amongst the last offshoots of a work that began some thirty years ago without special reference to any particular class. A few young men met at Mr. Hatton's, in Chancery Lane, and agreed to devote some pence weekly to a small work among the poor. First, a shop and parlour were engaged for meetings; then a large hall; then, as the hall overflowed, Wild Street Chapel was offered, and gladly accepted. Here are now held the annual suppers to the criminal classes, which are a remarkable feature of George Hatton's labours. But they, like the mission in St. Giles's, were the result of a small beginning.

After one of the services in the chapel, some thirteen years ago, two discharged prisoners who were present expressed a wish to reform. In due course a small room was taken, a knife-grinding and wood-chopping business commenced, and penitent prisoners welcomed. This soon became too narrow for the needs, and an old public-house in Earl Street, called Napoleon the First, was secured. Hither came men who had once used the house for evil ends, and who were now desirous to live in it an honest life. It had been a "house with a bad name." Again the accommoda-

tion became insufficient for the ever-increasing numbers of men anxious to turn over a new leaf, and another public-house was secured in Brooke Street, and converted into a home for hundreds who, without it, would have been not only homeless, but driven back into crime. Thus, what has helped to make criminals, becomes a means of their salvation.

It must be confessed that Mr. Hatton and his coadjutor, Mr. Wheatley, have worn the seven-leagued boots to some purpose. As the latter is the mainspring of the work in Brooke Street, and secretary and manager of the Prison Mission generally, we must answer his call, and accompany him to the Homes, above the doors of which is the simple inscription, "St. Giles's Christian Mission."

It may not be amiss to confide to the benevolent public the account Mr. Wheatley gives us of his work during the current day. Although it sounds mythical, it is none the less true; and when we consider that every day is similarly employed, the most sceptical reader must confess that he does not lead an idle life, and that prisoners, both old and young, have a good chance of reformation if they choose to embrace it.

At half-past eight this morning Mr. Wheatley was in waiting outside Wandsworth jail.



Through the heavy gates poured fifty-four discharged prisoners, to all of whom he gave an invitation to breakfast. Fifty of them accompanied him to the neighbouring Mission Room; four only made an excuse. A large cup of coffee and three slices of bread and butter paved the way to exhortation and Christian counsel, and they were told that all who honestly wished to reform would be helped to do so at Brooke Street, Holborn. From Wandsworth he went to Millbank Prison, where he saw such of the inmates as wished to speak to him, and all the juvenile offenders, three of whom we shall see by-and-by. Hence he proceeded to the Home Office to entreat Government to appoint a ship for the training of the lads placed under the care of the Mission. Not a reformatory ship, in one sense; though essentially so in another; for there is nothing compulsory in this "Mission to Discharged Prisoners." He is hopeful of obtaining this ship, which would save the Mission the payment of house-rent in its three "Boys' Homes," and Government a fortune! for every criminal costs the country a good sum for board and lodgings, for which the reformed do not apply. Hence it follows, that it is better for the public to support the Mission and its ship than the jail.

Then on went Mr. Wheatley to the Treasury, to appeal for a small house in connection with Holloway Prison; and finally, to the bank; for money he must have. It is to be hoped he will never overdraw his account! He had dealt with twenty-five cases of men and boys, of all ages, ready to visit Brook Street when discharged, in the hope of obtaining honest work.

And this goes on day by day. From seven in the morning till ten at night, this hopeful labour lasts; and all the helpers having been themselves in desperate prison straits, never grumble at over hours. One told us that he was often employed till past eleven.

It was between three and four when Mr. Wheatley joined us in Brooke Street. He was at once met by a respectable woman, whose son had stolen money, been discovered, and had run away to avoid consequences. She was in great trouble, but beyond kind promises, there was no present help. The porter looked at us as if he suspected us of similar business, and bade us follow upstairs. The face is not, after all, a certain index of the mind, as we were soon convinced; for most of the men and boys, who were reformed or reforming characters, looked much like other people.

Six years ago we were at the opening of the Men's Home; now it is a busy hive of industries. Tailors and shoemakers are at work; for all the clothes prepared to turn the ex-convict, or the prison man or boy, into a respectable member of society, are made on the premises. There is a small room full of them. Such a display of good, strong coats, trousers, boots, &c., of all sizes, for all sorts of recipients! There are, besides, clothes baskets, and articles in tin manufactured on the premises. The baked potato ovens are lent out as a means of turning an honest penny, and numerous are the plans made and carried out for this purpose. The large rooms, utilised by day as workshops, are bedrooms at night. Lockers surround them, which contain narrow iron bedsteads and their accessories, which are drawn out, together with mattress, blankets, and coverlet.

