DAM & BYRNING THERMALTH PHU ADELPHIA - THERMAN Y SEPTEMBER II TABLE

TWO HOURS IN JAIL.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD.

(Second Paper.)

The City Prison at Holloway is an establishment for the reception of criminals sentenced to two years imprisonment or less, and at the present time the governor has four hundred and fifty delinquents in his custody. To provide receptacles at once commodions and secure for so many lodgers is undoubtedly an essential condition, but another of almost equal importance is so to arrange the said receptacles that the ways thereto may converge to one common centre, the latter affording a stand-point from which an uninterrupted view of the full number of cell-doors may be obtained by the warders on duty. Without entering on architectural detail it may be by an admirable arrangement radiating corridors, these prime aids towards successful prisen management have been attained. It is needless to say that the whole establishment, from extremest corner to corner, and from roof to basement, is scrupulously clean; indeed, it is glaringly so, and painful to contemplate on that account. You look up-

ward and round about, and all is white, white, spotless, and dead, and harmonizing exactly with the frequent notice-boards enjoining silence" hung around. Under foot all is black; it cannot well be blacker, for the flooring material is asphalte, and every morning it black-leaded till it shines like the face of a kitchen-stove. It looks like a still, black pool in the evening light, and is slippery as glass. The warders, conforming to the grim rule of silence, glide about in shoes, the uppers of which are white canvas and the soles India-rubber. They shift from this point to that so swiftly and noiselessly that you would think that the still, black pool was frozen to ice and they were sliding on it, only that as a rule sliders are jolly-looking people, and these were solemn men, resigned to their duty perhaps, but overpowered by a melancholy that dwells in

The City Prison is a working prison, and the Governor taking advantage of certain facilities that perhaps are peculiar to the prison location, appears to have advanced far towards solving the long tried puzzle of how to make enforced labor profitable. By the way of answer to a question put by us relative to this matter, there was placed in our hands the "labor roll" for the day, showing at a glance how every capable prisoner of the four hundred and fifty had been employed since morning. I wish that I had copied the roll that I might have presented it to the reader in its exact entirety, but I well remember that it included painters, glaziers, smiths, carpenters, wood-choppers, barbers, wheel-treaders, oakum-pickers, bricklayers, brickmakers, and, last and most important of all, mat-There were between sixty and seventy mat-makers. We went into the matfactory, where there are several looms, which have been erected on the present Governor's responsibility. We were informed that a prisoner who had never seen a loom before, might be taught to make himself useful at one in a fortnight. The prison authorities are at no risk as regards their mat-making. A contractor provides all material, bringing it to their doors, and carrying away all manufactured goods; and last year the profits thereon that were handed to the corporation out of this branch of prison labor alone amounted to nine

hundred pounds. I have alluded to brick-making as figuring in the labor-roll, and was as much surprised as doubtless the reader will be to find it there. Twenty-five, I think, was the number of prison hands engaged at this branch of manufacture; but where was it performed? To make bricks it is necessary to have at your command clay and "breeze" or cinders for burning. "Come with me," said the governor, "and you shall see all about it."

He conducted us out of the prison to the grounds at the rear of it, enclosed by the high

prison-walls, of course.

The ground pertaining to the jail is about seven acres in extent, and without doubt is made the most of. Two acres and a quarter are in wheat—the very finest that can be met for fifty miles round, owing, doubtless, to a judicious utilization of the prison sewage in the form of liquid manure. Besides the wheat there are thriving plots of cabbage and potatoes, and onions and leeks for soup, all sown and tended by the prisoners. Never was wheat so precious, thanks to its merciful grower. It is a jail regulation that every prisoner shall take so much walking exercise each day, and in ordinary the necessary operation is performed in a dreary flag-paved yard, wherein the prisoners tramp wearily to and fro through the specified time-now much exhilarated may be easily imagined. But just now it is pleasant walking for the inmates of Holloway Prison, and it will grow pleasanter until wheat-cutting time comes. In one of the largest patches circular paths are left, and this is the exercise ground. To be sure, to expect to arouse wholesome emtions in the breasts of a certain set of Holloway prisoners by so gentle a means would be simply absurd; but they are not all of this sort. There are scores and scores of miserable men, young and old, who, under a spell of devilry, have slipped from the path of rectitude once, and only once, and who in the confines of their narrow, solitary cell drop hot tears of remorse and penitence as their thoughts wander home, and to wives and children, and they yearn till their hearts ache for the day that shall restore them. What, after the debasing drudgery of jail-labor, must that hour's tramping through the hopeful green wheat be to them ?

