

BEHIND THE BARS.

Thrilling Incidents of Life in a Great Prison.

Men who have not visited great penitentiaries have little idea of the horrors of prison life. A short time ago a party of men, more or less known in New York, ran up to Sing Sing, for a visit to the famous prison. As an instance of the entire ignorance of the ex-convicts, it may be stated that every member of the little party thought that women as well as men, were confined "up the river."

It is enough to sadden any man to look at the fifteen hundred desperate looking wretches at Sing Sing. They are close shaven, down-trodden, apparently hopeless, and utterly discouraged. They are not allowed to speak a word to one another under the severest penalties, and they work away with a dogged discontent that a man who has once seen them never forgets. It was rather impressive in itself to be among fifteen hundred men for hours, and not hear a single one of their voices.

The abuses of Sing Sing have often been exposed and investigated, but there is still room for improvement. While I was there, a poor, round-shouldered, sallow, and unhealthy looking convict, was brought in from the iron foundry. He held a cloth, which was liberally stained with blood, to his left eye. The doctor pushed him over by the window, opened the eye, wiped out the spark with a steel instrument, and sent the man out into the yard again. His keeper ordered him off to the foundry.

The convict fairly cried as he begged to be allowed to bathe his eye, or return to his cell for an hour; but he was sternly sent back to his work, as pitiful, bloody, and unfortunate a specimen of mankind as I have ever yet seen.

One old man, with grey hair, bony arms and a bent head, who was carrying some stove patterns from one shop to another, looked familiar. It was Brockway, the king of counterfeiters. He is the very elegant specimen of a crook who lived at the best hotels in New York, while floating his thousand dollar notes. The counterfeiter was only discovered because his work was superior to that of the government.

The most astonishing change I had ever seen in any man, was that in Allen. He is the festive young clerk who spent fifteen thousand a year on a two thousand dollar salary, for some ten years, while in the employ of a dry goods house here, without exciting suspicion. He would probably be doing it yet, if it had not been for a blunder on his part.

He was a placid and easy-going young swell, who drove a dog cart on the avenue, was invariably attired in an evening dress, after six o'clock, had a box at the opera, and was altogether one of the most popular men in town. He had a small, blonde beard, parted in the middle, and his taste in the matter of gloves and handkerchiefs was universally admired.

To men who had been used to seeing him for years, and always in the most fashionable attire, his present appearance was startling. Clean shaven, dirty and dejected, he was the exact opposite of his former self. He was much cast down.

It was very different with the other young swindler of the same age, who was in the room with him. They say that hungry Joe never changes, and he certainly is a man of extraordinary cheerfulness. Even when he was being whipped by Captain Williams, he is reported to have made the Captain smile between his blows; and his demeanor at Sing Sing is no less joyous than on Broadway. A cheerful manner is so rare at Sing Sing, that Hungry Joe has established himself a universal favorite.

"Mothers stand by the prisoners the best," said the warden in a desultory talk. "No matter what the son has been, the mother never forgets him, and every two months, when he is allowed to see her for a little while, she is sure to be here with some fruit, or delicacy, to remind him of her love. Wives are usually devoted for a short time, but if they are young and pretty, and their husbands are in for long terms, they usually drift away after a few visits. Fathers seldom or never come here, for a father is the last one to forgive the disgrace which the son has brought upon him. This is but another illustration of the undying nature of a mother's love."

A back-biter: The mosquito.

A great after-dinner speech—Have a cigar

NEWS ITEMS.

E. Colpitts Robinson, in his new work, "The Geology of Geneva," referring to the creation, speaks of the great deep "hitherto wrapped in total darkness." "Darkness upon the face of the deep!" exclaims Knowledge. "Why, the whole surface (such as it was) of the earth under the conditions postulated must have shone with an effulgence in some sort comparable with that of the sun himself."

Young Duval, who squandered a fortune on Cora Pearl, is a son of the founder of favorite cheap Paris restaurants, and is now settled down, prosperous, and happily married. He long since recovered from his passion for Cora, whose present deplorable state has furnished the occasion for so many sympathetic articles in the Paris press. She became years ago a hideous wreck, and has now fallen into utter poverty.

Shares in the Manchester (Eng.) canal project are in great demand. They are put at £10,000 worth of stock. The expectation is that as soon as the canal is open it will obtain a fourth of the tonnage now entering Liverpool—4,000,000 tons—which, at the low profits of 2s. per ton, would give an annual revenue of £100,000, or 5 per cent. on the capital. The enterprise, therefore, has a very enthusiastic backing.