At the moment, the three lads, who have lately arrived from prison, are seated on two of the lockers, which form narrow seats by day; and very disconsolate they look. They are summoned and questioned by Mr. Wheatley. Two were taken to prison for sleeping out at night. One had no parents, the other only a mother, and she in a lunatic asylum. They wish to try the Home, they say, and not

to return to prison. One is a pale, delicate, interesting-looking boy; the other less attractive in his outward mien. Both are ragged. The third lad is older, and says he was taken up for selling in the streets. He has no friends, and is thankful for being rescued. He looks downcast and miserable. Mr. Wheatley does not press enquiries, but looks the lads well through, knowing already the true state of their case, of which they naturally make the best. They are willing to work and attend to rules, and are added to the fifty-four boys now actually in the Homes. Thirty-four men tenant theirs. Sometimes the Homes are overflowing, and applicants must be refused. The hardest part of all is to tell a man or boy in prison that there is no room for him when he comes out.

The three lads we have seen are samples of the whole; only many—probably most—are taken up for actual theft. The object is to save them from a career of crime, and already many hundreds have been thus rescued. They are first tested; then employment is found for them. This is not so difficult as it would seem. If the prison authorities turn them over to the Mission, they cannot be hopeless; and numerous employers are willing to lend a helping hand, on receiving a sort of guarantee from the Secretary. They live at the Home, and go out for their day's work, bringing back their wages, out of which they are allowed a trifle for pocket-money. Many are sent to sea who prefer a seafaring life. Not unfrequently, men convicted and about to be sent to penal servitude, are anxious about their children.

They entreat Mr. Wheatley to help them. Not long since a boy was traced with difficulty to a common lodging-house, where he was surrounded by every sort of evil influence. He was admitted to the Home, and is doing well. On another occasion, when both parents were in prison, a family of six children were found and aided in different ways. But for Christian charity, they must have swelled the criminal classes. Now we have to thank Almighty God for a perceptible diminution of crime. This is due in a great measure to Mr. Hatton's mission to male prisoners, and Mrs. Meredith's to female. Both work on similar lines. They aid those who wish to reform, and seek to rescue the children.

That they do reform is proved in a thousand ways. Employers who have tried one lad frequently write for more. They keep their situations, they rarely fall back into theft, they write grateful letters. They become, in short, respectable. Some time ago they made Mr. Wheatley a present in token of their love and gratitude. Letters from a lad sent to Canada are now before us, which touch upon this subject. They are so satisfactory that we make a few extracts. They range from 1889 to 1890: "I am very thankful to you for sending me out. I think I can do better here than in England. I started work last Wednesday, and have earned nearly three dollars in the four days. The Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. got me a situation as telegraph messenger." "I am still getting on pretty well over here. I am still clerk in a telegraph office, and I get five dollars a week; the only fault is, I have to work every Sunday for half-a-day." A friend has told him of the intended presentation to Mr. Wheatley, and he writes: "I enclose five shillings for my subscription. What are you going to present Mr. Wheatley with?"

But we are summoned to tea, and as the fashionable hour of five has struck, we must not linger over letters, or any of the other interesting subjects that engross our attention in this place. We have twice had supper with some three or four hundred reforming criminals in the Mission Chapel at Little

Wild Street; but they were men. This afternoon we are invited to meet the boys from the three Homes, and find them already flocking in and seating themselves at the two well-spread tables prepared for them. It may be advisable to state here that every Sunday they are expected to attend the said Mission Chapel twice—morning and evening—and to sign their names as a certificate of their presence.

This is truly a hopeful sight. All the lads are well dressed, and there is no sign of the prison fledgling about them. Yes; one has a cropped head—he whom we interviewed above-stairs. Perhaps that is the reason of his bringing his new hat to the tea-table. It is no wonder that he actually danced for joy when his rags were taken off, and he was attired in brand new garments. He grins from ear to ear, as he seats himself between the other two new arrivals, who are less demonstrative, though not less neat. They greet us quite as an old acquaintance. Doubtless the new clothes help on the new life. About fifty have arrived when grace is sung, and we all begin upon the bread and butter, cake, and marmalade provided. Two neat matrons, one of the men, and the writer superintend the tea urns, and it is pleasant to remark that all the guests are trim and neat, with well oiled and becomingly arranged locks, and cheerful countenances. Many of them are provided with flowers; and violets, lilies, hyacinths, and daffodils adorn and perfume the buttonholes.

