

### 63 — A WOMAN WHO ENRICHED HUMANITY

Towards the end of the 18th century there were about three hundred offences against the English law for which the punishment was death... For those who escaped the gallows there was a fate little better. Thousands were sent in foul convict ships to a settlement in New South Wales, Australia, to a place once so beautiful with wild flowers that the first sailors who went there called it Botany Bay. Yet these became words of terror...

Those who stayed in English prisons rotted in slow physical and spiritual death. The English prisons were overcrowded dens of filth, vice, disease, suffering and hopelessness. The most bestial and barbaric methods were employed...

Elisabeth Fry, however, said it was wrong to treat law-breakers as lost souls who must be banished from society and left to their own damnation. The aim must be, she said, not to punish and take revenge, but to reform — by understanding, love and assistance to give the criminals the opportunity to return to good citizenship.

**David Wren**