

VISIT TO RUSSIAN PRISON

SCHLUSSELBURG IS REGARD- AS PLACE OF HORRORS.

A Writer Says Prisoners are Bet- ter Treated There Than Prisoners in England.

Every now and again one hears reports of the terrible conditions present in the Russian prisons—the damp, filthy, overcrowded cells; the coarse, disgusting food; the harsh, cruel treatment of the hapless prisoners.

Quite lately a tale of the sufferings of the political prisoners in the fortress of Schlüsselburg was unfolded. Chained hands and feet day and night, fed only on black bread and water, mercilessly beaten with the knout for the slightest offense, men and women huddled together in damp dens—such as the picture presented to an indignant world.

It is perhaps only natural that in the fancy of men Schlüsselburg is particularly singled out as a place of horrors. There is something in the words "island prison" that automatically carries on island agitation back to that other tale of Dumas, Monte Cristo's prison on the Chateau d'If in the harbor of Marseilles—with the additional terror of the icy northerly gales from over the bleak waters of the Lado- ga, instead of the blue, dancing waves and the mild breezes of the Mediterranean.

Frankly, when from the deck of the steamer taking me to Schlüssel- burg, writes B. W. Norregard in the London Daily Mail, I espied the old walls and the low, round watch towers of the

RIVER ENCIRCLED FORTRESS, the memory of a visit to Chateau d'If, peeping through subterranean passages from one terrible, damp dungeon cut in the solid rock to another, rose before my mind with vivid clearness.

The fortress, rich in memories of hard fought battles between the Russians and the Swedes, has served as prison for many a fallen grandee. Here the wonderful ad- venturer and statesman Biron was imprisoned after the death of his patroness, Empress Anna. Here the favorite of Peter, Menshikoff, and the pretender, Johan Antono- vitch, spent years of their lives. The large room where Biron was kept imprisoned is still to be seen.

I had obtained the permission of the president of the Board of Prisons to visit Schlüsselburg and see with my own eyes what foundation there might be for the allegations that have been made.

He would have preferred me to go later in the summer. "We are building new prisons there," he said. "We have not more than fifty-six prisoners there at present, but even so we have had in some instances to put two in one cell. In the autumn we will have room for about four hundred, and next year we will be able to accommodate nearly a thousand.

"The question of housing the im- mense, evergrowing number of

criminals is a most difficult and most pressing one. There are at present nearly

170,000 PRISONERS IN RUSSIA, and we have, properly speaking, only room for 100,000. This, as you will understand, is as unsatisfac- tory for ourselves as for the pris- oners.

"We are constantly asking for money for the construction of new prisons, but as you know money is not very plentiful in Russia just at present. However, there is every probability that the necessary means will be granted by the Du- ma."

I went through the whole fort- ress. I visited the present prison, went into many of the cells, being allowed to point out those which I wanted to see.

I spoke to many of the prisoners, learned of their occupation at their prison routine. I visited the kitchen, the bathrooms, the work- shops, the punitive cells. I tasted the food. Then I went through the new buildings, which were nearly completed.

I can sum up my impressions in a few words. The prisoners in Schlüsselburg are in every way bet- ter off than their conferees in simi- lar institutions in England. The prisoners are treated more lenient- ly, they have greater liberties, they are as well or better housed, their food is as nourishing and palatable, the care of their personal cleanli- ness is greater.

The excellently ventilated cells are 7½ feet by 12 feet and 12 feet under the ceiling. The air in them is fresh and pure. They are heat- ed by hot water radiators and abundantly lighted through a large window. After dark they are light- ed by an electric green shaded lamp which the prisoner may place on his table or in some corner.

A prisoner here is given two pounds of black bread daily, of the kind used by practically all Rus- sians. Three times a day he re- ceives a big kettle of boiling water. The coffee does not supply him with tea, or cocoa, but he may buy these things for himself.

AT NOON HE HAS A HOT MEAL, consisting generally of a large bowl of soup with a piece of meat and some vegetables in, and a large dish of "kasha," a kind of por- ridge much favored by all Rus- sians. I went to the kitchen, which with its majolica covered floor, its large stove and the beautiful cop- per pans would do credit to any restaurant. I tasted the "shshi" (meat soup) and the kasha, both rather better than what is given to the soldiers of the imperial guard.

In the kitchen, as everywhere, the most scrupulous cleanliness is maintained. For their daily ablu- tions the prisoners in their cells have a basin and a tap, and once a week they are given a steam bath in a large, well-equipped bathroom.

The prisoners are allowed to smoke in their cells—of course they have to buy their cigarettes them- selves. Twice a month they may re- ceive visits from their nearest rela- tives—of course under supervi- sion and generally through grilled screens. There is a very good library, from which they may borrow three books at a time.

Of course there are no novels,

but scientific books in every branch of science, books of travel, his tory and geography. They may write and receive letters—of course after being read and stamped by the chief of the prison.

People who have learned some handicraft may work in their pro- fession. I saw

SOME BEAUTIFUL WORK

being done by carpenters and cabi- net makers, but the dearth of space makes it for the present im- possible for more than a few to be occupied in this way. It will be better in the new prison.

