

MOSTHATED PUNISHMENT

THE WHEEL-HOUSE, A CRUEL DEVICE FOR PRISONERS.

Little Meat is Provided—Bread, Porridge and Potatoes are the Staples.

Eight ounces of bread and a pint of gruel for breakfast and supper, bread and suet pudding or potatoes for dinner, not one morsel of meat for seven days—that is how a convict begins a sentence of hard labor. During his second week he tastes meat but twice, on Mondays and Fridays, and then only three ounces at a time, says an English paper.

Even after four months, when long-sentence hard-labor men are at last put upon full diet, there is still meat but twice a week, and of that four ounces only each time. The rest of the diet is bread, porridge, potatoes, suet pudding, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays a pint of soup.

THE AWFUL WHEEL-HOUSE

is the house of the hard labor man. The "house" has four wheels, each wheel divided into compartments, so that no convict can talk to or communicate with his neighbor. Fifteen minutes on and five minutes off is the unbending rule. It is cruelly hard to then notice, climbing this endless staircase.

Try walking upstairs for a quarter of an hour without stopping, and see how you feel at the end of it. Try it again after a brief five minutes' rest and then a third and fourth time. Try it after breakfast of half a pound of whole meal bread and a pint of sticky gruel. There is no possibility of rest, for if the foot remains an instant too long upon the step it moves away and the next step scrapes the skin from the shin. Small wonder that "two years' hard" is a sentence which the most hardened criminal looks on with dread.

As a matter of fact almost any of them prefer five years' penal servitude to two of hard labor. The food of a convict undergoing penal servitude is hardly luxurious, but it is better than that in hard labor prisons. Breakfast consists of the usual pint of gruel and half-pound of bread. But the gruel is better than the hard labor skilly. It contains two ounces of oatmeal and half an ounce of molasses.

There is meat on three days a week—beef twice, mutton once—five ounces each time, and it is boiled with onions and vegetables. A pound of potatoes is the dinner allowance.

THE SOUP IS GOOD,

being made of beef, pearl barley and onions. There is cocoa for supper, of the very same quality as that which is served to the navy. The whole meal bread is well made, and of full weight. Small wonder that on this diet men frequently regain lost health, and the death rate is only ten per thousand—less than half that of the healthiest towns in the country.

The work is not the hopeless toil of the treadwheel. Men are put to trades—tailoring and shoemaking principally. Many at Portland and Dartmoor work in the open air. Then there are various privileges, and even money, to be gained by good behavior and hard work.

A convict on arriving is placed in the probationary class. He can earn eight marks at the end of his first year he gets into the third class. He then has black facings on sleeves and collar, he may write and receive one letter in six months, and receive one visit of twenty-one minutes in the same period. He is also able to earn a gratuity of one shilling a month.

If at the end of the second year he has succeeded in earning 2,200 marks, he passes into the second class, distinguished by yellow facings. He may now send and get one letter every four months, and receive three visits during the year.

IN BLUE-FACED DRESS.

A letter may now reach him once in three months. He may look forward to a forty minutes' visit once in the same time.

A year before a penal servitude prisoner's discharge he may pass into the special class, with all-blue uniform, tea instead of cocoa, and—greatest treat of all—roast instead of boiled beef. Many men say that the everlasting diet of boiled meat is one of the worst parts of their punishment. The craving for a chop or a sausage becomes simply terrible, and lasts long after the desire for tobacco has vanished.

Penal servitude convicts may also gain considerable remission of their sentences by good conduct and hard work. Hard work pays in every way, for a clever, handy man may get the greatest coveted job of cook or cleaner, or even of gardener, which is the biggest prize of all.

The governor of a prison has, of course, power to punish refractory prisoners. The punishment which

even the toughest convict dreads is a "bashing." Thirty-six lashes may be given, and few men can keep consciousness beyond twenty-four. The punishment over, the man is wrapped in a blanket soaked with salt water, and taken to the hospital.

The birch is used as well as the cat, and almost equally feared. Next to a thrashing, the cells are the most dreaded punishment within a punishment. The man sentenced to solitary confinement is put on a diet of

BREAD, WATER AND GRUEL.

If he is noisy he is shut up in a noise-proof cell, which is almost dark. Third in the list of severe punishment comes the wearing of irons. In these a man must eat, sleep and work, and even bathe, perhaps, for six months on end. These punishments are wonderfully rarely necessary. The dread of being degraded from his class to the one below it is the best weapon against the convict in the hands of authorities. No prisoner cares to risk this, or run the chance of losing any remission of sentence.