wheat out in the prison rear-ward garden. It is here that the bricks are made. The Governor's severely economic instincts have led him to argue that although no kind of crop may be raised out of clay, such as abounds on his estate, there is another direct and simple method of making the material in question productive. In a great pit the furnace and ordinary fire refuse of the prison is stored, and with these two ingredients he sets to work. There is a "pug-mill" worked by manual instead of horse-power, and "moulders" and barrow-hands and stackers, all wearing the slate-colored skeleton suit with the embroidered sleeve and the metal ticket with a number on it about their neck. But silence still prevails. You can hear the dull thud of the clay as the moulder fills his mould, and the clap of the little boards with which the carriers take up the soft brick, and the creak of the barrow-wheel as the bricks are wheeled away; but beyond that there is not noise enough to drown the chirp of a free sparrow that has her nest in a niche of the prison wall. In the midst of the workers, perched in a sort of pulpit, is an officer in prison livery, who has nothing to do but fold his same and shut his mouth and keep his ears open and stare at the 25 brickmakers with all his might, ready to pounce on anybody who dare break the golden rule. But nobody grables; indeed, it may be safely asserted that throughout the jail there are no such cheerful-looking laborers as those out-o'-door opes. However severe the task, it is per-formed in the open air, where the crow flies overhead and the sun shines and the wind formed in the open air, where the crow flies overhead and the sun shines and the wind blows. Besides, there is fair in view the only they must obey." When lot at that very in-

But it is not all tramping through green

obstacle that stands between them and liberty. between them and the common pavement on which people lounge, or saunter, or hurry, without dreaming of restraint. They can hear the leather-lunged potboy from the public-house over the way bawling "Beer O!" they can hear the carriages rattling along the road-way, and the heavy market cart rumbling over the stones, and can picture the happy carter smoking his short pipe as he slouches along, with one hand in his pocket and his whip over his shoulder. Ah, dear reader, you know a few clever people, and so do I; but for "seeing through a brick wall," as the saying is, one of these unfortunate laborers in the prison garden might be matched against any

one of them, and backed at long odds to win. The labor least relished by the prisoners—and I don't wonder at it—is the treadwheel. Its use is to raise sufficient water for the use of the establishment to an immense tank fixed on the roof. Hand-pumping was at first tried, and with such questionable success, that the laborers were suspected of "shirking," and to prove the charge against them a gang of free workers were called in and set to the task; but having that blessed privilege, after a trial they dropped the pump handles and flatly declined "to have any more of it." The treadwheel answers better, but it is fearfully hard work for the treaders. With all respect for the excellent contrivers and managers of the institution under inspection, would suggest an alteration in this treadmill shed. There should be more light and more air in the place; on a hot summer's day the fatigue must be unbearable. The "wheel' itself extends the whole length of the shed by the wall, and revolves on an axle. Attached to this wheel, or rather drum, are projecting pieces of board six inches in width and about nine inches apart. Overhead is a short bar for the operator to grasp with his hands, and when the wheel is started he has no foothold and no rest for his feet until his spell of "treading" is at an end. For full twenty minutes he must constantly raise first his right foot, then his left, as though he was walking up stairs, and this at the rate of about sixty times in a minute. Fancy having to ascend twelve hundred stairs in twenty minutes, to ascend to the summit of the Monument three times over in that short time, and then to be released that you may sit in a box like a church new in the same shed and pick cakum for a further term of twenty minutes by way of a rest, and then three times to the top of the Monument again, and so on through the working hours of every day! And it is not as though the operator trod on the open wheel. He must not speak to his neighbor. he must not see him; and to this end he works in a sort of box open at the top. It must be terrible work for a fat man, and such as well as lean commit them elves. It is possible for such a one, as we were informed, to lose in weight three stone in as many months.

