Strange Experiences Related by the Warden.

I was for several years assistant warden in a state prison where only male convicts were confined, and I left that to become warden of a prison where over 300 females were under lock and key the year round. ders.

except one were perfectly innocent of crime | bosiness to inquire into her movements. and had been sent up through mistake or malice. The exception was a youngish wo- gone down under the wall and was ready to man named Haskins, who had poisoned the break the surface of the ground on the other man who betrayed her and was making side. She would not risk daylight, as the will give satisfaction in every case, or money ready to desert her. She not only acknow other had done, but waited nearly a week done her duty in revenging herself. The remain in the laundry an hour later than innocents were all agog for some change to usual. She had been gone half an hour bebenefit them. while at least a hundred ex- fore she was missed, and it was a full hour pected me to recommend them for pardon. before the means of exit was discovered. Mrs. Noonan sought an interview with me | The dirt had been carried to the rear end of for the purpose of stating that she had dis- the room and flung behind some old covered new evidence bearing on her case : tubs and mangles, and she had done evidence which would conclusively prove her work as well as the craftiestman. her own innocence. She had, in a fit of | She had likewise got hold of bresd and meat, anger, as the records of the case showed, and when she got into the street she only stabbed her husband with a butcher knife went two squares before hiding herself in at noontime and before her four children. a horse barn. The owner had no horse, and escaped.

dream. She had dreamed that a clerk in a used every exertion to secure her recapture, certain grocery near her home had stabbed having depots watched and the country Moonan before he entered the house, and scoured in every direction. A week past that the guilty man was now anxious to con- and I could not obtain the slightest clue. fess the fact and obtain her release. The Thenonenight a barn on the alley opposite the idea was so absurd and silly that I could not one she was hidden in was set on fire, and promise her anything, and from that hour before the engines got to work the roof of she determined to make me all the trouble the other was ablaze. I happened to be possible. She first refused to work. I gave early on the spot, and what was my asher a day in which to think it over, and as tonishment when Mrs. Williams quietly she remained obdurate she was locked up in opened the door and walked plump into my a dark cell with only bread and water. On arms. She shed tears of vexation when rethe fourth day word was brought me that turned to her old quarters, having made up Mrs. Noonan was dead. I went with the her mind that her escape was asssured. prison doctor to the cell, and we found the body growing rigid and cold. Both of us wool over my eyes for the moment was a had seen many cases of shamming, and, Miss Hutchins who was serving a sentence while convinced that this was another, the for pocket picking. I give you her prison counterfeit was startling. The jaw dropped, name but it was said that she was the wife the half-shut eyes had the glaze of death, of a notorious thief and bank sneak. He and the flesh assumed that pallor which had exausted the law in his endeavors to only death can bring. And yet we both felt that the woman was alive. Indeed, she should not serve her time out. When there was a flutter of the pulse and the heart I took charge I was warned to be on the to prove it. It was a case of animation sus. aler, and I kept my eyes open as far as pended by will power. Perhaps not more possible. Miss Hutchins and two others than one person in ten thousand is able to were employed in making fancy baskets, control mind and muscle in this manner. It which were sold to procure books and is, for a time, next door to actual death. It papers for the prisoners. They had a have explained afterward that they heard in the place about three months when two the body. It required no particular effort bakery, kitchen, laundry, and other places, to hold the breath or keep the limbs rigid.

I ordered the body to be prepared and placed in a coffin and the coffin placed in a shed next to the laundry. I supposed this was what Mary wanted and had planned for. All the other prisoners believed her dead, and she had two or three particular friends who wept over her loss. The coffin behind us one of the visitors exclaimed: was placed in the shed about sundown, and two men set to watch it. At midnight Mary rose up, climbed out, and was work- dry." ing to loosen a board when accosted by the watchers. She returned to her work next morning as usual, and refused to answer any questions or make any explanations. About once a week for the next five years she had some new scheme to annoy me, and I was