"Here comes one with a cane!" whispers Mr. Wheatley, delighted that his *protégés* should be "in the fashion." He arrives late, as do some others, having been detained at their places of business. There is a seat at our side, and he soon gives us his brief history. He is in a well-known West-end establishment, where he has been two years. He does every sort of odd job, and has tea at five o'clock with the porters. He hopes to get on, and means to do his best. All with whom we speak have a similar tale to tell, and we thank God that all these youths are at work in various trades, offices, shops, and not going from bad to worse through continued commitments to prison. "I can do nothing but steal," was the declaration of a youth the other day to the judge who was trying him. "By all means save the children," has become the cry of this century; and what more important than to snatch them from the greedy jaws of crime and, perchance, from the gallows. It is awful to think that many of these youths have been "to the manner born," and taught their evil trade from infancy. Parents there are who use their children to pass the counterfeit coin they have fashioned; others who make of them juvenile hypocrites. It is no charity to bestow alms on the weeping, whining child, who attracts your pity, because he has been well-tutored, and carries your dole to a brutal or drunken parent. Give him something to eat and drink, but keep your peace.

Our eating and drinking has come to an end. Social tea-drinkings loosen tongues, and our boys have become animated. But the singing of grace produces silence, and Mr. Wheatley addresses the party. Every head is turned toward him, and all eyes fixed on him, as he tells them how he, himself, began life in a small way, and by perseverance enlarged his borders; how he served a seven years' apprenticeship, and how his masters lent him money to set him up in business. "And I was not happy until I paid it," he adds emphatically; and the words are not lost upon the listeners. He understands his hearers, knows how to talk to them, and his address is evidently appreciated. When he bids such as wish to leave their present life and return to their old one, hold up their hands, no hand is



shown; but every eager face expresses the desire to follow their friend's example, and get on in the world by honest industry. May God help them!

On the table before Mr. Wheatley are displayed twenty-five well-bound volumes, amongst which are several Bibles. These are rewards for such as have kept their situations for given periods. We are privileged to present them, and by so doing look a quarter of a hundred of these reclaimed ones in the face. They choose their books, those who have been two or three years in the same situation having precedence.

We learn something of their histories as they come and go; but may be excused for not perpetuating them. It is pleasanter to chronicle that all express the hope and intention of serving God instead of Satan, and that two or three are quietly pointed out to us as converted Christians, acting as missionaries amongst their brethren.

"I sat next you at tea," say our two

neighbours of the festive board, one having secured a handsome Bible, the other a collection of poetry, well illustrated.

We do our best to stammer out a few words of hope and congratulation as we put the books into their hands. Their replies show that they are in earnest, for the time being at least. Their ages average fifteen years. Several are older, and have long since left the Home, and are catering for themselves. Mr. Wheatley has a kind word and good advice for all, as they confide to him their present position, with its successes or failures. Some of the books are rewards for good conduct, and it is interesting to mark the half-gratified, half-shamefaced way with which they are received, and the grateful "Thank yous" and "I hope sos" that follow.

We notice one especially, verging on manhood, who was rescued from prison, remained two years in the Home, and has since been two years in a situation. Four years of good conduct! Which of us can show a fairer

testimonial? We cannot wonder that magistrates, heads of police, prison governors and chaplains, judges even, thankfully transfer juvenile offenders, after their one day of imprisonment, to the care of Mr. Wheatley and his staff. Let us all help them according to our ability.

After the last prize is given there is again a hubbub of voices. The winners are congratulated, the books admired.

"Hush! our friend is wishing you good night," says Mr. Wheatley, with a wave of his hand.

"Good night, good night!" we repeat, when temporary silence follows.

A chorus of "good nights" echo through the room. The hands that refused to move just now become active enough. We have never before retired from any scene followed by so vociferous and animated a farewell.

Mr. Wheatley, St. Giles's Christian Mission, Brooke Street, Holborn, will gladly welcome "enquiring friends."

VARIETIES.

A CHOICE OF EVILS.

*Engaged Youth*: "My dear, do you know how to cook?"

*Sweet Girl*: "No, indeed."

"You have a general knowledge of house-keeping, though, I suppose? or perhaps you prefer sewing?"

"George, if you are in want of a house-keeper or a seamstress, I would advise you to apply to an employment agent. I thought you wanted a wife."

