

BRITISH DUNGEONS.

A SKETCH OF THE PENTONVILLE AND PORTLAND ESTABLISHMENTS

WHERE IRISH PRISONERS ARE CONFINED—THE DEADLY RULES OF DISCIPLINE WHICH MARKS THE SEVERE ADMINISTRATION OF THESE INSTITUTIONS.

After their conviction Dr. Gallagher, Whitehead and many other of the Irish prisoners were detained for a short time in Pentonville. Compared with this institution, harsh as are its regulations, Portland is a hell upon earth, says the New York Times. At Pentonville the prisoner exchanges his own clothes for those provided by the prison regulations. The newly made convict is then locked up in the cell which is destined to be his abode during the ensuing nine months. The furniture of this small apartment is scanty and of the simplest kind. A stretcher to sleep upon, a stool, a small table, a metal water jug, a slate, pencil and Bible—these are the fittings. At 6 o'clock in the morning the prisoner is awakened. Then follows the routine of cleaning out his cell, of oakum picking, by way of work; of bread and a weak, tasteless mess of gruel for breakfast, of a solitary promenade up and down a corridor for an hour by way of exercise, of bread, meat and the water it had been boiled in by way of dinner, of more oakum picking, more gruel and finally twelve hours sleep or meditation to wind up with. From morning till night not a soul does the prisoner see save the warden, who brings him his food and his oakum, and even with him he is forbidden to speak. This is not a very exhilarating mode of existence, but it is as the delights of a summer resort when compared with work in the quarries of Portland.

OFF TO PORTLAND.

Having completed their nine months' probation at this prison, the alleged dynamiters were one day informed that they were to be removed to Portland. The transfer is a simple, if degrading, operation. The prisoners heavily manacled and chained together in gangs of five and ten, are hustled into prison vans and conveyed to Waterloo Station. There they are placed in compartments distinguished by red labels, upon which appears the word "Reserved." There are nearly as many warders as prisoners, and they are all heavily armed. At every station at which the train stops a crowd gathers about the carriages and gazes openmouthed at the wretched convicts, in their villainous garb of drab and gray, plentifully bespattered with big black broad arrows. The average British convict is not of prepossessing appearance at the best of times, but when attired in the clothes provided by a paternal government, no more wretched spectacle than he can be imagined.

The distance from London to Portland is rather more than 100 miles, and it is therefore some five hours before the convict gets his first glimpse of the big rocks which will constitute his home for many years. At the Portland railway station he is met by a big vehicle not unlike a furniture van, painted black, minus windows, and on the sides of which is painted in gold letters a foot high "V. K."

AN ISLAND OF ROCK.

The first view of Portland is not prepossessing, and on closer examination it does not materially improve. The Isle of Portland is for the most part a rugged, barren bluff, whereon few would take up a residence from choice, though of late years many thousands have had to do so in consequence of unpleasant necessity. Portland, strictly speaking is a promontory and not an island, for it is connected with the mainland by that geological curiosity, the Chesil Beach, a bank of pebbles twelve miles in length, forty feet in height, and of an average breadth of 180 yards, dividing the English Channel from Portland harbor. Portland is about four miles in length, and its widest point one and three-quarter miles. The extreme south is called the Bill of Portland, a familiar and welcome point to mariners and passengers bound up the channel. The highest point of the island is 495 feet above the sea, and upon this huge cliff, popularly known as the Gibraltar of England, is built the Verne Citadel, the strongest fortress in England. Three sides of the island are absolutely inaccessible from the sea, the cliffs rising to an average height of 400 hundred feet, against which the waves ever dash. The island is almost devoid of vegetation, the only spot on which trees grow being the grounds of Pennsylvania Castle, built by Sir William Penn, descendant of the famous founder of the State of Pennsylvania, when Governor of the island in 1680. The walk from the convict prison to the Bill of Portland, taking in Bow and Arrow Castle and Pennsylvania, is the most romantic and varied in Portland, and embraces the boldest features of its cliff scenery.

IN THE PRISON.

