

THE PRISONS OF SPAIN.

THE LAND OF ROMANCE, PALACES AND DUNGEONS.

Where Terrible Tortures Were Freely Inflicted—System Even Now Far Behind the Age and a Disgrace to Civilization—Story so Full of Human Pain and Despair That a Careful Fournalist Must Add to the Sorrow of Nations.

It may be that the Oriental-Moorish traits which are so marked in the characters of the men of Spain have much to do with the careless indifference which is extended to the prison system of the great Spanish peninsula.

Popularly speaking, Spain has been looked upon as a country of romance. Music singing and dancing are supposed to be the national amusements. Whenever one thinks of the peninsula there comes visions of the bolero, fandango and the seguidilla, danced to the pleasing phrasings of the guitar. Then the mind roams toward the great palaces and parks, with the outward show and glitter which takes one back to the days when Spain was the European power, and was mighty for good or evil in the world's progress.

But from this picture the mind soon turns. The joy and happy carelessness of the average Spaniard is soon felt to be but the result of partial education, and it is soon seen that beneath every palace is to be found the dark shade of a dungeon.

PRISONS AND PALACES.

So it is that Spain, like no other country on the face of the globe, is a monarchy of prisons and palaces. It is filled with outward show of luxury and refinement, but beneath the veneer is the present system of the country, which even to-day has not yet shaken off the curse of private revenge which it early bore. All through Spain to-day can be seen the relics of yesterday, when kings, bishops, lords or monks, as soon as in power, built dungeons and stored them with instruments of torture, ostensibly to suppress crime, but in reality to either distort power or inflict revenge.

To walk the streets of fair Madrid in grand old Spain is to see on all hands signs of the brutality which made up the rings of iron and steel, the fetters and cells, the horrible instruments of the torture which marked the Inquisition, and also marked the old penal system of the past.

ABUSES STILL.

The torture has been done away with so far as its mere physical pain is concerned. But still, Spanish justice is barbaric and out of date.

The punishments of the present can be divided into nine heads. Briefly reduced to a new statement, they are as follows:

1. Death.
2. Hard labor for life.
3. Hard labor for a term of years.
4. Reclusion for life.
5. Reclusion for a term of years.
6. Relegation for life.
7. Relegation for a term of years.
8. Banishment for life.
9. Banishment for a term of years.

DEATH PENALTY.

The death penalty is always carried out by the garrote, a form of punishment which is nearest akin to that of electrocution, so far as celerity is concerned. Nearly all of the death sentences are executed in the Pradera de la Yadro, in Madrid. All executions are public, and are usually held early in the morning. The criminal is always mounted on the back of a tiny Spanish donkey and goes to the place of execution in a procession which consists of citizens, priests and soldiers.

Prior to leaving the prison in which the condemned has been confined mass is celebrated, and the death sentence is read to the guilty wretch. When the prisoner reaches the place of execution, he mounts a scaffold, a black handkerchief is tied over his face and he is manacled to a chair. Then around his neck is placed the band of the garrote. Two turns of a powerful thumb-screw crushes the neck of the victim, and almost severs the head from the body.

DEATH INSTANTANEOUS.

Death is claimed to be absolutely instantaneous. After the execution, the body of the victim is allowed to remain for several hours in plain view of the crowds which have seen the accomplishment of the deed of justice. All executions are looked upon by the lower Spaniard as being excellent entertainment.

The prisons in the peninsula itself are all of them small, badly arranged and greatly lacking in hygienic conditions. There is no attempt made to separate the criminal guilty of a petty crime from the hardened convict, and the entire system, therefore, fatal to health and morals. Nearly all the prisons consist in the interior of vaulted apartments, each divided into several square cells, about ten feet in height, and which stand in two rows, one above the other.

In the upper cells a dim ray of light falls through a narrow barred window. The lower cell is much darker. Each cell has two doors. The outer one is of heavy iron, and is always solid and is kept closed.

FOOD PASSED IN.

The inner door, which is bound in iron, has a grate through which food is passed to a prisoner. The food is absolutely insufficient. Prisoners awaiting trial are allowed ten cents a day for rations, and this sum can only buy soup and black bread. Little clothing is given the criminal. He wears a yellow shirt, blouse, jacket, and trousers, with a cap and sandals of twisted Spanish broom.

But, as the State only furnishes occasional supplies of clothing, the criminal is nearly always ragged, vermin infested and has to put up with clothing which have often been worn threadbare by some other prisoner. Thus public charity has to be depended upon, and, if this were not so, many a Spanish criminal would be forced to go naked.