ever wondering what she would do next. It is seldom that one hears of a woman escaping from a prison. This is not for the reason that they do not long for liberty, nor that some of them are not desperate enough at times to take any risk. One of the most deceptive of the inmates of the prison was a little woman of 30, all smiles and sunshine, for committing a robbery. She was goodlooking well educated, and evidently of good birth. Every word and movement was ladylike, and during the six months she had served before I took charge she had quite won the matron's heart. She was placed in charge of twelve sewing women in a room on the second floor, fronting a side street. These women made the clothing of the inmates. This sewing room was lighted Off this room was a stock or store room, and Mrs. Newman, as the little woman was called, had the key to this and was in charge. There was but one window in this of room. Mrs. Newman was the last person I should have picked out as a plotter. Indeed, I should not have expected her to go out had

the doors been left open. little lady was missing, and fifteen minutes the window. Where she got a file I never could learn, but the procured one somehow and filed off three bars. She was engaged at this work for three months. When she got ready to go she made a stout rope of cloth, fastened one end to a remaining bar, cloak, and she walked off two blocks, boarded a street car, and was soon out of the neighborhood. A trifling circumstance led to her capture that same night. If she had planned to meet friends, they had not come on. She had no money, and though the always been placed at 4,100 miles, but civil and walked brickly away. I happened to twenty to come.

take this same car two hours later, and overheard the conductor relating the circumstance. I caught at the idea that it was Mrs. Newman, and at 10 o'clock that night I found her in a farm house ten miles away. She laughed merrily, and hoped I would bear her no ill will.

The assistant forewoman in the laundry was a Mrs Williams, who had been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for maining a child the had adopted. She had been in If forced to choose I would prefer to have three years when I took charge. She claimcharge of 500 males rather than 100 females. ed to be the victim of a conspiracy, but Most mea enter prison feeling that they seemed content to bide her time. Off the have deserved their punishment and anxious laundry was a large, badly-lighted room to make all the good time possible. No which had been intended for refractory cells, woman admits her guilt, and by the time but which had never been finished up. The she reaches prison she has convinced herself room was now used as a catch-all for the that she is a martyr. One not familiar with | laundry. There were eleven women in the the workings of a female prison can have no laundry, and in doing what she did Mrs. idea of the trouble and annoyance an obstin- Williams had to blind them all. One end ate inmate can cause. A male convict who of this room was toward the side street, and is obstinate, malicious, and bent on causing the wall was three feet deep, and sunk six trouble can be punished and forced to give or seven feet into the ground. The floor in, but you can only go so far in inflicting was of concrete. A month before I came punishment on a woman, and the limit the forewoman was taken sick and Mrs. scarcely compels obedience to routine or Williams was promoted to her place. She could now pass anywhere about the laundry One of my first patients was a woman unquestioned, and she at once began worknamed Mary Noonan. She was on a life ing on a plan to escape. Her tools were an sentence for the murder of her husband, and old hatchet and a small fire shovel, and she had been in the prison five years. A change | began digging from the room described to of wardens always renews the hopes of those undermine the wall. She was never absent looking for a pardon, and it always causes a from the laundry over a quarter of an hour change in the conduct of certain prisoners. at a time, and could not work at her digging I had not been in the new place a fortnight over two hours per day. The other women when I discovered that all the convicts saw her go and come, but it was not their

In about seventy days Mrs. Williams had ledged the crime, but felt that she had only until some extra wash gave her an excuse to It was the clearest case in the world, but as it was summer time the woman could not she contended that a great wrong had been suffer lying on the hay up stairs. There done her, and that the real murderer had was water below, and she economized her food to make it last as long as possible. Im-The new evidence had come to her in a mediately that her escape was c'iscovered, I

Another of the inmates who pulled the get her clear, and had made his bossts that does not require nerve, as I understand it, small room off the nall leading from the but simply the power to collapse, as it were. | corridor to the laundry, and were constant-Prisoners who have thus shammed on me, ly under some one's eyes. I had been in every word spoken around them, though young women called as visitors. It so hapno voice sounded natural. They did not re- penad that the matron was busy, and I alize any feeling except that of extreme volunteered to escort them about until she lightness, as if all solidity had gone out of should be at leisure. We went to the and would have passed by the basket room had they not particulary requested to enter it. Not a sign of recognition passed between the visitor and any of the three workers. A few questions were asked, some of the finished work admired, and we passed out. As the door closed