The convict establishment is divided from the fortress by a deep fosse, and its most easterly wing is built on the edge of a cliff more than 400 feet high. The prison was erected in 1848, and affords accommodation for 1,700 convicts, who are principally employed in quarrying stone and at work upon the fortifications of the citadel.

The prison is composed of three long and lofty parallelograms (one of which is a double building) and a large block in the form of a wing lying somewhat in the rear of one of the main structures. All these are built of stone in the same way as the houses of the island, the single buildings containing four and the double buildings five stories of cells, the upper ones opening from light iron corridors, similar to those at Pentonville, the corridors and the whole of the main building being lighted from the roof. The spaces between the blocks of build-

ings, spanned above by an iron bridge extending from one block to another, serve as open areas in which the prisoners are paraded every day before going to the quarries.

The cells are about 4 feet wide, 7 feet long and 7 feet high, each furnished with a small window, and the walls formed of corrugated iron. They contain a slung hammock, with mattress, blanket, sheets and quilt, a stool and wash basin and a nest of deal shelves in which the prisoner keeps his plate, mug, his pannikin and such books as he is allowed to borrow from the prison library. He never has a knife or a fork, and he has nothing to eat requiring the use of these implements. He eats his meals with a wooden spoon. His diet is calculated to a nicety in the number of ounces of food per day that will keep him safely over the border line of starvation. He must get up at 6 o'clock, and his breakfast is brought to him at 7.30 o'clock. He eats every meal in his cell. In the first stage of his imprisonment he has only bread and water for breakfast, and for dinner a pint and a half of "strabout," a gruel-like mixture of oatmeal and Indian meal. In the fourth and last stage of his imprisonment he has a pint of porridge with his bread for breakfast, and a better dinner, but even the fourth stage bill of fare is never changed throughout the year. There is no holiday dinners nor an extra dish on Sunday, as in some of the American prisons.

RIGHT DISCIPLINE.

A very slight infraction of the regulations—to speak to a fellow convict, for instance—will cause the unfortunate prisoner to be locked up in a dark cell for a week and confined to a diet of bread and water. A repetition of the offense means being tried up to the triangle and the administration of a flogging at the hands of a sturdy warden. The air of Portland is keen, the prisoners' appetites are large, and the consequence is that the gentlemen under the supervision of Her Majesty's Government are far from satisfied with their dieting. Infractions of the rules are not frequent. "It ain't the quality I complain of," remarks the released convict, discussing the diet pathetically, "but what's the use of supposing a first-class burglar eats no more nor a sparrow? It's a mockery. It's a mere-keeping of us alive; that's what it is."

The entire system of discipline in English prisons is military in its rigidity and it is never relaxed. There are no demonstrations of discontent, of delight or of contempt on the part of the convicts, such as American prisoners indulge in. The English convict is not by nature more respectful or orderly than the American convict, but he knows that disobedience will be immediately punished. He knows that the statutes of Parliament have framed the conditions under which he is to serve out his sentence and that the power and the system of the prison are such that he must obey the rules or suffer the consequences.

As has already been stated, the principal employment of the convicts at Portland is to quarry stone, and there is no reason to suppose that Gallagher and Whitehead have not been similarly employed. There is no distinction of persons or prisoners at Portland. Their very individuality is lost and they are known only by numbers.

IN THE STONE QUARRIES.

Imagine a bright, scorching August sun beating down upon the stone quarries of Portland. Nothing is heard save the clink, clink of hundreds of hammers upon huge blocks of stone, in the hands of hundreds of men in their prime, their complexions all burnt to a brick dust color. The hum of honest toil is unheeded. No human voice is heard. On all sides are blue-coated warders armed with long muskets, all of which are loaded with ball cartridge. The scariest tunics of the soldiers who aid in the duty of guarding the convicts contribute a ray of brightness to the scene. Can anything be sadder than this awful spectacle of hundreds of men in their prime, with the pulse of life beating strong in their veins and no hope left for them in this world—a world in which they are destined never again to see all those near and dear to them? No prospect of change or amelioration in their lot. Nothing but the narrow cell by night—the eternal stone quarry by day. All are attired in gray drab and coats and hessian knickerbockers, plentifully bespattered with the broad arrow. Blue, red-hooped stockings, coarse shoes and caps of the variety known as Glengarry complete their attire.