It may be news to some that, though the diet is everywhere the same by law, yet there is much choice in the matter of prisons. Wormwood Scrubs seems the favorite, for there, they say, a man can live without being hungry. But Portland and Princetown none like, particularly the former. The keen sea air gives the convicts an appetite which their food is never sufficient to entirely satisfy, especially as the work there is done by convicts.

FOUND AT LAST.

A Poor Cobbler Who was Perfectly Content.

Charles Frohman, the theatrical man, talked the other day about contentment.

"I don't work for money," he said. "The hardest workers never work for money. When did money bring contentment?"

"You know the story of a satrap and the Persian physician? A certain young and profligate satrap, exhausted alike in body and in mind, sent for a famous Persian physician and said:—

"I have squandered my youth in riotous living. My frame is enfeebled like an old man's, and my mind disordered with remorse and horror. Can you help me?"

"The Persian physician, looking gravely at the pale satrap, answered:—

"You have but one hope. Go forth and find, if there be such, a perfectly contented man. Persuade this man to exchange shirts with you, and you will straightway be strong and happy again."

"The satrap set out upon his search. He travelled many months in vain. But at last he heard of a cobbler who was said to be absolutely contented.

"The satrap came at last to the cobbler's door. The house was but a hovel, and on a board before it the cobbler lay asleep. Awakening him, the satrap asked if it were true that he was quite contented, and the cobbler, with a laugh, declared that it was.

"Then," said the satrap, "I have a boon to ask at your hands. It is that you will exchange shirts with me. For thus, a wise physician has said, I may become strong and contented also."

"But the cobbler shook his head. "Most cheerfully would I grant your request, young man," he began, "but—"

"Nay, nay, deny me not," the satrap cried. "I will pay you any sum that you may name."

"I seek not your gold, youth," said the cobbler, "but—"

"But what?"

"The truth is, I have no shirt."

SPECTACLES FOR HORSES.

Used When Young, They Produce High-Steppers.

The business of one well known firm of opticians in England consists largely in the manufacture of spectacles to promote high stepping. They are made of stiff leather, entirely closing the eyes of the horse, and the glasses used are deep concave and large in size. The ground seems to the horse to be raised and he steps high, thinking he is going uphill or has to step over some obstacle. This system of spectacles is generally adopted while the horse is young, and its effect on his step and action is said to be remarkable. It has been discovered that the cause of a horse's shying is as a rule short sight, and it is now suggested that the sight of all horses should be tested, like that of children.

In Abyssinia, the wife is master. The house and its belongings are hers, and, if her husband offends her, she can turn him out.

Teacher—"If you are kind and polite to your playmates, what will be the result?" Scholar—"They'll think they can lick me!"

When a dentist in China is extracting a tooth for a patron, an assistant pounds on a gong to drown the cries of the patient.

STILL TO BE EXPLAINED

MANY AREAS OF THE WORLD ARE UNDISCOVERED.

The Tread of the Pioneer is Still Waited on Nearly all the Continents.

Few people probably realize the great areas on nearly all the continents which still await the tread of the pioneer. That there still remains plenty of scope for research on the face of the globe is brought vividly to the mind by a long and interesting survey of new and projected exploring expeditions printed in the London Times.

SOUTH-EAST ARABIA.

South-eastern Arabia is one of the regions which await the pioneer. Here, embraced within a line drawn north from Aden to Nejd and another eastward to the peninsula called El Katr, is an area of some 400,000 square miles. It is largely occupied by the Roba el Khali, the "Dwelling of the Void," probably the most forbidding desert on the face of the earth. The southern border has been explored, but the desert itself has been untraced except perhaps by the wandering Bedouins. Now G. W. Bury, an experienced Arabian traveller, proposes to make an extensive expedition into the unknown interior, examining ruins and buried cities on his way.

IN TIBET.

In Tibet, Dr. Stein will follow Dr. Sven Hedin. "While the main object—the search for the treasures that have been buried for centuries under the ever encroaching sand—is archaeological, he regards geographical exploration as of first importance."

Another problem is "that of the unknown stretch of the Lower Brahmaputra, which flows for 100 miles or more through the country of the intractable Abors." An adventurous Englishman, taking his life in his hands, is now on his way through Assam bent upon solving this problem. It is only a few days ago that Mr. Brooke, who was making for the same district from a different direction, was murdered on the Tibet-Chinese border.

ANOTHER ATTEMPT.