"Dear me, but I have lost my gloves. I most have left them on the table in the laun-

I, of course, volunteered to go after them, and I found them on the table. I did not stop to speak with any one, and was not absent over seventy or eighty seconds. The owner of the gloves thanked me, complained of a sudden headache, and remarked that they would trouble me no further. I passed them through two wickets and the main hall and out of the front door, and had just got seated in the office to write a letter when a messenger from the matron said I was wanted at once. When I reached her she stood beside a sharp, good-looking young woman, who was in dishaville, and a stranger. She who had been sent up for a number of years had been discovered in one of the cells almost by accident.

"What does this mean?" I asked, failing to connect her presence with an absence. "I do not know !" she rep'ied, wringing her hands and looking in a helpless way. "Oh, sir, where am I, and won't you take

I own up that she befooled me neatly, and delayed me a quarter of an hour. It was a put up job. The two girls had come in to by two windows, defended by bars, of course. do just what they did do. When I started for the gloves Miss Hutchins came into the hall. In the minute and a half she was clothed at the expense of one the visitors, and the latter found refuge in an open cell. A carriage stood in front of the prison to carry them away, and they had a long start. There were two crooks in the job, and the party One midafternoon it was reported that the felt so elated over bamboozling me that they got drunk as they pushed along the highway later I had discovered that she had gone by for a town twenty miles off. Fifteen miles away the carriage was upset and broken, Miss Hutchins ir jured, and the other three arrested for brawling. Suspicion was aroused, and I was telegraphed to, and inside of twenty four hours I had my prisoner back. Later on those who had helped her escape and then slid down to the earth in safety. bad to serve out sentences for six months, She had secretly made herself a cap and a and the crooks were wanted for a job which gave them five years apiece.

The length of the Mississippi River has conductor did not put her off on this account, engineers familiar with the stream say that she was flurried by the situation. She got it has shortened itself over 400 miles in off at a street running out into the country, twenty years, and will do as well in the " Old King Cole Was a merry old soul, And a merry old soul was he."

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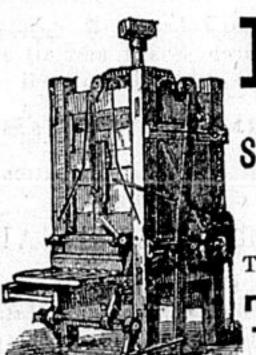
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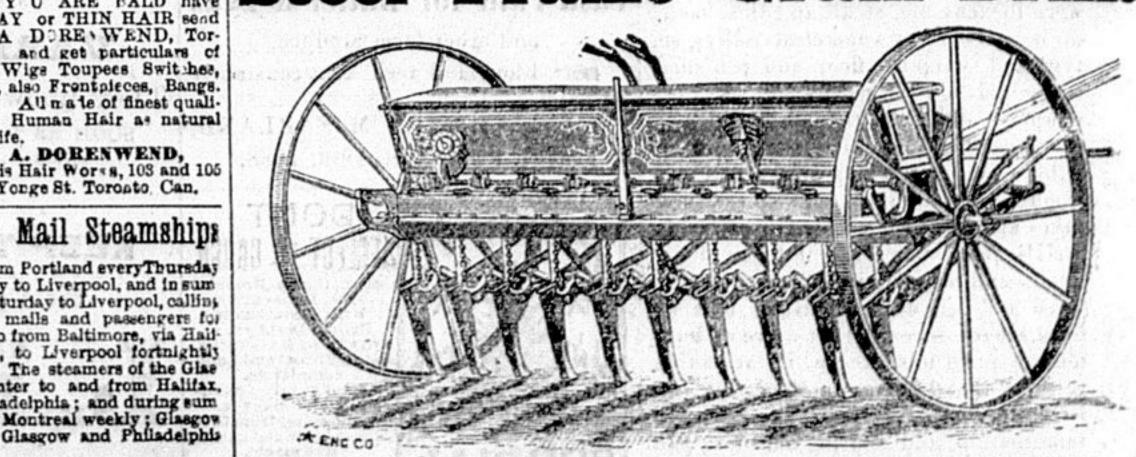
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