Men whose terms have nearly expired from their having been shortened in consequence of good conduct are dressed in blue suits with "P. P." stamped upon them in red letters. Some few among the number work in the quarries in heavy chains and quaint dresses of gray and yellow and gray and black. The former are those who tried to break away, the latter are ruffians known to intend violence to the warders. Men of all ages, all characters, of diversity of crimes, all burnt to the same brick-dust hue, and bearing at first sight a strange resemblance to one another. Think what a destiny! To wrestle with the granite rock all your days, at night the narrow cell and your reflections! Truly, it is a strange sight. Every phase of crime is represented in that quarry—larceny, arson, forgery, felony, burglary, swindling, manslaughter, murder! Exponents of all of them are to be found among these hundreds of brick dust burnt men, clothed in drab and gray, with pick and hammer, wrenching the stone from its bed, taciturn by compulsion, speechless by command.

No sound but the incessant stroke of the tools as they meet the rock, the creaking of the barrows, the falling of the splinters or the occasional stern voice of a bronzed, bearded warden. Blue-coated, cutlass-bitted, these stand scattered through the throng, an apparent handful among those they control. It is not until one studies the scene that one becomes aware of the cordon of sentries with loaded rifles. Truly, a grim spectacle to gaze at, these silent laborers, outcasts of humanity! Escape is impossible at Portland and has never yet been known.

It is from such awful surroundings that Dr. Gallagher and Whitehead have just been released. Can it be wondered that Whitehead should be a lunatic at large and Gallagher a physical wreck? Whether convicted justly or unjustly,

the circumstances attending their release should draw public attention to the rigors of the English prison system and thus pave the way to real prison reform, and a beneficent work will have been accomplished.

THE TURKS' HOUR HAS COME.

PROF. GOLDWIN SMITH SPEAKS OF THE EASTERN QUESTION—TURKISH RULE IN EUROPE HAS BECOME IMPOSSIBLE.

From the Toronto Globe.

"The end of the Turkish Empire in Europe has come at last," said Prof. Goldwin Smith in the course of an interview with a Globe reporter. "Russia is the chief factor in the Eastern question, and the counsels of Russia are dark and continuous. In this way she has a great advantage over the other nations, for, while their foreign policies change with each succeeding Ministry, hers remains unchanged. The will of Peter the Great, which lays out a programme for gradual aggrandizement, is of course a forgery, got up, it is said, under the auspices of Napoleon, but no doubt Russia has her purpose, which remains steady, and is veiled behind the curtain of her dark counsel. Her great purpose probably is to get to the open sea.

"No, that does not necessarily mean obtaining possession of Constantinople. Besides the Bosphorus there are 120 other exits, the Persian Gulf, which is dangerously near the Indian Empire, and the Gulf of Iskanderun, in the north-east angle of the Mediterranean. I do not think they will succeed ultimately in keeping her from reaching the open sea. The Crimean war was a desperate attempt to arrest her progress, but it was futile. Lord Palmerston believed Turkey to be capable of regeneration, this belief being partly inspired by his fanatical hostility to Russia. He maintained that the Turk was a sick man, but that if he was put upon a regimen he would turn out as well as his neighbors. People of my way of thinking said the Turk was incapable of being regenerated, that he was incurably barbarous. We appear to have proved right. The last day of the Turkish Empire in Europe must have come. The Sultans are not capable of ruling. Living shut up in their harems, as they do, they know nothing of affairs.

"It was desired to prevent Russia from advancing into Europe, surely a military federation might have been formed of the small powers in that region. Her purpose probably is not so much territorial aggrandizement as to gain the open sea.