Several African expeditions are planned, some of considerable magnitude, but, as the writer in the Times remarks, "one might walk over any part of Africa now without meeting with adventures, unless, indeed, one provoked them." But Mr. Virscher will make another attempt to reach the Tibesti highlands, the practically unexplored mountain range which runs for some 700 miles north-west from Dar Fur into the heart of the Sahara.

WORK IN SOUTH AMERICA.

More pioneer work perhaps remains to be done in South America than in any other continent, for here "probably some 2,000,000 square miles are still unexplored." But after all "it is around the Polar regions more than elsewhere that popular curiosity still hovers, since these are still surrounded with a veil of mystery." In the south Polar area Lieut. Shackleton's expedition is still at work. What he has accomplished cannot be known until March or April, when it is hoped that the Nimrod will return to New Zealand, either with the expedition on board, or with the information that Shackleton has decided to continue his work for another year. Meanwhile Dr. Charcot in the Pourquoi Pass has begun his enterprise on the Graham Land side of the Antarctic.

ROYAL EDITORIAL OFFICES.

His Majesty is a Great Newspaper Reader.

Most people are aware of the multitudinous duties of King Edward, but it is not generally known that there is a department in each of the Royal residences which approximates to the news-room of the daily paper. Here newspaper items from the great journals of the world are "cut" by newspaper men, say, for reports of news dealing with the higher spheres of politics, foreign affairs, and a myriad other topics, alike of interest to the King and his responsible advisers.

His Majesty is a keen man of affairs, and probably the best-informed monarch in the world. Even when on a special journey, his newspapers are set out on the table in his saloon carriage for his perusal, and the morning news finds no more omnivorous reader.

In the Royal work-rooms cuttings and references are carefully preserved in special books, and indexed for future references. King Edward's editorial offices, as we may call them, are the best organized of all, though those of the Kaiser, at Potsdam, run them very close.

Now-a-days, however, every Court has an intelligence department attached, and its multifarious duties provide plenty of work for Royal messengers and other members of the confidential staffs.

WORTH KNOWING.

A Few Items of Fact That Should Interest You.

The cotton factories in Lancashire spin enough thread in six seconds to go round the world.

A cave has lately been discovered in New Zealand which is larger even than the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky.

Germany's colonies are five times as big as herself, those of France eighteen times, and Britain's ninety-seven times.

At the Strozzi palace in Rome there is a book made of marble, the leaves being of marvellous thinness.

In Persia there are no distilleries, breweries, or public-houses, and native wine is the only intoxicating beverage used.

The same force which moves one ton on a smooth high-road will move eight tons on a railway or thirty-two tons on a canal.

Aeronauts have noticed that the barking of a dog is the last sound they hear from earth, being sometimes then at an elevation of four miles.

A pigeon used by a Manchester firm of mill-owners to carry messages from one mill to another has saved the firm \$1,145 in telegrams during the past ten years.

A bridal wreath in England is usually composed of orange blossoms, Germany uses myrtle, Italy white roses, Spain red roses, Greece vine-leaves, and Bohemia rosemary.

Three hundred Berlin streets are planted with 14,000 trees, which are said to represent a value of nearly \$200,000. About 1,000 gardeners and assistants are employed to take care of them.

A public notice to the following effect was recently placarded at Thirlstane, Tasmania: "I, Sarah Fitzpatrick, if not claimed by Francis Fitzpatrick in fourteen days, will be married again.—Sarah Fitzpatrick."

In Abyssinia it is the law that the murderer be turned over to the relatives of the dead person, and they, if they please, may put him to death in the same manner in which the murdered person was killed.

A naturalist asserts that if the earth were birdless man could not inhabit it for more than nine years. All the sprays and poisons in the world would be quite inadequate to keep down the insects, which would eat up everything.

A fox can scent a man half a mile away if the wind be blowing in the animal's direction. A mouse can smell cheese 50 feet away. A deer may be sound asleep and yet he will catch the scent of a person passing 200 feet off.

A poultice in the Rue Montmartre, Paris, who makes a specialty of game of all kinds, is selling a dromedary and two kangaroos. He expects, he says, to see camel outlets and kangaroo steaks as items on the bill of fare of every restaurant in Paris.

New York is to have another "skyscraper," with towers which have forty-six and forty-seven storeys respectively. The building will have a tower of sixty-two storeys with a main building of thirty-four storeys, and it will be over 900 feet high. This is easily a record.

