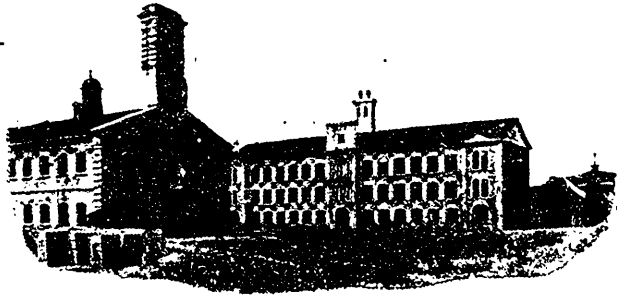


itself indelibly upon the memory of every convict. He is not quite hardened. His thoughts before his crime had never dwelt long on the stern possible realities of a prison. He had other ambitions than this. His

crime, he thought, would be but the open door to riches, or favour, or comfort, or pleasure,—not to prison; and hard is the blow, when after the dazing experience of the apprehension and trial, he finds himself actually in charge of an officer in a closed cab, which is reined up at the north gate of Kingston Penitentiary. The great, heavy, double pair of gates swing back, and, as they drive on through, clang behind him, as with a harsh and heavy knell to all his bright ambitions, now passed for ever beyond his reach.

But little time is allowed him for thought. He is immediately given in charge of the chief keeper: all his possessions are taken from him, packed, labeled, and laid away against the time of his leaving; he is given a bath, is examined, measured, weighed, and a full description of him is registered. A suit of clothes—grey, with cross streaks of red, is presented to him, with his number and letter stamped here and



THE CENTRAL YARD, KINGSTON PENITENTIARY.

there upon it, and in a few minutes he stands forth, in dress and in reality a convict, ready for the kindly but firm counsel of the officials that he obey rules and behave himself, ready for the work that is to be allotted to him, and off he goes, a prisoner in charge of his guard.

There are few occupations more wearing in their monotony than is that of a penitentiary guard. For about twelve hours in every twenty-four, either during day or night, he is on guard, walking to and fro on high wall or quarry-mound, standing in ward, or shop, or yard, releasing or locking up the men at morn or eve, and ever but with one thought, "watch." There is little relief during hours, no reading, or smoking, or talking with the convicts, no work allowed, and everything has to move with such clock-like regularity that this compulsion to no occupation but the strain of watching, becomes as hard labour as man could wish.

The new-comer soon becomes acquainted with the bare, grim surroundings of the spacious central yard, with its pavement of fine broken stone; for across it, if he works in the "shops," he passes



PART OF EASTERN WALL, KINGSTON PENITENTIARY.