The beds furnished to prisoners are mostly of dirty straw, although the more aristocratic prisoner sometimes is given a mattress without sheets or pillows.

CELLS OVERCROWDED.

The cells are always overcrowded, and

the sewerage systems of all the prisons are so bad that the cells are filled always with an awful odor. In some of the lower cells of most of the prisons there stands several inches of loathsome filth made by the sewage.

But there can be a surcease from all this horror in case the convict has money. Prisoners can buy extra food and private rooms. Ill treatment, which is a common occurrence in all Spanish prisons can be bought off. The system of paying for extras is called exploitation, and if enough money is at hand a prisoner, can even buy the privilege of visiting cafes or theatres just as if he were free. But the poor prisoner must live or die, as his constitution determines, in the hell which is called a Spanish prison, with no hope of an escape from the terrors of his situation.

BULL FIGHTERS FOR GUARDS.

Much the same state of affairs exists in the detentional prisons, which are called carceres. While magistrates and judges visit this class of prisons once a week, they hardly ever attempt to alleviate their condition, and as many of the guards are drawn from the ranks of bull fighters, the abuse of the prisoners is absolutely sickening. In the detentional prisons the average bed of a convict is a bit of tissue of Spanish broom. He is fed upon the product of eight cents a day and is always half starved.

The bastinado is the usual form of punishment. This consists of whipping with heavy rods and is so often dealt out that a prisoner never escapes a week without at least one whipping. Chaining in painful positions, reprimand and disagreeable labor make up the usual list of authorized punishments, but so brutal are the jailers that the history of the life of a Spanish prisoner is one long agony, in which physical abuse is the keynote.

OFFICIAL STAFF.

All the prisons are officered by a commandant, major and adjutant, with four sergeants. The prison population is called a force. But usually the prison management is turned over by the commandant and his aids to the sergeants, who are appointed from the ranks of the prisoners. No convict is ever selected for the rank of prison sergeant who has not served part of a term of imprisonment for homicide or assassination, and he holds his office upon his record for brutality alone. The more brutal he is the better he is appreciated by his superiors.

The strictly penal prisons of the kingdom are absolutely bestial in their lack of accommodations. It was only a few years ago that the civilized world was shocked at the falling in of the penal prison of Corunna. It was an old building, and was so overcrowded that it collapsed and hundreds of prisoners were either killed or grievously wounded.

DISHONEST OFFICIALS.

But to sum up the exact state of prison management in Spain, it is only necessary to state that a few years ago six chiefs of prisons, two sub-chiefs and six or seven sergeants had criminal suits started against them for their dishonesty while in office.

As far as possible the Spanish Government sends all of her greater criminals to her great convict colonies in Africa, or in the Canary or Balearic Islands. In the few towns which remain to Spain from her once conquest of Northern Africa she houses her desperate convicts. They are hardly a fitting relic of the once magnificent colonial empire of the kingdom is on the largest penal colony of the Kingdom is on the Mediterranean, near the coast of Valencia, in Spain. There the convicts are housed like dogs in kennels. Day and night they are forced to wear chains a foot long, which are suspended from a girdle.

PRISONERS' WORK.

They work in the cultivation of wheat, barley, yams, dates and figs, and in coffee plantations, the result of their labor being shipped to Europe, when in African colonies, and till the soil for its products equally in Canary and Balearic Islands. The largest penal colony in the Canary Islands is on the island of Fuerteventura, which is sixty-three square leagues in dimensions and has a population of 9,000, nearly all being convicts. Deportation to these penal colonies is made in the most shiftest and cruel manner. From all parts of Spain the prisoners who are to be sent to the penal colonies are marched through rain or snow to the Sledero, or detentional prison, at Madrid. Then they are marched, with insufficient clothes and with absolutely no provision for food, to Valencia.

HERDED LIKE CATTLE.

Here they are shipped to the colonies in old antiquated ships, which are overcrowded to the verge of positive danger. Herded like cattle in pens, beaten by ignorant and brutal soldiers, they go to a living death in the colonies where stripes are given more than food, and where brutality is visited with the smiles of superior officers. No wonder that suicide is the natural thought of the usual Spanish convict.

The Spanish penal colonist, however, has at least not to face the horrors of the imprisonment his unfortunate brother has to suffer in Spain itself. In the home prisons there is only a fitful industry apparent.

LAZINESS PROVERBIAL.

The inaction of a Spaniard is proverbial, and this extends to prison work. A semblance of labor is carried on, to be sure, in the prisons of the peninsula, but the product is of such poor quality that it can only be sold far below market prices, and all that Spanish prison labor does is to depress the price of the product of free labor.