"Don't be angry, darling. I do want a wife, and you sha'n't be bothered with house-keeping. I will have my mother come, and—"

"I—I'll learn, my dear. Your mother sha'n't be incommoded on my account—no, indeed, George."

A SEEMING CONTRADICTION.

A poor man once went to Mahomet, who was sitting in an assembly of learned men, and cried, "Oh, Prophet, I am poor!"

Mahomet replied, "Poverty is my glory." Immediately afterwards another man came, saying, "Oh, Prophet, I am poor!"

Mahomet replied, "Poverty makes men blush in both worlds." He then turned to his companions and added, "You are surprised, my friends, at my giving such contradictory answers to these two beggars; but the fact is, the first is a pious man, who for religion's sake has left the world; but the other is a man whom the world has deserted."

KEEP MOVING.—The heavens themselves run continually round; the world is never still; the sun travels to the east and to the west; the moon is ever changing in its course; the stars and planets have their constant motions; the air we breathe is continually agitated by the wind, and the waters never cease to ebb and flow; doubtless for the purpose of their conservation, and to teach us that we should ever be in action.—*Burton*.

EARLY MARRIAGES.—In the middle ages it was customary in Germany for princesses to be given in marriage on their attaining the age of twelve. Thus Otto, the second Duke of Meran, married Blanca, a Countess of Champagne, in 1225, at the age of twelve, he having just completed his fourteenth year. Hedwig, daughter of the Duke of Meran, was married in her twelfth year to Henry, Duke of Breslau, in 1186.

A WRONG READING OF THE STARS.

Pope John XXI, having studied astrology for a long time, imagined, by the knowledge he had gained of the influence of the planets, that his life would be long, and used to say this to all his friends.

One day, as he was boasting of it, an arch which was being constructed by his orders at the palace of Viterba, fell and hurt him so severely that he died at the end of a week.

JUDGING OTHERS.—Never pronounce anyone to be a wilful niggard until you have seen the contents of her purse. The distribution should be in accordance with the receipts.

LOVE.

"This I moreover hold and dare  
Affirm where'er my rhyme may go—  
Whatever things be sweet or fair,  
Love makes them so."—*Whittier*.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC I.

Two well-wooded groves, whither once in  
fresh air  
The vol'tries of Fashion were won't to repair,  
To hear music, sip tea, and discuss, *à leur*  
*gout*,  
The follies and foibles of all whom they knew.  
Alas, for earth's pleasure! these groves are  
now gone,  
And instead are seen houses of bricks or of  
stone,  
While each site where rank, beauty, and  
learning would meet  
Is remembered alone by the name of a street!

1. A town in an island on well-sheltered  
ground,  
Where sea-view and landscape boast  
every charm;  
Here patients with delicate lungs will be  
found  
Enjoying the air and the scen'ry around;  
But the town for strong persons is rather  
too warm.

2. A tree of our garden; its foliage so bright  
Floats gracefully over the blossoms con-  
cealed,  
Now showing, now hiding the flower-sprays  
white,  
That dance in the sunshine or shrink from  
the light—  
The poetical symbol of *love unrevealed*.

3. Among the Swiss cantons, the foremost  
of all

To assemble her brave mountaineers in  
accord  
With their brethren, to rouse them at  
Liberty's call,  
To shake off the yoke of a foreigner's  
thrall,  
And achieve independence at point of the  
sword.

4. A terrible scold; when we mention her  
name  
That inflicts such disgrace on the rest of  
her sex,  
We cannot avoid a sensation of shame,  
Rememb'ring her husband's great time-  
honoured fame,  
And how sorely her temper his patience  
would vex.

5. The river whose swift-flowing waters around  
Unknown Ethiopia formerly rolled,  
Where flowers and plants aromatic abound,  
On its banks, among grasses and herbage  
were found  
The mysterious mineral, bdellium, and  
gold.

6. In our journey we crossed a remarkable  
land,  
Where trav'lers are not always sure of  
civility,  
Since the native 'gainst strangers oft raises  
the hand;  
The north is all rock and the centre's all  
sand,  
While the south is renowned for its won-  
drous fertility.

7. All Germany prizes a writer who brings  
To his dramas and fables such exquisite  
taste;  
His thoughts in melodious cadence he  
sings,  
But chiefly his parable, called "The Three  
Rings,"  
Is with wisdom and highest benevolence  
graced.

8. With a different spelling this word is alike  
In Scotland or Ireland, as tourists all  
know,  
Whether sketching a landscape or angling  
for pike,  
Escorted by Donald or guided by Mike,  
To the picturesque scenes whither travel-  
lers go.