

ESCAPING CONVICTS.

Hunger Generally Causes Their Rearrest.

The two convicts who recently escaped from Princeton, Dartmoor, were caught like most similar fugitives, while having a meal. The popular idea—a natural one, much encouraged by writers of fiction—that such prison breakers are captured while hiding in romantic spots deep in the wild moors is seldom realized. If the men could exist in such localities the chances are they would get away permanently; as it is, famine forces them to seek human dwelling, where they are almost invariably secured while satisfying their hunger. It was so with the pair referred to—they were seated at a meat tea, set before them by involuntary hosts, a Dartmoor farmer and his wife, who, while granting their petition for food, sent word to the warders who were searching for them.

Another prisoner who escaped from the same convict station was located through much the same cause. He had successfully crossed Dartmoor to the railway, where he succeeded in secreting himself in a passing railway truck. Exhausted by privation, he fell asleep and did not awaken until the wagon was uncovered at Penzance. There he might have got off with a reprimand as a mere tramp who had risked his life for a free ride, but the vehemence with which he declared his famished condition aroused suspicion and he was detained pending inquiry.

The fate of a convict who is said to have been the only man who ever escaped from Portland was somewhat similar. After getting clear of the prison by means of a pass made ingeniously used he hid in the neighboring quarries, where he lived for nearly a week upon bread he had taken with him. At the end of that time, partly by swimming and partly by creeping along Chest Beach, he reached the outskirts of Dorchester, where he entered a clergyman's house, helped himself liberally to food and substituted a clerical suit for his own arrow-marked garments—all but one little item. Then he walked out among his fellow-men, but he had not money to buy food and was compelled to live on blackberries. Some days later an intelligent constable, surprised to observe a seeming clergyman grazing upon bramble bushes, approached to investigate. The fugitive was on the point of satisfying the policeman's curiosity when the latter managed to notice that the "clergyman" was wearing prison socks. After that the game was up.

But perhaps the most curious instance of escaped convicts being brought back to durance vile owing to their appetites occurred at Parkhurst, where two men evaded the warders one night and, being at liberty, chanced upon a house where a supper party had just risen from table. They found the room deserted and sat down to what was left of the feast, with the result that when they got up to go away they were caught without difficulty, simply because they had eaten so much that they were incapable of doing anything to save themselves.

Occasionally, of course, men get away, and are taken back through other causes than those connected with need of food. Such cases are few and far between; but one occurred some years ago, when a convict escaped from Borstal, near Rochester, by getting through a skylight. From there he dropped to the ground and broke his ankle, so that he could hardly move. At daylight he was observed crawling toward a wood and rearrested.

A different fate overtook one of three who escaped from Princetown. One was shot dead, one only got a very short distance from the prison, while the third successfully evaded his pursuers and reached Devonport, having meantime procured a change of clothes. There, while walking along the street, a dog accompanying a policeman smelt at his legs, and the man was so "jumpy" that he bolted on the spot. The constable, his suspicions aroused, chased and caught him, with the result that he was taken back whence he had come.

But, on the whole, bolts and bars are found less effective than the force of famine, which is probably the reason why the State prison of Repress, Cal., has neither the one nor the other, if a convict tries to leave there he may be shot; if he gets off it is a practical certainty that he must starve to death.—Tit-Bits.

Long Tunnels.

Long mountain tunnels are conspicuous by their absence on American railways, and none of the numerous railway crossings of the Rocky mountains present such remarkable examples of tunnelling as the railways crossing the Alpine range in Europe. Indeed, the longest railway tunnel in this country is in the East, being the Hoosac tunnel, on the Fitchburg division of the Boston & Maine Railway. This is 4.25 miles in length and was built in the early days of American engineering. The noted Alpine tunnels are from 3 to 12 1/2 miles in length, with others 10 and 16 miles now proposed.

The electric post is to be tried in Italy.

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EXPERTS ADVICE OF EATING.

Authorities Tell Us What Foods We Should Consume and Avoid.