"Lord Salisbury is in an embarrassing situation. After arresting Russia within a short distance of Constantinople, he and Disraeli, who was also a bitter enemy of Russia, perhaps partly from Jewish feelings, went to Berlin and made a treaty, by which they acquired the Island of Cyprus as a fee for upholding the Turkish Empire. Cyprus has proved a white elephant; originally in a commercial angle of the Mediterranean, it is now in a dead angle. Its harbors were capable of holding the ancient galleys, but are not capable of holding first-class modern warships. In the event of an eastern war Great Britain could not spare the garrison necessary to protect it. Lord Salisbury took it on these conditions, and he could not take strong measures against the Turk without resigning Cyprus. He would have to go back on what he and Disraeli had done in Berlin. What will be done now I cannot tell, any more than you can. As I said before, Russia is the chief factor and her counsels are dark.

"There is another thing about which they have to be careful. A rising of Islam would be a very formidable thing. It was thought that the deposition of the Sultan was a blow against Islam, there would be terrible scenes in the eastern part of the Turkish Empire. It will be a memorable day when the Christian service is again said in Saint Sophia."

NO HOPE FOR SEPARATE SCHOOLS

(Toronto Globe, Liberal.)

Archbishop Langevin has returned from his visit to Rome, where he conferred with the Pope on the Manitoba school question. The Archbishop is reported to have said, in answer to a question, "My attitude is the same as before my departure." He was an ardent advocate of the remedial bill, and of the restoration of Separate Schools in Manitoba, and it is quite natural that he should desire an arrangement which would re-establish a system of Catholic schools under the control of the Catholic clergy. But, making all due allowance for his zeal on behalf of his church, he ought surely to be able to distinguish between what he desires and what is possible; and the events of the past few months must have convinced any man who is not living in a world of dreams that legislation such as he supported is out of the question. To get that legislation enacted in the final session of a dying Parliament was the last chance of Archbishop Langevin and his friends. On the 25th of April their hopes and the seventh Parliament of Canada died together.

WHIG AND TORY.

(Dublin Nation.)

Not many of those who use the English party names "Whig" and "Tory" are aware that one of those words is of Scotch and the other of Irish origin. They came into use in or about 1679. Macaulay gives the following account of them—

The appellation of Whig was fastened on the Presbyterian zealots of Scotland, and was transferred to those English politicians who showed a disposition to oppose the court, and to treat Protestant nonconformists with indulgence. The bogs of Ireland at the same time afforded a refuge to Popish outlaws. . . . These men were called Tories. The name of Tory was therefore given to Englishmen who refused to concur in excluding a Roman Catholic prince from the throne. It is a curious circumstance that the nickname originally given to poor robbed and plundered Irishmen who were driven to starve in bogs and woods, and were liable to be shot like

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hares or rabbits by the settlers on their lands, should now be borne by the more wealthy and aristocratic of the two English parties. But the "whirligig of time" brings about strange transpositions and transformations in every department of human affairs.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.

Dublin Freeman's Journal.

The Registrar General's annual report for 1895, on the statistics relating to marriages, deaths, and births, has just been issued, and, as usual, contains much interesting and suggestive information. The marriages registered in Ireland during last year numbered 23,120, the births 106,113 and the deaths 84,395. This marriage rate is considerably above the average rate for the preceding ten years, and is higher than the rate for any of the decade. The birth rate and death rate each show a slight increase as compared with the average rate for the decade, or with the rate for 1894. The estimated population of the country in the middle of last year was 4,574,764. The loss by emigration during 1895 amounted to 48,703, while the recorded natural increase of population was only 21,718. There would thus appear to have been a decrease of 26,985 in the population in the year, but against a portion of this decrease there is, as the Registrar-General points out, a set-off in immigration of which no official record has been obtained. A complete registry of the persons married would be valuable from many points of view, but unfortunately no record of the kind exists. The requirements of the law are complied with by the entry of "minor" or of "full age" in the age column, and the vast majority of couples content themselves with these vague descriptions. Sensitiveness on this point seems to be on the increase, and in 1895 the exact age was specified in less than one-fifth of the total number of marriages. In the year 1895, on the other hand, when 30,802 marriages were registered, the ages of both parties were given in 18,910 instances. The signatures of the contracting parties in the marriage registers or certificates offered a rough test of the progress of elementary education. In the year 1895, 19,191, or 83 per cent of the husbands, and 19,487, or 84 per cent of the wives, wrote their names, and the remainder signed by marks. These figures show a considerable improvement as compared with the corresponding results eleven years since, the percentage of persons married in 1885 who wrote their names being—men, 76.5, and women, 73.8.