For several successive days visitors at Block Island, R. I., had numerous examples of the phenomenon of refraction. Vessels have seemed to sail in the air, headlands have appeared to float above the ocean, which could apparently be seen extending directly under them, glassy rivers seemingly ran seaward through the solid wall of the mainland horizon, clusters of small buildings have been magnified into large villages with stately blocks, and all other distant objects have been seen distorted and unreal. At night the lighthouse fires along the coast have seemed to blaze from points far above their true position.

A man died at Montrouge, in France, after a strange reverse of fortune. He was known in the humble society among which he ended his days as Le Pere Fallait, but under the empire, less than twenty years ago, he lived in great luxury. He was the contractor who undertook the work for opening the Boulevard St. Michael, in which millions passed through his hands. He afterward became utterly ruined in unfortunate speculations, and lived for a time on the charity of an old beggar woman, whom he had promised to remunerate when he came into a fortune he expected, but as the fortune did not come she lost patience and turned him into the streets, where he was found lying dead on a heap of rubbish.

The Koh-i-noor, the Queen's celebrated diamond, was committed by the East India Board to the care of John, afterward Lord, Lawrence. He dropped it into his waistcoat pocket and thought no more about it. He went home, changed his clothes for dinner, and threw the waistcoat aside. Some time after a message came from the Queen to the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, ordering the diamond to be at once sent home. Lawrence turned to his brother Henry at the Board and said, "Send it at once." "Why, you have it," said his brother. Lawrence was terror-stricken. It was fortunately found still in the pocket. It is now preserved in Windsor Castle, but a model of the gem is kept in the jewel room of the Tower.

They talk of corruption in our institutions, but the revelations at the great Eastern Hospital in London throw them in the shade. Wines of the finest vintage for sick paupers, banquets on the most luxurious scale for the committee, an enormous liquor bill for the 200 officials of the establishment, of whom only three were entitled to such rations—these are not the most amazing features of the record. The sums paid to laborers for fuel, for uniforms and the like, compel reluctant admiration. It was magnificent, if it was not exactly on the square, and such a time as they had of it—officials, Board of Administration, patients and all! They wallowed in luxury, for otherwise the \$300,000 expended in one year could not be accounted for.

At Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, the sewage of 40,000 people passes from the town, three miles distant, by the action of gravitation. On its way it passes or flows through a straining tank filled with refuse slag from the iron works, by which the coarse parts are intercepted, and it is finally distributed through covered earthenware pipes upon a

field of twenty acres, divided into four plots of equal size, each of which is used six hours at a time, with eighteen hours of rest for aeration. The sewage flows uniformly over each plot, with a fall of one foot in 160 from the conduit to the main under drain, where it is arrested by an embankment. This main under drain is six feet deep, and serves to carry off the effluent to the river; the lateral deep drains are of the same depth, and placed only twelve feet apart. The soil is well adapted to the system, being a light loam with a deep, gravelly subsoil, and the effluent is quite pure. Intermittent downward filtration is also said to be successfully resorted to in other towns.

Some peculiar instances of spontaneous ignition of various substances, with attendant losses of property, would appear to have been due to simple ignorance of the relations of animal, vegetable, and mineral oils to combustion. Prof. Atfield points out that the two former are much safer than the latter, since they do not ignite at low temperatures nor give off vapor which, when mixed with a certain portion of air, explodes in contact with flame; on the other hand, in their inability to spontaneous ignition, when freely exposed to the air, under certain conditions, they possess a dangerous property from which the mineral oils are free. Then, too, the animal and vegetable oils differ considerably among themselves, in the rate at which they cause the generation of heat on being exposed to air, upon the surface of fabrics, shavings, or other materials, though all are more or less liable to this result when spread out in thin films, or in any other state of minute division. What are known as drying oils are particularly susceptible to such atmospheric influences, the drying itself consisting in the conversion of the oil into a kind of resin by the action of the air.

NONSENSE.

A long felt want—A new hat.

No, "Viola," we hardly think it possible that the reason they call them giddy girls is because they are apt to make the young men's heads swim.

The fact that when an elephant has the chills five gallons of rum and whiskey are prescribed, leads one to suspect that the elephant is a native of Hamilton.

The man who breaks in a new set of store teeth may not have the blood of martyrs in him, but he has about everything else needed to insure success in that business.

A writer has discovered that persons in captivity live a very short time. This may be a rule; but we know of some married men who have attained a remarkable age.

"Tell me what the lady has sketched, said Dobyn to a little boy who was carrying an easel on his shoulder and following a lady. "I think, sir, she's sketched the measles."

"What is the matter with the baby?" asked a lady of a little girl whose baby brother she had understood to be ailing. "Oh, nothing much," was the answer; "he's only hatchin' teeth."

