

FLEE PRISON IN OARLESS SKIFF

Padding with Hands, Steering by Ice-Cakes, Gangsters Escape from Welfare Island—Land on Long Island Shore.

New York, March 1.—Police boats groped through the fog of the East River in the early morning in search of three New York gangsters who had escaped from the penitentiary on Welfare Island in a small skiff which they paddled by hand and steered by grasping ice cakes on either side of the boat and shoving them away.

Keeper John Conroy, who was on duty at midnight, happened to glance toward the Brooklyn shore when a moonbeam struggled through the cloudy sky and lit up the river mist, which was not very dense at that hour. Conroy could make out vaguely the outlines of a small boat which was moving north with a kind of waltzing motion.

The tide was carrying it toward the Sound, and the bow was swinging toward Welfare Island. The moon went behind a cloud, and Conroy ran to a coal-barge where a skiff had been moored. There had been no oar or paddle in it and it had never occurred to anybody that an oarless boat could possibly prove a means of escape for prisoners.

See Prisoners in Oarless Boat.

While Conroy was investigating, the moon came out again and faintly lit up the boat. The guard could make out the silhouettes of three men and could see that their bare hands were the boat's only source of motive power. The river was full of big ice cakes. Each man waited until he could lay his hands on one and then thrust it away giving the boat an impetus northward, and, as often as possible, toward the Brooklyn shore. The tide was coming in swiftly, and the boat was making rapid progress toward Hell Gate.

Conroy telephoned in an alarm to the office. Then it was forwarded to the Police Harbor Squad, which sent out two boats.

It was then time for the midnight meal and there proved to be three vacant places at the mess-table. These were the places of three New York gangsters, serving terms for various offenses, who had been acting as trustees. They were Daniel St. John, 28 years old, who was arrested in connection with the slaying of a policeman on election night in 1919; James Lahey, known as "Spot" Lahey, accused of acting in concert with payroll bandits; and John Clinton, accused of carrying a revolver.

Police Boats Grope in Mist.

The police boats had to move with care through the ice field, which was rushing north with the tide in the East River at that hour. With the temperature rapidly growing warmer, the mist began to rise thickly off the river, forming a dense fog, and the searchlights of the boats could not penetrate it to any extent. The three fugitives kept up their cold and difficult work through the ice field for several hours, as was reported later, the speed of the tide making it extremely difficult for them to make progress across the current.

"They apparently landed several hours later at Ravenswood Park," said



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Commissioner of Correction Frederick A. Wallis. They were dressed in the prison gray, making their escape difficult, and we have strong hopes of being able to capture them. As far as I know they had no overcoats.

"They were able to get away because, being trustees, they were allowed to go from one building to another. They slipped away on their way to the mess-hall, got out this skiff and started off with their bare hands.

"They were very foolish. For one thing, each man had overlooked better chances to escape in the past. All three had served most of their terms, and one had only three months longer to serve. One of them had \$400 in cash to his credit here which he left behind, and the three abandoned a total of \$740."

PAPYRUS TELLS OF AIRSHIP IN SOLOMON'S DAY

Earliest Extant Reference to Flying Found in Abyssinian Manuscript.

London, March 1.—There has just been brought to light an ancient manuscript, the statement that Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba "a vessel wherein one could traverse the air (or wind), which Solomon had made by the wisdom that God had given unto him."

This statement is quoted by Col. Lockwood March, secretary of the Royal Aeronautical Society, in the opening of his preface to "Bibliotheca Aeronautica," to be issued in a few days. The text is taken from an ancient Abyssinian manuscript, "The Glory of the Kings," translated by Sir E. Wallis Budge, director of Egyptian antiquities in the British museum, in his book, "The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek," published last year.

"This ancient manuscript has, of course, been translated many times," said Col. Lockwood March to press representatives, "but the statement about Solomon's airship apparently escaped the notice of the reviewers, and it has been left to a flying enthusiast like myself to discover and proclaim it. Solomon lived in the tenth century, B. C., so it is quite the earliest reference to flying extant, and as such will be added to our records."