But it is not six hours at the treadmill, or at any other manner of work performed at the City Prison, that contents the inexorable authorities of that model establishment. One way or another a prisoner must work ten heurs. He is roused at half-past five in the morning, and somehow or another he is kindly preserved against the perils of idleness until 8 o'clock at night. This shows fifteen hours and a half, but he is not working absolutely all that time. He has to go to chapel and to take his meals and his exercise. He is tasked through ten hours only. Many of the trades-such, for instance, as the shoe makers and tailors and the out-o'-door hands (excepting the brick-makers)—"knock off" at six to get their supper, after which they retire to their cells; but they must do some kind of work until the bell sounds 8 o'clock, when they may cease, and are privileged to spend the ensuing hour in reading or meditation, or in washing themselves, when the bell tolls again, and a clatter of hammock-hooks, as long and precise almost as the grounding of arms at a military review, resounds through the corridors, and the prisoners may go to bed.

Ah! the glorious privilege of breaking that horrible silence, though only for so short a time as may be occupied in adjusting four iron hooks in as many catches! The blessed relief of lifting for a few seconds the sombre veil that clings about a poor wretch so suffocatingly. "The strictest silence must be observed," say the notice-boards, and it is observed. Entering in at a door guarded by a gigantic though melancholy janitor in India-rubber shoes, the governor signs us to step softly on to a mat that is there. We do so, and in a listening attitude he raises his hand. There is not a sound. Before us is a long corridor containing a long double row of cells, each containing a man alive and in health, and engaged at some kind of work; but no charnel-house could be quieter.

Judging from the awful "hush," the cells might each have been a church vault, with a coffined creature lying within it. But presently a noise is heard, a "Tap! tap! tap!" and then a pause, and then a succession of taps, vigorous and hearty, conveying to our oppressed senses a relief for which we sigh gratefully, as one does on a sultry evening when the sudden and heavy rain-drops come pit-a-pat on the dusty read. "That's a shoemaker," the governor whispers; "he's got s task to finish, and he is hammering out his sole leather." Fortunate shoemaker! If it is a relief from the dread benumbing to clatter aloud for the space of half a minute with a couple of iron hooks, what must it be to be armed with a handy broad-faced hammer and a lapstone, with liberty to assault grim silence with all the strength of your right arm? How the other poor still stitchers of cloth and pickers of oakum must have envied him! What would they not have given for a broadfaced hammer and a lapstone and free permission to bang away as hard as they pleased for half an hour! They would have been heard as far as the summit of Highgate Hill. "Do the prisoners dread this silence so very much?" the reader may ask. Ay, do they-a hundred times more than a free man can possibly realize. A gang of them—poor, soft-handed wretches!—were at work on the evening of our visit at the rough, and to them heavy task of bricklaying, and had been so employed all day. Come six o'clock, they were to turn into their cells, and spend the next two hours at some light work at which they could sit down; but they didn't want to sit down; they didn't want to change the heavy work for the light. Holding up his hand, which is the sign that a prisoner craves permission to speak, one of them hum-bly requested the Governor to allow them to continue bricklaying until eight o'clock. But the request could not be granted. "For God's sake, governor, put me in another cell!' was the prayer of one poor prisoner who had occupied the same lodging through nine weary months; "for God's sake put me somewhere else! I have counted the bricks of the cell I

am in till my eyes ache." But there came under our notice one curious instance of how small a matter may upset the calculations, and turn even to ridicule the sternest enactments, of men mighty in authority. From the men's corridor we proceeded to the women's, and, prideful of his eminently successful silent system, the governor paused at the threshold with the whispered remark, These are the f.male cells, and yet you perceive the same unbroken still-