Young housekeeper (looking over the market report)—"Bridget, I shall want you to go to market this morning. I see that beef is much cheaper on the hoof, and I presume it's just as good. Get a nice roast off the hoofs."

The imaginative Smith: "Talk! how jolly that singing sounds on the river over there. What a difference water does make to the sound of music." The flippant Jones: "Yes, but I find whisky and water make more difference still."

"Did not the sight of the boundless blue sea, bearing on its bosom white-winged fleets of commerce, fill you with emotion?" "Yes," replied the traveller, "at first it did, but after a while it didn't fill me with anything. It sorter emptied me."

One of the most attractive and elaborate exhibits at the late Toronto Industrial Exhibition was that made by Mr. D. Conboy, the well known patentee and manufacturer of finished carriage tops. This business has within the last few years grown to enormous proportions, and by energy and enterprise, and by furnishing a superior article, Mr. Conboy has established an enviable reputation. He supplies almost every carriage builder in the country with his tops, and by the facilities which he has for manufacturing practically controls the Dominion market. The factory is at 407, 409, 411 and 413 King St. West.

Music and Drama.

"A NIGHT OFF."—This most delightful comedy enjoyed a successful run at the Grand last week, and the large patronage it received at the hands of the public was in every way well merited. In the selection of the cast for the piece, Mr. Rhean has displayed his usual faculty for allotting to each performer the part for which the artist is most perfectly adapted. The company includes Miss Helen Leigh, who has previously appeared in Toronto in different characters. As Angelica, Miss Leigh was simply charming, and in her delineation of the young wife who suspects her husband of having a "past," she gave evidence of intellectual culture and mental superiority which few actresses possess. Of the other members of the company it is sufficient to say that they are all artists of more than average ability.

"A Brave Woman" this week.

The production recently at Drury Lane theatre of the new melodrama, "Human Nature," is memorable on account of the part taken in its preparation by a British officer whose recent services in the Sudan have made him famous. The play is a blood and thunder composition of lurid type, and its only chance of making a hit comes from its relation to the exploits of the British army in Sudan. Col. Kitchener conceived the idea of dressing a body of men as Arabs to represent the hordes of the Mahdi. He designed the costumes and made the improvised warriors such exact types of the desert fanatics that the effect was absolutely startling. The half naked bodies of the men were painted to imitate the tawny hue of the Sudan, their weapons and equipments were faithful reproductions, and their method of attack was an exact imitation of the onslaught of the Arabs. All the details were personally supervised by Col. Kitchener.

Our Folks.

BY STEEL LYNN.

"Hi! Harry! halt a breath, and tell a comrade just a thing or two: You've been on furlough? been to see how all the folks in Jersey do? It's long ago since I was there,—I and a bullet from Fair Oaks:— When you were home, old comrade, say, did you see any of 'our folks'?"

"You did? Shake hands. That cheers my heart; for if I do look grim and rough, I've got some feeling; people think a soldier's heart is tough but tough. But Harry, when the bullets fly, and hot salt-petre flames and smokes, While whole battalions lie a-field, one's apt to think about his 'folks'."

"And so you saw them—when? I and where? The old man—is he hearty yet? And mother—does she fade at all? or does she seem to pine and fret? For me? And Sis, has she grown tall? And did you see her friend, you know That Annie Moore—How that pipe chokes! Where did you see her? Tell me, Hal, a lot of news about 'our folks'."

"You saw them in the church? It's likely, for they're always there. Not Sunday? No! A funeral? Who? Who Harry? How you shake and stare. All well, you say, and all were out—What ails you, Hal? Is this a hoax? Why don't you tell me like a man, what is the matter with our folks?"

"I said all well, old comrade—true; I say all well for he knows best Who takes the young ones in His arms before the sun goes to its west. Death deals at random, right and left, and flowers fall, as well as oak; And so—hal. Annie blooms no more; and that's the matter with 'your folks'."

"But see, this curl was kept for you; and this white blossom from her breast; And look, your sister Bessie wrote this letter telling all the rest. Bear up old friend!—Nobody speaks; only the old camp raven creaks And soldiers whisper:—'Boys, be still, there's some bad news from Granger's folks'."

He turns his back—the only foe that ever saw it—on his grief. And, as men will, keeps down the tears kind nature sends to Woe's relief; Then answers:—"Thank you, Hal, I'll try; but in my throat there's something chokes. Because, you see, I've thought so long to count her in among 'our folks'."

"I dare say she is happier now; but still, I can't help thinking, too, I might have kept all trouble off, by being tender, kind and true— But maybe not... She's safe up there (and when God's hand deals other strokes She'll stand by Heaven's gate) know, and wait to welcome in 'our folks'."