

PRISONS AND PRISONERS

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Prisons and prisoners by J. W. Horsley

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J. W. HORSLEY

**PRISONS
AND PRISONERS**

A FEW words to explain the frontispiece may be useful. It is a reproduction of the card of invitation issued when the Prince of Wales opened the magnificent buildings reared on the site of Clerkenwell Prison, and within its old boundary walls. The keynote is struck by the copy of a picture from *Punch* in 1847, which occupies the central medallion at the top, and bears the legend, "The Prediction." A prison scowls and exclaims against the loss of business entailed by a neighbouring school which, with long arms and a smiling face, gathers children in and purposes to cut off the supplies of crime. It is balanced at the bottom of the card by a view of the Hugh Myddelton School opened on December 13, 1893. This date was appropriately chosen as being that of the blowing down of the prison wall by Fenians in 1867, when a large number of persons in the houses outside were killed or wounded. No prisoners escaped or were hurt owing to Captain Codd, the Governor—and subsequently my father-in-law—having put the exercise hour earlier owing to information he had received, but the intention was to allow the Fenian prisoners to escape from the exercise-yard. The gap in the wall is shown in the top left hand of the medallion, and it may still be traced in the wall of the children's playground.

Other contrasts are afforded by the view of a typical prison cell and of a school class-room, and of the spacious Boys' Hall in which the Prince presided over the opening ceremony (his only previous visit to the place having been shortly after the outrage in 1867), and of the centre of the old prison with a view down one of its five-tiered galleries of cells, two of which, knocked into one, served as my office. The ground design of the card represents the leaves and roses which are metaphorically to blossom on the spot where previously "the wicked" were "folden together as thorns."

I may add that the prison gate on the cover of this book is that of Newgate Prison, which became attached to Clerkenwell when abolished as a separate prison. The cat of nine tails on the cover is of an out-of-date pattern, knots having been now for a long time disused by order.

J. W. H.

of the manuscript to the

PRISONS AND PRISONERS

BY
REV. J. W. HORSLEY

AUTHOR OF "JOTTINGS FROM JAIL"



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PRISONS AND PRISONERS

CHAPTER I

1. The Last Ages of Prisons. —2. A Prison Calendar.
—3. The Last Prison Statistics.

1. THE LAST AGES OF PRISONS.

IN the middle of the 18th century the people of England were perhaps, socially, at their lowest point. It is not only from an ecclesiastical point of view that we might describe the Georgian period as the Dark Ages: 1819, when the Queen was born, was for many practical purposes still the middle of the 18th century so far as social progress was concerned. Nay, we may even say the same with regard to 1837, when she came to the throne. England at that time was unknown save to a very few English people. Not a single railway had been completed. There was no Penny Post, and the majority of