There is one ray of light on this dark picture, however. That is, that women are never sent to the penal colonies. They are never chained as the brother criminals are, and are never punished in an excessive manner. This is due to the strictness with which the female sex was formerly treated and the formal stiffness which prevailed in the treatment of women. The female prison of Spain is at Alcalá, but except for the fact that women prisoners are not beaten or maltreated they are otherwise hardly better off than male prisoners.

WOMEN FARE BADLY.

The prison buildings at Alcalá are absolutely unworthy of the use they are put to. Young girls and depraved women are housed together, and no woman who ever enters upon a term of imprisonment ever comes out one whit better than when she

entered the institution. If she enters for her first term with but a single crime as her record, when she leaves the institution she is sure to be a depraved, hardened woman. The immorality of the women's prison is something absolutely unspeakable. But there is hope for Spain after all. Plans are being perfected to build a big splendid cellular prison at Madrid, built upon modern methods: Who shall not say that the prison is not the leaven which is to reform the present horrors of the Spanish prison system of to-day?

GREATEST DIAMOND IN EXISTENCE.

The Excelsior Diamond Traveled Under a Military Escort.

When a diamond is found weighing more than a hundred carats the news is usually heralded with much ado. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if the finding of the "Excelsior" created considerable excitement. It weighed in the rough 971 carats, and was found near Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State. When examined it was found to be a white stone of the first water, but had a small flaw in the center. The inspector of the mine, a Swede named Jorgensen, was the lucky finder. The proprietors of the mine, Breitmayer & Bernheimer, had the stone tested and valued by experts, who agreed that the value was \$5,000,000. It is a fact that two offers of \$3,000,000 and \$4,250,000 respectively, have been refused by the proprietors. Upon its transfer to the coast great precautions were taken for its protection. A squadron of cavalry escorted it to the railway station. In Capetown it was placed aboard the British gunboat H. M. S. Antelope, which brought the precious gem to London, where it now rests in the fire and burglar proof vaults of the Bank of England.

The next largest diamond in the world is the one owned by the Rajah of Matan on the island of Borneo; this one weighs 367 carats. The handsomest of all the large diamonds known is, however, the one in the French collection of crown jewels, known as the "Regent," which weighs 1363 carats. Louis XV. paid 3,000,000 francs for it, but now it is valued at 10,000,000 francs, or \$2,000,000.

How much the "Excelsior" will lose in cutting can only be decided by most eminent experts. As a rule, the larger diamonds lose fully one-half of their weight in this operation. Naturally the cutting, which is done with a view to having as few large pieces as possible outside of the main gem, must be carried on with the greatest care. This business is carried on mainly in Amsterdam and Antwerp. In Amsterdam there are at present five large concerns of diamond cutters, with 872 diamond mills or cutting wheels, and 3,000 hands, besides a large number of less important concerns.

VALUE OF TRIFLES IN HISTORY.

Results of Incidents in Careers of Well Known People.

Thorwaldsen, the great Dutch sculptor, after working for more than four months unrecognized in Rome, determined in despair to return home and lay down the sculptor's chisel forever. A chance error by a careless clerk in drawing his passport detained him twenty-four hours. During that interval of waiting Mr. Hope walked into the studio, admired his Jason in clay, and aroused the desponding Dane's hope by ordering a copy in marble.

Thorwaldsen unpacked his tools, and never afterward, in his long career, lacked patronage.

Rachel, the great tragedienne, was, when a child, a street singer, and as such might have passed into womanhood and old age had not a party of critics dining together chanced to hear her loud, clear voice beneath their window. They observed the child's wonderful face and eyes, and in a kindly spirit aroused perhaps, by the wine they had drunk, proposed to her protectors to place her in the conservatory as a pupil.

Sir Walter Raleigh would probably have remained out of favor with the court had Elizabeth, on her walk to the tower chanced to take a path less maddly. Every reader of history knows the story of how the gallant Sir Walter spread his cloak beneath the royal feet and was rewarded with his sovereign's smile and speedy restoration to favor.

Potemkin, the favorite of Catherine II, and founder of the powerful Russian family which bears his name, would doubtless have remained an obscure soldier had not a trivial incident—a chance, in fact—changed his destiny. After Catherine had deposed her weak husband and herself assumed the scepter she was accustomed to parade the streets of St. Petersburg at the head of her troops. One day Potemkin noticed that her sword bore no knot. He boldly stepped forward, braving the knout for his insubordination, and offered his. The Czarina accepted it and, struck by the handsome Lieutenant, asked his name and regiment and if he would not like to serve her in the palace.