Of the 106,113 children whose births were registered in Ireland during the year 1895, 103,242, or 97.3 per cent were legitimate; and 2,871, or 2.7 per cent were illegitimate: the average percentage of illegitimacy for the preceding 10 years also was 2.7. It is unnecessary to say that these results compare very favourably with the returns for most other countries. Comparing the provinces, we find that the percentage of children born in Ulster, who were illegitimate, was 3.9; in Leinster, 2.5; in Munster, 2.3; and in Connaught, 0.7. The death-rate for 1895, which was 18.4 per 1,000 of the estimated population, is 0.2 over the average rate for the preceding ten years, and also 0.2 over the rate for the year 1894. The lists setting forth the various causes of death reveal some interesting facts. While some diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, diarrhoea, and pulmonary consumption, claim more or less the same number of victims annually, the variations in other diseases is remarkable. There were three years out of the last decade in which there were no deaths registered from smallpox. The epidemic of 1894, however, ran up the number of fatal cases in that year to 72. Typhus fever is one of the diseases with which medical and sanitary science seems to be grappling most successfully. There were only 192 deaths from typhus, being 149 below the average for the ten years 1885-94, and 35 under the lowest yearly number in that period, which was 227 in 1893. Of the 192 deaths last year, 27 occurred in the province of Leinster; 67 in Munster; 55 in Ulster; and 43 in Connaught. The course of influenza within the last three decades was remarkable. For the ten years 1864-73 (during the greater portion of which period there was not any epidemic outbreak of the disease) the average annual number of deaths from influenza registered in Ireland was 166, or 0.3 per 10,000 of the population, the yearly number ranging from 311 in 1864 to 96 in 1868; for the following ten years (1874-83) the average number was 82, the highest being 124 in 1875, and the lowest 39 in 1882; and for the six years (1884-9) the average was 34 only, the numbers varying from 21 to 44. In 1890 the deaths from the disease amounted to 1,712, or 8.6 per 10,000 of the population;

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in the following year they fell to 891, or 1.4 in every 10,000 living; in the year 1892 they rose to 3,742, or 8.1 in every 10,000 of the population, and equal to 4.2 per cent of the deaths from all causes; in 1893 they fell to 1,310, or 2.8 in every 10,000 of the population; in 1894 they again rose, the number for the year being 2,032, or 4.4 in every 10,000 persons, and last year they fell to 1,896, or 4.1 per 10,000 of the estimated population. Cancer is one of the diseases which, unhappily, show a marked tendency to increase. The number of deaths due to it last year was 2,230, being 162 over the average for the decade, though it was 79 under the number for 1894. There were 152 cases of suicide in Ireland last year, as against an average of 121. The emigration statistics show that of the 48,703 emigrants who left this country in 1895 6.6 were under 15 years of age; 84.7 per cent were between 15 and 35 years old; 8.7 were 35 and upwards.

THE RANSOMING OF ROME.

(From the Catholic Times.)

The project of ransoming Rome or purchasing a sufficient territory in Italy for the Pope by the payment to the Italian Treasury of £200,000,000, subscribed by the Catholic world, first mooted in October last by a writer in the Daily Telegraph, has again been revived. Half quixotic, half chivalrous, partly visionary and partly practicable, as it may seem to many, it has attracted no little attention. There are, however, as strong points against as any that have been urged in its favor. In the first place the Piedmontese usurper has no moral right to the possession of Rome, and how can he lawfully sell what does not lawfully belong to him? Pius IX. and Leo XIII. have time and again solemnly and emphatically protested against the unjust seizure of the Patrimony of the Church, and have not touched a penny of the indemnity or pension voted to the Pope by the Italian Parliament under the so-called Law of Guarantees, as to do so would be a recognition of the present régime. To buy, from King Humbert or any section or territory in the former States of the Church, would be equally a recognition of the usurpation. It would be like a man who had been robbed buying back from the thief what had been stolen from him. The Italian Government are only tenants at will, and a tenant at will can give no lease. What guarantee of security of tenure could be given by a Government floated into precarious power by a wave of revolution, and which may be swept from power at any moment by a returning wave?