In one of the excavated cemeteries in Egypt the bodies of many pet dogs have been found. One of the animals had ivory bracelets round its legs, while several had collars of twisted leather, one with a leather lead attached. The teeth of many of the dogs were in a noticeably bad condition, the result of idleness and unhealthy luxury.

A man named Robert, who was turned out of his house on the outskirts of Paris in October, has camped out with his family under a bridge, and has placed the municipality in a quandary. The prefect of the department has even offered him a house, but Robert says no. He cannot be arrested for vagrancy, because he neither begs nor moves from his position.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STOP?

In New Zealand an automatic device has just been patented for telling railway passengers the name of the next station. The names of the various stations are printed on a roll, which is rotated by toothed wheels. A "tripper" is placed, either on the track or by its side, between each station, and this is so adjusted as to strike a lever on the passenger car. The motion is communicated to the toothed wheels governing the roll bearing the station names, and the ringing of an automatic bell announces to the passengers the fact that the name of the next station is on view.

CANTON FULL OF ROBBERS.

Canton, China, at present is full of robbers. It is said that in some parts the people are really afraid to go to rest at night, inasmuch as it is certain that thieves will enter and rob the place. Accordingly some one sits up, while others sleep. The following is a queer criticism of China's police by a correspondent: "We have a police force, whose work consists mostly in sleeping at post or helping the nearest shopkeeper to chop wood or a neighboring blacksmith to blow his fire."

A GOOD FELLOW'S WIFE

HER LOT IS CERTAINLY NOT A HAPPY ONE.

Selfish, Heartless Man About Town Lets Wife Slave at Home.

"The furnace is broke," explained the lady of the house as she led the way to the kitchen and invited her guests to take seats near a stove. "So I brought the children and my sewing out to the only warm spot in the house. My embroidery? Oh, I'm just doing some marking for Eleanor. She admires me to do this. I'm marking all her linen as well as her lingerie—with a monogram I designed for her."

GOOD FOOD, BEST WINES.

The guests admired the work, and the afternoon chat flowed smoothly enough until the man of the house appeared. Well dressed, full bodied, with the effects of conceit, good food and the best wines marked all over his handsome, if puffy face, he cast the pale, frail personality of his worn little wife quite into the background. Her gingham, which had been neat before, looked worn and faded. Her tinniness became scrawny, and her face was pinched with nervous anxiety.

VISITOR'S OPINION.

The advent of the suave, jolly man brought the call to an abrupt close.

"I can't bear to breathe in the same room with him," stormed the oldest of the group as they walked away. "I hate him so at times I feel like running a hatpin into his nice, round, complacent body. That wife of his is a saint, if there was ever one, although I do think she is too saintly with him. If she'd get a little more devil in her and a little less patience, that man might get what he deserves."

GOOD FELLOW'S WIFE.

"What's the matter? Why, he's a good fellow, and she's a good fellow's wife. He is a spender down town, and he does not half support the family he has at home. He is 'one of the boys' down town and a nagger and a bully and a coward up town—that's what he is. He spends all he chooses to spend on his wife, conceited self, and his wife pretends the furnace is broke when she knows that it is simply because she can't afford to keep a furnace fire and she and the children live in the kitchen to save fuel all winter long."

SHOES LIKE PAPER.

"She goes about with shoes like paper while she buys his clothing from the best tailor in town—and she excuses him because his business standing demands a certain good appearance. He spends more for cigars in a week than she does for food for herself and the children, and, worse, she works to feed and clothe them. Yes, she does! She sews for her friends—her shirt waists are dandy."

FRIENDS HELP.

"In the fall some of her friends insist that she put up some fruit and jelly and jam for them. They get her to make cakes for their parties, and she does plan the nicest dinners and luncheons, even to the decorations and place cards. Of course, it is all done under the pretence that since she does these things so much better than any one else, we simply couldn't expect her to do anything else. The pay is simply—oh, the pride of that courageous little mite would break your heart!"

PITY "POOR FELLOW."

"Of course, some of the other 'good fellows' suspect that 'he' is a sneak. But, some men don't seem to mind such things, exactly. They are too lazy and careless to feel squamish over a pal's lack of principle. His mother-in-law is the only one who won't 'pretend' for them. She visits them once a year—yes, she has money, but she won't give her daughter much because she says it encourages the husband to give even less to the home."

"Not a few people misunderstand. They pity him for having a wife who is so dull she doesn't care to go round with him and have a good time, and so stingy she lives in the kitchen to save work, and so careless she wears shabby clothes and never makes an effort to keep his love by keeping her good looks."