Sicero told us long ago that we should eat to live, not live to eat, and Prof. Gautier, of Paris, amplifies that wise pronouncement in the course of a very interesting article on "How We Ought to Eat." The professor is the sworn enemy of all culinary artifices the object of which is to stimulate taste, excite the appetite and induce a man to eat without hunger and drink without thirst.

These, he says, are prejudicial to the maintenance of health. When one has an appetite for plain bread, vegetables or meat unmodified by any seasoning then and then only can one be said to be really hungry. Another paternal recommendation which the professor makes is the old advice of our grandmothers, that we should always leave the table with a slight sensation of hunger not entirely appeased.

It appears that we lose every day from 85 to 100 grams of albuminoids, corresponding to 420 or 500 grams of muscular flesh or analogous tissue. An inhabitant of Paris, for instance, recuperates on the average to the extent of 102 or 103 grams a day.

As a guide to what we should eat the professor tells us that the best meat is that of animals fattened on pasture land—beef and mutton. Then comes poultry and pork fed on products of a vegetable origin, whether grain or herbaceous.

One should always avoid the flesh of animals fattened to excess on muscular flesh and also, to a certain extent, that of animals which are too young. Veal is not good for either gouty or arthritic people. It is not recommended for people with fragile, irritable, eruptive skin.

Fish, excellent in itself when it is quite fresh, is easy to digest, but it is not suitable to eczematous persons or those who have any other skin disease. Black meats or game excite the kidneys, predispose to gravel, to hepatic congestions and to arterio-sclerosis. One may live absolutely without meat; one can not do without vegetable aliment.

Eat with regularity and in accordance with the demands of hunger. Rich dishes as have always been regarded as innocuous and remember that, as a rule, it is neither meats nor bouillon nor wine nor spices nor coffee which poison us, but their abuse.

THE SCALE TAILED CRAB.

Naturalist Schaeffer Once Counted Them, and Found 1,802,604.

The crab known as the scale-tailed apus was believed to have become extinct in Great Britain fifty years ago, the last recorded specimens being taken in the ponds on Hampstead Heath. But now it has turned up again in some numbers in two ponds on Preston Merse, near Southwick, in Kirkeudbrightshire. About two and a half inches long, the apus bears a very striking likeness to that remarkable creature the king crab, and this because the fore part of the body is covered by a great semicircular shield or carapace, while as in the king crab, it swims on its back. In the great number of its legs the scale-tailed apus has few rivals, while in the number of the joints which these share between them no other creature can compare. The naturalist Schaeffer once essayed the task of counting them and made the magnificent total of 1,802,604. Latreille put down the number at a round 2,000,000.

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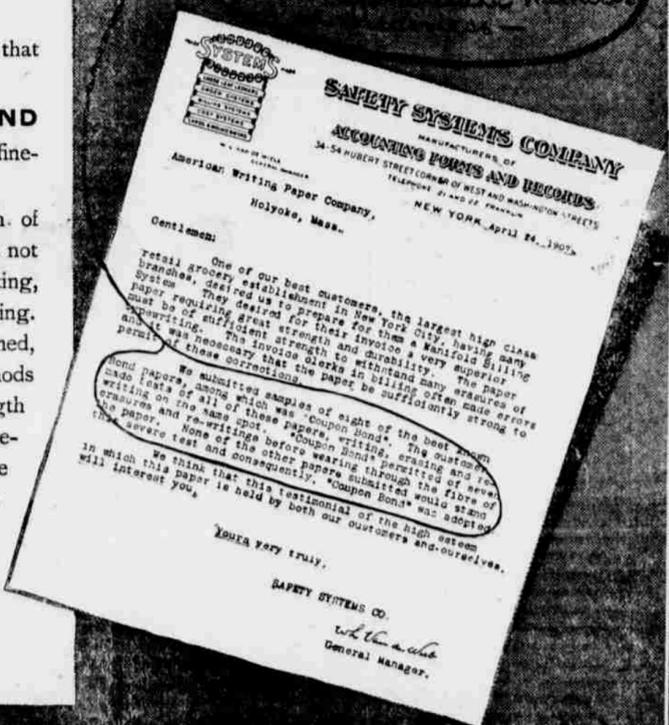
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