The new Italian dynasty and Government were never more insecure than they are at present. They are losing the props upon which they rested; broken reeds some of them were. They are breaking with the Masons, who are changing front, and, under the leadership of Grand Master Nathan, are going over from their former allies the Royalists to the Republicans, who are only biding their time and waiting for their turn. The Democratic policy of the reigning Pontiff has alarmed the lodges, and clouds and darkness veil the House of Savoy. A Democratic movement appealing to local patriotism, which has struck such deep roots into Italian history, may sooner than we think change the whole state of affairs and bring about a federation of republics instead of a united Monarchical Italy. Bankrupt in its finances at home and bankrupt in glory in Abyssinia, he is but a purblind politician who cannot already discern the handwriting on the wall. This plan might be an ingenious method of replenishing the exhausted coffers of the Italian Exchequer, and handing over more spoils to the despoiler. Everything comes to those who know how to wait, and the Papacy, as full of undiminished vigour as when Macaulay penned its eulge, will yet have its triumph without bribing the Italian Government to render unto God the things that are God's.

A BRILLIANT STUDENT.

Mr. Thomas J. Meagher, a young Catholic of Philadelphia, has proven himself an unusually brilliant student. Three years ago, when not yet eighteen years of age, he graduated with honour from La Salle College, which is taught by Christian Brothers. He entered the law department of the University of Pennsylvania, and graduated there recently with the highest possible honour (cum summa laude), being the only one of his class to attain that degree, and this notwithstanding the fact that he was not yet twenty-one years of age, and had for his competitors much older men and graduates of the university itself and of other leading educational institutions. Mr. Meagher was given the degree of Master of Arts by La Salle College at its last commencement.

THE WRITINGS OF THE HOLY FATHERS AND CLASSICS.

The Congress, at Rheims, recently, discussed at great length various questions connected with the education of youth, especially in seminaries. The Abbé Pierre complained of the unjustifiable manner in which the study of the Fathers of the Church was now neglected. "I," said he, "no longer read of our holy doctors, it is because we have been so saturated with the Latin of Cicero."

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He urged the necessity of following the counsel of Pius IX. by inculcating the study of the finest passages of the Fathers, and, in a more restricted sense, those pagan authors who might be considered inoffensive. To give extra force to his argument against the abuse of classical learning, the speaker cited the critic and dramatist, Jules Lemaitre, who has made no secret of the fact that the study of the Pagan classics had a disastrous effect upon his soul. The Abbé Garnier supported the Abbé Pierre. He held the expurgation of pagan authors for the use of youth to be of the highest necessity.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC.

Some striking figures are to be found in the statistics of railway traffic in the United Kingdom just issued. Last year, it appears from this return, the passengers conveyed by train from place to place in the United Kingdom numbered no fewer than 929,770,000. This vast total, which by the way exceeds that for 1894 by more than 18 millions, is exclusive of season ticket holders. Passenger traffic yielded in 1895, in gross receipts, £37,361,162.

BEAUTY THAT BROUGHT DISCOMFORT.

The head of Liberty which adorns the silver dollar issued from the United States mint is a portrait, and not an ideal profile; and there is an interesting story connected with it. In 1876 the American Treasury commissioned an artist, a Mr. Morgan, to prepare a design for the new dollar. At first, to obtain a correct type of American beauty, Mr. Morgan tried ideal heads. The results were not satisfactory, however, and he determined to find, if possible, an American girl of typical beauty to sit for her portrait. This was not an easy matter; and when at length he did find the girl—a school teacher at Philadelphia—he had the greatest difficulty in gaining her consent to accept his proposed tribute to her beauty. Ultimately, however, she did give the necessary permission. As soon as it became known that she was the model for the design, she was subjected to a series of persecutions. People followed her and stared at her; her school was filled with visitors; and artists from all parts of the States wrote imploring her to give them sittings.



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