The prisoners are given three- quarters of an hour exercise in the open air daily, six at a time. They walk about in couples and are al- lowed to converse together, the warders keeping at some distance. Their beds are provided with hair mattresses, white casel pillows and a blanket and if they like they may lie down for a couple of hours after dinner.

Frankly, where in the world are prisoners, even political prisoners, better treated? It must be remem- bered that these men are not theo- retical politicians or dreamers. Most of them have taken part in ar- med insurrections (Sebastopol, the Bal- tics); two of them have accomplish- ed political murders, several were caught redhanded manufacturing bombs.

The majority of them are unedu- cated men, sailors or farmers. All I saw looked well fed, clear eyed, hale and healthy. I was much struck with the confident and plea- sant way in which they greeted and conversed with the inspector. Every one of them was asked if he had anything to complain of or if there was anything he wished. One man asked to have a certain book pur- chased for him; all the others an- swered in the negative.

According to the prison regula- tions every man sentenced to more than eight years penal servitude during the first two years

ARE CHAINED ON THEIR FEET, exceptions being made for men of weaker health. The chains, pol- ished like silver, are not heavy and do not trail, being lifted up in the middle and fixed to a strap hang- ing from a belt round their waists.

Punishments are of rare occur- rence. For minor offences the prisoners are for some days de- prived of books and writing materials, they are refused permission to smoke or disallowed visits from their relatives. For more serious offences they are placed in punitive cells which are lighted only by elec- tricity day and night, where the bed is a wooden pallet and their food bread and water, with how- ever, a hot meal every fourth day.

Only once has a prisoner receiv- ed corporal punishment—not by knout but by the birch. A danger- ous and violent anarchist tried to assault the president of the board of prisons visiting his cell.

I have set down what I have seen with my own eyes. It is possible, even probable, that the conditions in other prisons, particularly in the provinces, are not on a level with those in Schlüsselburg. It is cer- tain that many abuses take place—the further away from the capi- tal the worse they seem to be. But comparing the real conditions in

Godfrey's Helpfulness

"GODFREY! oh, Godfrey!" No sooner did he hear this summons, than a little boy ap- peared from the grape arbor in which he had been half hidden. Turning his head toward the balcony where stood the lady who had called, he shouted: "Don't want me, mother?"

"I need thee ever so much," said the young mother, laughingly; "for I have lost a second time the book with the pretty binding of blue and gold. And since thou wast so successful in finding the book for thy careless mother when 'twas lost, I must needs call again upon the services of my knight."

"I'll find it, mother! I'll find it!" cried

was a bookshop at which he paused, and that which attracted his attention was nothing less than a volume with a beautiful binding of blue and gold. "Mother's book, of a surty!" gasped the lad.

Then, getting his jaw determinedly, he muttered: "Mother SHALL have her book, for I have promised it!"

First glancing around to see that no one observed, he struck savagely at the window with his hoop-stick, shattering the glass to bits. Quickly thrusting his hand through the opening, he grabbed the precious book and dashed recklessly down the street.

In vain the old bookseller pursued. The boy was more fleet of foot than he and, darting down side streets and twisting through alleys, soon eluded him.

Triumphantly Godfrey bore his capture home. Seeking his mother, he laid it before her, saying proudly: "See, lady mother, I have brought back thy book and kept my promise!"

"But this book is not mine, even though the binding be of a striking like- ness," exclaimed the mother, in aston- ishment. "Tell me, my son, where



"DASHED RECKLESSLY DOWN THE STREET"

Godfrey, with assurance. His chest swelled with importance as he swiftly made his way to the house.

But, for the once, Godfrey failed in his purpose. Not a trace of the book could be found. However, he did not lose all hope of bringing the volume to his mother, and he pleaded for a little more time in which to hunt for it.

A day or so later Godfrey was trundling his hoop along one of the streets of Boston town, when something brought him to a sudden stop. His hoop, which had been spinning several feet ahead, was permitted to roll unopposed into the gutter, while he hurriedly ex- amined the shop window nearby. It

didst thou get it?" "Some one stole it and took it to the bookshop, mother, and I went thither and ran away with the book from Mr. Jenkins," Godfrey explained, his eyes sparkling with pride at the thought of his achievement.

Godfrey's father straightened out the tangle that evening. When he returned home, after paying the bookseller for his book and the damage done to the window, he drew Godfrey aside and told him very carefully that however much little boys may wish to help, they should always first make sure they do the right thing in the right way.



Schlüsselburg with the fancy pic- tures of the place I am inclined to believe that even in the provincial prisons matters are not nearly as bad as generally represented.

About twice as much power is re- quired to stop an express train as is necessary to start one.

There would be no weather if it never changed.

Mr. Bunsby—"If that young man's coming here to see you every day in the week, you had better give him a hint to come after supper." Miss Bunsby—"I don't think it's necessary, pa. That's what he comes after."

MASA'S CURSE A BOOMERANG.