Always Mentioned.

Little Girl—Did the newspaper reporters notice your papa was at the great banquet last night?

Little Boy—Yes. Mamma said she couldn't find your papa's name on the list.

No, but the list ends up with "and others." That means papa. They always mention him that way.

Plenty of Intellect.

Father—I don't believe that young Simmerkins has sense enough to come in when it rains.

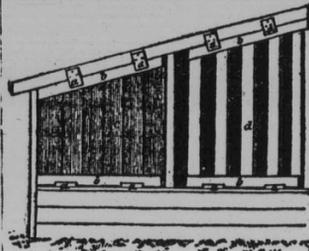
Cholly—Aw, you don't know him. That man cawn tie his own tie.

His tongue dropped manna, and could make the worse appear the better reason, to perplex and dash maturest counsels.—Milton.

AGRICULTURAL

A Summer or Winter Henhouse.

Here is a device for converting a summer henhouse into a winter one, and vice versa, which is simple, cheap and effective. The house is built in the usual way, the walls consisting largely of 1x3 vertical strips 2 inches apart. The device is for closing or opening these 2-inch cracks at pleasure. It is applied to an end wall, for example, as follows: Go inside the house, out other



1x3 strips of proper length, set them up against and coinciding with the corresponding strips of the wall, the top end of each being cut to correspond with slope of roof, and lacking about 1 inch of reaching the rafter to which the wall strips are nailed. Fasten 8 or 10 of these strips securely into a frame or sash (see cut), by nailing the batten b b along their ends at top and bottom. Then nail on the cleats a a at top and bottom to hold the sash in place. The strips of the sash now coinciding with those of the wall, the 2-inch cracks between them are open, but by sliding the sash to the left 2 1/2 inches the cracks are closed. The sash can be in or out, closed or open, at pleasure. The cracks may thus be closed or opened, entirely or partially, at pleasure, by sliding the sash back or forth.

The Water Supply for Stock.

The question of the usual water supply is a very serious one, except for those who are fortunate enough to have rivers or lakes in their vicinity. Large private ponds are also of great value in these times, as they will often continue to give an unending supply long after the public or village pond has become a mere basin of dirty water, and a nuisance. How is it that these places are so abused, being used for every available purpose until they become foul pools quite unfit even for a pig to cool his skin in?

Even where the water supply is adequate the labor of dealing with it is no light one. Water-carrying all through the summer months is scarcely the occupation one prefers. It is the large dairy and grazing farms which suffer most in these times, and the necessity of administering to live-stock is certainly an imperative one. Some of these farms are suited for the occasion, i. e., supplied with a good-sized pond or two at no great distance from the homestead, with a large tank outside the farm buildings, and a smaller one with pump inside for daily use. If these conditions are absent, or even in any way defective, they should be made good before any man ventures on a stock farm. A water cart or carts containing about as many gallons as there are acres on the farm is indispensable; one holding 150 gallons can easily be managed by a single horse. When the large tank falls below a certain point, it may easily and rapidly replenish from the nearest pond. Should the drought prove so severe as to drain even this resource, the next nearest supply may be required. Instead of allowing cattle, etc., to foul the reservoirs, they should be fenced round and kept clean and sweet; then if stored in the tanks they will last for a long time, free from all decaying matter and impurities of any kind.

On really well-appointed or model farms, large water troughs are constructed in the fields for cattle. Though somewhat costly at first, they will save a lot of labor carting. The price of iron or galvanized troughs is now less than formerly, and every large breeder or cattle owner may find them a profitable investment. They should be made removable so that they may either be used or be put away during winter. With care they may be worth two-thirds of their former value at the end of ten years.

Dairy Expenses.

While I admire the plan of independence in dairy, and have great respect for the home dairy, it does appear that there must be a closer imitation of the "trusts" and working in larger bodies, and with greater material than now, to reduce the cost of manufacture, writes John Gould in Country Gentleman. The old German who wondered "what his wife would do in the afternoon if der milk went to der creamery," did not take into account what an amount of wife-power it took to make 10 pounds of butter, and how insignificant it would become, and to what a fraction of cost it would amount to, if made with 2,000 pounds of other butter; and this applies as well to our creamery system and cheese factories. All over the land there are no end of 150 to 300 cow factories and the cost of making is excessive as compared with the factory using 20,000 to 40,000 pounds of milk daily; and when it becomes a matter of competition, the result is either cheap help, and cheap cheese and butter must be made, or else it is a matter of lingering starvation with the maker. Often the way is made clear that big yields will tide the matter over, and soft, spongy cheese and water-soaked butter is packed, to keep up coverage and show large production.