"Think of it, he is actually pitied, when the whole situation is due to his own selfishness."

An elephant works from the age of twelve to the age of eighty. He can haul fifteen tons, lift a half-ton, and carry three tons.

After losing a case a lawyer is willing to "try, try again"—as long as his client is willing to pay the freight.

On an average, 1,490 lives are lost by fires in England and Wales every year.

The selling of wine in Spain on a Sunday is prohibited, and inns must close by midnight on Saturday.

HILDA'S LIFE-PRESERVER.

The Lesson She Gave the Fool that Rocks the Boat.

The swells from the steamer passing to the island started the rolling motion, and suggested to Charley Winter the brilliant idea of rocking the boat. In the chorus of girlish "oh's" that followed, one girl, a newcomer in the place, sat silent. When the rocking performance was repeated her very lips were white. "Please don't, Charley!" begged Nan Winter. "You're frightening Hilda to death!"

Possibly if Hilda had squealed and implored now, Charley might have been satisfied; perhaps he went on just to reduce her to the proper "feminine" state. Good-natured, well-meaning teases have overlooked larger considerations for no higher end.

"I say, Charles,"—Ned Greene spoke up—"there's such a thing as going too far!"

Suddenly Hilda Barlowe took something from her coat pocket and unfolded a newspaper clipping.

"I want to read—something," she said, unsatedly. Without further explanation she began:

"The recent accident, if 'accident' be the word, by which five young people were precipitated into Emerald Lake, seems to us to demand a scientific classification of fools. There are fools and fools, and again there are Fools, to be treated, orthographically, with large capitals, and in ordinary intercourse with the toes of the boot. Among the last the Fool who knows that the revolver he points at his shivering victim is unloaded heretofore led the van; but to-day, in this town, his light pales before the superlative Fool that Rocks the Boat."

"The Unloaded-Revolver Variety, practising his innocent pastime, can be approached from behind and knocked down; but the Fool that Rocks the Boat rests serene on the fact that the administering of the dressing he deserves would endanger life quite as much as his own elegance and highly original sport itself. The Fool that Rocks—"

But Charley Winter's tremendous work at the oars had brought them already to the island landing. On shore, Charley promptly disappeared.

"He'll not play that game right away again," said Ned Greene, gazing at the vanishing figure.

"I'm sorry to offend any one," began Hilda Barlowe, "but, you see, I was in the boat on Emerald Lake—"

"You were upset?"

"Yes, and they worked hours to save us. One—never came back. Again Hilda's lips were white, and an awed group surrounded her.

"My cousin Jim was on the village paper; he wrote that editorial and they said it drove the boy who rocked the boat out of town."

"It's only recently that I've been able to see a body of water and not turn sick. But father and I have thought I ought not to give way to morbid feeling. When we moved here, near this pretty lake, he said the time had come to conquer my fear, and not let it keep me from other young people."

"But every time I've been out I've brought Jim's editorial along—it's silly of me, but I feel safer with it. I only wish Mr. Winter knew of my terrible experience."

"Don't worry about that. We'll see," promised all the rest in chorus, "that he hears about it."

QUICK-FIRING RECORD.

Fifteen Hits in Fifteen Rounds by Home Fleet Gunner.

Another record in naval gunnery has been made by the British Home Fleet. It will be remembered that the armoured cruiser Indomitable of this fleet, led the battle-practice returns for last year with an unprecedented score; now the battleship Agamemnon has put up a splendid record for firing with the 12-pounder quick-firing gun.

The principal figure in the exploit is Able Seaman and Gunlayer S. Jones, who, firing during the Gunlayers' Test, succeeded in hitting the target fifteen times in fifteen rounds, in the short space of 55 seconds. This is at the rate of 16.4 hits per minute. The previous record for this class of gun was fourteen rounds and thirteen hits, and Jones has set up new standards both for rapidity and accuracy of fire.

The Agamemnon is a new battleship of 16,500 tons, attached to the Home Division of the Home Fleet. For a time she was the flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, Vice-Admiral Sir Francis Bridgeman, while the Dreadnought was refitting at Portsmouth. She is commanded by Captain Bernard Currey.

KNOWLEDGE.

Indignant Artist—"You talk about a picture! Why man, you never painted one. How on earth do you expect to know one?"

Candid Friend—"But, my dear friend, I know a bad egg when I see it, and I never laid one!"

She—"Mr. Gamble used to be rather wild. Do you think he'll make Jane a good husband?" He—"Jane'll make him a good husband!"