stant a tiny voice was heard to crow its shrillest, and that within a dozen yards of where we were standing. "That's one of the babies," remarked the Governor, with all the wind suddenly taken out of his sails. "Of course,

you can't keep babies quiet."
We were further informed that as many as fourteen of these small mockers and defiers of gags and governors were born in the jail within the year. The mothers are permitted to take charge of their children. In every cell door there is a peep-hole of about the size of a penny, covered first with wire gauze and then with a shifting metal cover. Putting this last aside, we peeped in, and there we saw the little rebel who had so audaciously put to rout the Governor and his silent system, sitting on the bed bright and lively, and getting rare fun out of a skein of darning cotton, while its mother, seated on a stool by the bedside, was busily finishing a job of sock-mending by the fading light that shone in at the high-up barred narrow strip of window. It would be hard to say whether the presence of the innocent baby with its cheerful little face and its general air of content made the gloomy little cell look more or less prison-like. How the mother would have answered had the question been put to her need not be doubted, but of course she was a prejudiced person. By the way, I wonder if the silent system in all its grim severity is imposed on mothers with babies? The cobbler is at liberty to pound away at his leather till the gloomy corridor echoes again, but he no more dare whistle as he hammers than he dare demand a pint of beer wherewith to whet his whistle: the incarcerated tailor, to beguile the tedious time, may think a tune if he pleases, but to hum one would be to peril his prospects of dinner: how is it with motners and their little ones? Are they bound to caress them (and you may depend that they are not so debased as to have overcome the very natural habit) in dumb show? Do they convey to them words of endearment under their breath, and indoctrinate them in the soothing nursery jingle by unsounding movements of their lips The next time I am in the company of our worthy governor I will ask him all about it.

Every day the prisoners, male and female, old and young, are made to attend chapel, and twice on Sundays. The appearance of the sacred edifice quite upsets one's ideas of ''free-dom'' of religious worship. The chaplain's pulpit is perched high up against the wall at the end, so as to enable him to get a view of his entire congregation. Otherwise this would be impossible; for while the larger body of adult male prisoners occupy the body of the chapel, the women and children are partitioned off on either side by a tall partition that quite precludes the possibility of their seeing bayond. Before the great space where the men sit is a pair of tall grim fron gates; and they are ranged on seats rising one above the other with warders in attendance and constantly on the watch lest for a single instant they, through the whole of the service, depart from the rigid rule of "eyes right." They must look steadfastly before them, regarding through the iron bars the preacher in his pulpit, and they must raise and lower their prayer-books with elbows squared and all at once like soldiers at drill. They may not scrape their feet upon the floor without having afterwards to explain the movement. They may scarcely wink an eye or sigh without dan-ger of rebuke or punishment. God help them,

poor wretches ! It says much in favor of the Holloway system, however, that it exercises no injurious effect on the health of the inmates. There is a commodious infirmary; but out of the large number of four hundred and fifty only three were invalided, and that—at least in two cases—not through being unable to bear up against the severity of jail discipline. Of the two cases in question one was that of an old man turned eighty, an experienced "smasher," or passer of spurious coin, while the other was a tall. languid young man of decent appearance, who coming of a family of thieves, had always been himself a thief, but who was now in the last stage of consumption. He was going home to his friends in the country, as we were informed. "He may as well go home and die, since he wishes it, as die here." When fever cases occur in the jail they are removed at once to the Fever Hospital, and when he is cured he gets his liberty; on what principle, however, is not very clear.

There are peep-holes in the doors of the cells in which the male prisoners are confined. The polished black-leaded floors and the India rubber shoes favor stealthy approach, and the sliding corner of the peep-hole may be shifted quite without sound, so that at any moment a prisoner may be under the suspicious eye of the warder, and he never know it. It was now 8 o'clock (a fact the great shining bell hung in the hall announced in deafening accents), the signal for striking work for the night. There yet remained an hour till bedtime. "What do they do meanwhile?" we inquired. "Look and see for yourself," replied our guide; and we did, treading softly from door to door, and noiselessly pushing back the peep-hole screen. The majority were engaged in the healthful process of washing. They are not bound to wash themselves over night, but as they are expected to show clean and ready to commence the labor of the day at half-past 5 o'clock in the morning, they find it convenient to perform their ablutions before they retire to their hammocks.

