

The Overcoming Power of Love.

In 1873, a female prison and reformatory was opened at Indianapolis, Indiana, and Sarah J. Smith, a well-known Quaker philanthropist (d. 1885), was appointed superintendent of the institution.

The following account of the transfer of the women-prisoners from the State Prison is given in the life of Rhoda M. Coffin, recently issued, pp. 156, 157 :—

The first to enter with her shackles on was Sallie Hubbard, a muddress. She and her husband had been convicted of the murder of a family of seven, who were migrating westward, and stopped with them for the night. The husband was executed, and the wife was sentenced to prison for life at hard labor. She had been incarcerated for seventeen years in Jeffersonville State Prison. She was a terror in the prison, and exceedingly difficult to manage. The sheriff and two deputies brought her into the hall of the Administration building heavily manacled and said, "Mrs. Smith, where shall we take her?" "Set her down," replied Mrs. Smith; "and take off her shackles." He replied, "We can't—show us the cell, she is an awful woman." "Take off her shackles," Mrs. Smith said, "she is *my* prisoner, not yours." They did so, and as the chains fell, she took the prisoner in her arms, kissed her on her forehead, and said, "I receive thee as my child, and will be a mother, and I know thou wilt be a good daughter, let us pray, and ask Heaven to help us." They both knelt, Mrs. Smith's arms still around her. She plead for power to bring "the poor lost daughter home to God," and then rising with her prisoner, she said, "Come with me, dear, I have the loveliest little room for thee," and opening the door showed her her home for the remainder of her life. It was neatly furnished with an iron bedstead, good husk mattress, a chair, small square table with a white muslin cover, a Bible and Hymn Book on it, a small looking-glass, the bed clothed in white, white curtain over the window, a locker for her use, and a pot of flowers in the window. All of the cells were similarly furnished.

It was but a short time, until the prayer was answered. The prisoner became a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things passed away and a steady growth in grace was witnessed. She became quiet, gentle, unobtrusive, faithful in service, always on the alert to see that there was no plot to do harm. She was worth two guards, and yet had the love and confidence of the fellow prisoners. For fourteen years she has led a meek and humble life.

This wonderful answer to prayer gave us great courage and confidence that our plan as organised was feasible and could be carried out, and that the worst prisoner could be reformed.