

**THE PRISONERS OF
AUSTRALIA.
A NARRATIVE**

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The Prisoners of Australia. A Narrative by Charlotte Anley

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CHARLOTTE ANLEY

**THE PRISONERS OF
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A NARRATIVE**

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A NARRATIVE.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "MIRIAM," "INFLUENCE," "ESSAY ON
BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT," &c. &c.

LONDON:
J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.
1841.

TO
THE LONDON COMMITTEE
OF THE
"BRITISH LADIES'
PRISON VISITING ASSOCIATION,"
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED
BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

REQUESTED by many friends to lay before the public the substance of a journal, which, during my residence in Australia, I had forwarded to England, relative to the condition of our unfortunate prisoners in that colony, I do so with some hesitation, feeling how incompetent I really am, to do justice to a subject, not only of deepest interest, but one of too much importance to be unskilfully handled. Nevertheless, so far as this little volume may be considered as an appeal to the feelings of every woman in behalf of woman, I fear not that I have trespassed upon grounds, confined within the limits of political jurisdiction; and, connected as our efforts among the poor in England must be,

with the transportation of our prisoners abroad, I trust I shall be pardoned in having combined the interest of both, in a work expected, perhaps, to be more exclusively a history of Australia. But this I have left to its more recent travellers, and to those whose local information is more extensive than my own, and whose descriptive powers are better calculated to render its details interesting. I have, however, stated facts, and facts only; interspersed with suggestions, which I feel, indeed, may have been too boldly advanced: nevertheless the motive which induced them cannot, I think, offend or be mistaken. Called forth by scenes which might have moved an angel's pity, I have, in all simplicity of purpose, thus committed them to public consideration. May God direct the result, and teach us how we may best prevent future vice and irreligion, and avert the recurrence of transportation among our female poor! a class too long neglected, and yet one, beyond all others, whose principles necessarily involve the welfare of our society at large. Nor can it be but earnestly desired that so long as a prison

stands within the realms of Great Britain and her dependencies, we might see a greater extension of "prison visiting associations" among the ladies of our country and colonies; convinced that the exertions of those already actively engaged have been, in many instances, the providential means of leading the "disobedient, to the wisdom of the just;" and the ignorant, to the "knowledge of salvation."

As regards the "Prisoners of Australia," they who knew them in 1836, the period to which I have more especially referred, could bear witness that so far from exaggerating it, I have given but a faint outline of their moral condition, and have rather thrown a veil over the worst features of transportation, than exposed the greatest evils of its system. I have done so, under the hope that much has been already done to remedy them, and that soon they will altogether cease to exist. In the mean time, let us not slumber in our duties *here*. Upon *us* is the first claim, and our own is the greatest responsibility. Let every home, then, be the ground of earliest reform,

and every matron the example of her household; that, as pillars of one militant church, our British mothers, and our British daughters, may be numbered with the "Israel of God;" and at the last day, when the Lord shall open the "Book of Life," they may be found recorded *there*, as "blessed among women,"—"fellow labourers of prophets and apostles."

C. A.

Rose Bank, Wales,
May 1841.