The prisoners are afforded every facility for cleanliness. In each cell water is laid on, and the not unliberal allowance daily is six gallons. Each prisoner is provided with a bowl for washing his face and hands, and a neat little tray, holding about a gallon and a half, in which he is expected to perform the same necessary operation on his feet, when necessary. Further, he has a weoden soap-dish, and a handy bit of yellow soap, and a good towel. Every day the men go to church; but on Sunday godliness and cleanliness go specially hand in hand. On the Sabbath morning the governor makes a tour of sanitary inspection, and every prisoner appears at his cell door with his trousers pulled up above his shins and his feet naked, while his shirt and jacket are turned back at the collar so as to expose his neck and shoulders. Once a week in hot weather, and once a fortnight in

cold, every prisoner has a bath. But peeping in at the peep-hole we dis-cerned that very many of the captives were not busy with the soap and towel—perhaps it was only the experienced and "settled-dowa" hands that were so. Some of the poor fellows it was in the highest degree painful to contemplate. Here was a man seated on his stool before the scanty bracketed board that served as his table, evidently engaged in com-posing a letter to his friends—to his wife, perhaps. Prisoners have to be mighty careful how they write their let-One and all are carried to the governor, and by him inspected; and unless it is composed in the plainest language and is entirely free from ambiguous phrases and matters of a "private" nature, the prisoner has wasted his time, for the letter will not be forwarded. The priseners are, of course, apprised of this regulation, and, necessary though it be, its observance is doubtless a source of considerable embarassment—especially to the imperfectly educated and the alley-bred, whose knowledge of phraseology, although invaluable to the compiler of a slang

dictionary, is altogether unequal to the pro-

duction of such a plain and unmiatakabl epistle as will pass muster with the lynx-eyed supervisor. But, however unsatisfactory, this occupation evinced a disposition towards resignation, which was something. Others there were who were a long, long way from resigned. Here might be seen a man who had taken off his shoes that he might make no noise pacing his cell to and fre, to and fro, and with rapid stride as a wild animal does when it is newly caged, with his arms tightly folded and his face hag-gard and wrinkled by the terrible reflections that are tormenting him. Here is anothera poor, stricken wretch too cast down for an active display of his agony, and who sits on his stool, still as a statue, with his head buried in his hands. Who he is, is a secret known only to the governor and the record book. Perhaps he is merely a regular thief, bemoaning his severance from some Sall or Poll of Spitalfields, and may be a little child or two, their shameful progeny. It is possible, for even professional thieves may not defy the laws of nature as well as the laws of society; and though the criminal records may justly braud them as "bardened ruffians," make no doubt that they are not all hardness. They must have their inner life of domestic affection and their heart-yearning for somebody, or they are less than the fox or the wolf. May be, however, the dismal figure, tight clad in his prison suit and buried in sorrow so that no more than the top of his closely-cropped head is visible a month ago was a free and seemingly happy fellow, who dined sumptuously every day, and wore fine clothes and costly jewelry, and lived in a handsome villa at Brompton or Twickenham along with a confiding and innocent wife and a troop of merry children, who would as soon have believed that the moon was about to fall as that papa, who of late had grown so fidgety and complained of headache, and shut himself for hours together in his room, was a miserable felon, waiting and quaking for the crash that he knew must presently come. Anyway, there he is, and there he must remain, no man at all, but a mere machine built of flesh and bone and muscle, that may be adapted to any useful purpose his custodian may for him. He is merely a ticketed animal that must, through two years, through six hundred weary working days, make bricks, or draw water, or scrub floors, or pick calcum-in silence.

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