But lower prices and dissatisfaction follow, and the industry at large and commission-men in general are blamed, when the blame should be largely laid at the door of a poorly supplied and poorly-

equipped factory, or three factories where there should have been but one.

Farm House Ventilation.

The cellar must be ventilated directly into the base of the chimney. The kitchen chimney is best for it always has a draft both summer and winter. This is easily arranged by making an opening eight inches square near the bottom, which will also serve as a means by which soot and ashes may be removed from the chimney. When repairing my house some years ago I arranged it in this way, writes a correspondent, with the result that the cellar is entirely purified from the close and unwholesome air that seemed to pervade it before, especially during the winter season. In fact it accomplishes, to some extent, ventilation of the whole house, for by this means the cellar air never ascends to the rooms, but instead the air from the house is drawn downward into the cellar and finally passed out through the chimney.

FAMILY LIFE IN BABYLON.

Glimpses of Ancient Customs Given by the Tablets in the British Museum.

Glimpses of family life in ancient Babylonia are given by the Scriptures from Sennacherib's palace, now in the British Museum. From the tablets it appears that the family and the laws concerning it were the foundation of the social system of Babylonia. Take, as an example, the relation of father to son. A son could repudiate his father by the payment of a certain sum of money, but not his mother. In the tablets on family law it is written that a son who wished to deny his mother should have his hair cut off and be banished from the community. The law relating to husband and wife was curious. If a wife should say to her husband, "Thou art not my husband," which was the Babylonian way of saying that she did not want to live with him any more, then the offending woman was to be thrown into the river. But if the husband wanted a divorce, it was a comparatively easy matter for him to obtain it. All he had to do was to return to his wife her dowry, if any, and pay her a certain sum of money; if he was then a free man, and could marry again if he felt disposed to do so.

The position occupied by women in Babylonia was very different from their position in the East at the present day. The harem did not exist at all, and the wife was looked upon as the head of the household. A woman could buy or sell property independent of her husband, could enter into agreements or contracts, and could possess slaves. In Assyria, which was a colony from Babylonia, the modern harem system was in use, and women, on the whole, occupied a very inferior position.

That slavery existed in Babylonia from the earliest times there is ample proof, but the power and authority of the owner or master were limited. A slave had a definite position and could not only enter into contracts and agreements to his own advantage, but could even buy and sell as well as possess property, and after a certain time could buy his freedom. The slaves, from some cause or other, seem to have come upon evil days during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, for about this time many of their privileges were withdrawn, and the custom of branding each slave with the name of his master came into use. This custom led to all sorts of disputes, which had to be settled at law, and a large number of tablets relating to such suits have been found. Education was common throughout Babylonia, and schools of theology and astronomy were founded and attached to every temple of importance.

THE DEFENCES OF CANADA.

United States Army Officer Secretly Detailed to Study Them.

A despatch from Washington says:—The War Department is about to make a third attempt to learn something of the topographical and geographical situation in Canada with a view of preparing to meet certain situations which may be presented should Great Britain attempt to invade the United States from the Canadian frontier. If the two countries ever come to war Canada will be the most probable base of operations for the British troops, and it is proposed to gather data showing the exact strategic importance of certain points in the Dominion which would be selected by Great Britain as the bases of operations.

Three months ago the Secretary of War detailed an officer to go to Canada for this purpose, and he had just begun to gather valuable information when an old Admiral in the navy, whose daughter he had married, gave away the fact that an officer was in Canada on a Government mission, and the result was that the officer was recalled for fear of his identity being known to the Canadian officials. Later a second detail was made, and this officer was promptly frustrated in his efforts through some friends, who mentioned the fact that he had been chosen to study the fortifications and military strength of Canada. The War Department has now detailed a third officer, who will shortly be on his way to Canada, and it is believed that he will succeed in reaching there without the intent of his visit being known. This officer will travel incognito, and no one outside the War Department officials will know the purpose of his visit. The result of his investigations will be reported to the department, and it is expected that full particulars will be received of the real military situation which would be presented on the northern frontier should the United States and Great Britain again come to blows.

Hungry.

New Customer—Is that your dog?
Barber—Yes, sir.
New Customer—He seems very fond of watching you cut hair.
Barber—It is not that, sir. Scm times I make a mistake and take a little piece of a gentleman's ear!