Many theologians believe there were airships a million years ago in last Atlantis, but as a book describing these airships was not published until 1896, the theory was based on astral clairvoyance, Col. Lockwood March prefers to regard his reference to Solomon's airship in the dawn of civilization as the earliest one.

There are other references to flight in Abyssinian sacred writings and there is one long description of the miraculous way in which the Queen of Sheba's son Menyelek left Solomon journeying to his mother's country. "No man handled his wagon, and whether it was men, or horses, or mules, or loaded camels, each was raised above the ground to a height of a cubit." A cubit, according to the ancient Egyptians, measured about twenty inches, but elsewhere it is recorded that over the Red sea they were lifted up three cubits, "and everyone traveled in the wagons like an eagle when his body glideth above the wind."

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Bodily Housekeeping

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BOYS UNHARMED BY WILD WEST NOVELS

Toronto Librarian Says the Chief Interest Lies in Catering to Children.

Toronto, March 1.—No boy was ever led astray by reading wild west novels, Dr. Geo. M. Locke, chief librarian of the public library, told an audience in the Labor Temple, while dealing with tendencies in modern literature. It was only one of Dr. Locke's breezy remarks while dealing with his subject, which he also extended to include his work as chief librarian of the public library. Dr. Locke again admitted he did not care if "grown-ups" patronized the public library and declared that his big interest in boys and girls. "We teach the boys and girls history. Some people do not think so, but we have a history going back 300 years," he said. "We do not want the loyalty of the kettle drum and the waving flag, we want loyalty which stands for some-

thing. Do they like it? On Saturday not long ago 200 of them stormed the library, and when they were asked what they desired to hear, they agreed upon that of Chaplain. People do not seem to realize that the first white man who saw Lake Ontario was a Canadian, and that this was seven years before the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock."

Dr. Locke pointed out there was no censorship in Canada of literature, and doubted if there could be found an individual or a group of individuals capable of assuming the responsibility. This led him to express the opinion that there had been a demoralization in literature corresponding to the demoralization in life since 1914. He believed that the rigorous censorship of France and Germany upon literature since the war was sure indication of what was being served the public. "It is perfectly foolish to prohibit books," he said. "The instinct of curiosity and a resistance to constituted authority will attract people to them. I know two individuals who wrote a book in the United States which would not sell. They rewrote two chapters, paid a man to attack the book, and then

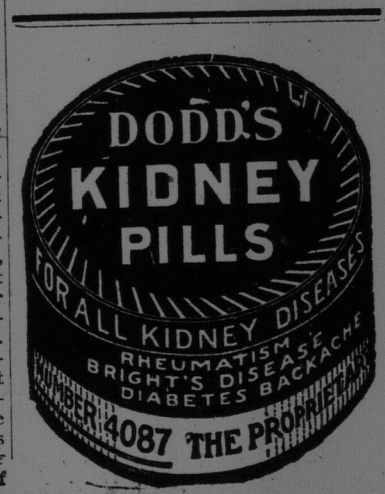
successfully sold it. Reform is never secured by legislation. Develop the good and interesting, and this will drive out the bad."

IS "CANDLE-SNUFFER"
Methodist Itinerant System Blamed by Chancellor.

Toronto, March 1.—While the Methodist Church in Canada has never had such all-round efficiency as it has today, Rev. I. G. Bowles, chancellor of Victoria University (Methodist), admitted here that the Methodist itinerant system was not productive of great pulpits power. Dr. Bowles to that extent agreed with Rev. Dr. D. G. McQueen (Presbyterian), of Edmonton, who in a recent interview stated that Methodism has had no great preacher since John Wesley. The itinerant system was a "candle-snuffer" said Dr. Bowles, and its advantages and disadvantages had been discussed at practically every conference in the history of the church. At any rate, he said, if the church had laid down its oratorical laurels, it had picked up the burden of social service. The good of

the church and the good of the community might perhaps be attained without words of flame and speech of gold.

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