

‘but you couldn’t have seen half of it.’ I at once found that this was true; for whilst he was in the act of speaking we were being introduced to a scene that was certainly quite new to me. It was a small, irregular yard, surrounded by mean outhouses, much like the yard of a dirty farmhouse in England. There was a pump in the middle of it; on the ground were some earthenware basins; here and there was a heap of kitchen refuse, and our noses were soon saluted by an odour of warm cooking. At the sound of our voices a door presently opened, and a woman emerged, whose proportions were those of a female Falstaff. With a rolling gait she advanced a few paces towards us, and then, perceiving Captain O’Flanagan and the sergeant, she turned round and preceded us into a kind of kitchen. Through this we passed into a whitewashed passage; the female Falstaff opened a door at the end of it, and we found ourselves in a bare room, with windows high up in the walls, confronted by a party of fourteen or fifteen women. I asked some one near me what these women were doing here. ‘Don’t you know?’ was the answer. ‘They are some of the female prisoners.’

The horrors of the day, then, were not ended yet. We had left one prison merely to enter another. I faced the situation, however, and examined the faces before me. A part were young, but the larger part seemed old—wrinkled, and dejected, and suggesting nothing but compassion—all