Truthful Tale of a Geisha Girl's Revenge.

It happened, so the truthful Mai- nichi Dempo of Osaka tells it, that Kisida, son of the lantern maker of Gifu, was enamored of Masa, the loveliest geisha of Fukuwara. He lavished all of his spare yen on little trinkets for Masa's enjoy- ment, promised her that as soon as he could become a master lantern maker he would marry her and take her from the life in the tea- house where she sang.

It came to pass that Masa began to detect a dampening of her lover's enthusiasm; she learned by little signs day by day that he was for- getting her and instantly she re- solved that it must be another's charms that were winning Kisida away from her. She sent her lit- tle maid, Yaye-sakura, out among the teahouse on little errands of no consequence, bidding the maid to keep her eyes open and her ears receptive for teahouse gossip. Yaye- sakura was soon able to report that it was the graceless lame, girl of a rival geisha company, who had won away the fickle lover.

Masa took an egg and painted upon it the face of a woman, which she lettered "Iame" in scrawling ideographs. Then by the light of the moon Masa went out that night and buried the egg beneath a stone near the lotus pond in the teahouse garden. Each night after that for twenty-one consecutive nights Masa slipped out of the house at mid- night, dug up the painted egg face of her rival and pricked it a dozen times with a pin.

On the twentieth night Masa's curse began to work. Iame was singing and playing the koto. Her lover, Kisida, sat on the balcony of the tea house over the pond of the gold fishes, listening enraptur- ed to the notes of his sweetheart's love song. Suddenly Iame scream- ed and threw her hands to her fore- head. The mama-san rushed in to find the girl in a fever and delir- ious.

They put Iame to bed, and the next morning they found that her face was pocked with little burning red spots. Physicians were called, they worked over Iame in vain to save her beauty. After several weeks of tossing on her mats with a raging fever the girl recovered, but her beauty was gone. Her face was pocked, just as the egg face was mottled with the pricks of the pin.

Then it was that Masa's triumph was complete. The little maid who had spied for her, had watched her go to the stone near the lotus pond and prick the face on the egg. Yaye-sakura slipped over to the geisha house where Iame was convalescing and for a consideration told all she knew about the affair.

When the perfidy of Masa became known throughout all the geisha colony she was ostracized by the geisha guild, her flowered kimono was taken from her, and she had nothing left to do but to go to the Yoshiwara, where poor painted girls sit behind golden bars to be viewed like porcelains displayed for sale in a china shop.

EXTRA! EXTRA!! JINGLING JOHNSON MAKES GOOD AT LAST

T-T-T JOHNSON THE POET, CARTONIST, I'M HIS MANAGER.

AN ARTIST ON A DRAWING BOARD, ONCE TRIED TO CROSS THE OCEAN. HE BOOZED AND FROGNEY RIGHT AND LEFT, AND CAUSED A GREAT COMOTION!

BRING BACK THAT 10 DOLLARS YOU PROMISED ME!

WAIT TILL PAYDAY!

SAY! THAT'S ALL RIGHT, HUH?

THOSE GUYS ARE CRAZY!

HA HA HA HA!

ELIJAH WAS BALD AS A BRASS DOOR KNOB OR AN IVORY BILLARD BALL. HE BOUGHT EVERY TONIC MADE THOSE DAYS AND FAITHFULLY TRIED THEM ALL!

ANYBODY GOT ANY LUNCH?

PESKY STUFF AINT NO GOOD!

GREAT!

FINE!

IN HIS RAGE HE SWORE HE'D TRY NO MORE. SAID HE, "I'VE GOT A HUNCH, AND THE NEXT TONIC A GENT THAT CAME ALONG WAS THROWN TO THE BEARS FOR LUNCH!"

JOHNSON STUDIED UNDER WALT MEDDAGALL.

HELP!

SIC 'EM, BEARS!

HAW HAW!

HO HO HO!

FINE!

WISH THAT DOG WAS ALIVE!

LITTLE FIDO'S PLUMP AND CURLY, WHITE AS HE CAN BE. PUT HIM IN THE COFFEE POT AND LET'S HAVE HIM FOR TEA!

TEE HEE!

YIFE YIFE!

OH, LOOK! AIN'T THAT FUNNY!

LOOK AT THE DOG!

3 CHEERS FOR JINGLING JOHNSON!

A MAN WENT TO A PICNIC, WITH TROUSERS BLUE AS SKY. HE STUMBLED ON A DORNICK AND FELL INTO A PIE!

HERE'S WHERE WE EAT!

WAUGH!

CUSTARD PIE

THROW 'EM SOME COIN!

HERE'S A TEN FOR 'EM.

IT WAS ONLY A DREAM, AND IT SEEMED SO TRUE. AND NOW I'M AWAKE AND I FEEL SO BLUE! THE LANDLADY'S CALLING, THE RENT IS DUE, AND THE BARBER KEPT ON SHAVING!

ALAS! THAT WAS ONLY A DREAM! THEY AIN'T ENOUGH COVERS ON THIS BED, EITHER!

Brookford