WONDERFUL FACTS.

A Visit to the Prison of Louvain-Convicts Consigned to Living Tomba.

In the whole of Europe there is but one prison in which the systeme cellulaire of absolute isolation by day and by night is still enforced, and it has, on that ground, a strange and sad celebrity. That one prison is the Maison Centrale of Louvain.

In England and in France prisoners are submitted to less severe penalties, for although they are condemned to silence, common, pray in common, and confinement in their cells is only a temporary measure recurred to in case of an insubordination or misbehavior. The question now pen lant in France of replacing the actual penitentiary system by the solitary system adopted in Belgium gives interest to the details of a visit paid to the prison of Louvain.

The buildings are situated on the anterior boulevards, nearly outside the town. They date from twenty years back, but their tall reddish walls have retained the freshness of newnesss. Adby the Minister of Justice, who grants the permission with so much difficulty that the rare visitors are always treated with the utmost courtesy and considera- tween the State and himself. This lattion, and enabled to see as much of the interior administration as is consistent with the rales and discipline.

one of these cells, a figure suddenly appeared standing motionless at the door a mysterious and ghastly apparition, clad entirely in white linen, head and face closely masked by a hood of the same material. Air was admitted to eyes, nose and mouth by four round holes. Obeying a rapid sign from the warder, the figure turned to the wall, and crossed its Even through the apertures of his concealing headgear, the prisoner of Louvain must never catch a passing glimpse of any human face beyond his keepers, and no breath of the outer world must ever pass upon his shrouded cheek. He wears his linen hood summer and winter, but during the cold he is provided with warm brown woolen cloths. Labor is compulsory, and the days are spent in one unvarying monotonous round of self-same duties.

wake the convicts. They come from the open, and the prisoner who can play the organ strikes the first chords. This is imprisonment at Ghent. They had been the signal for all the others to rise, dress, and make up their beds and bedding. religious anthems, operatic airs; waltzes their present abode. When prisoners or polkas-notes that must strike with have deserved an alleviation of their the wretched beings cloistered there. They do not all belong to the dregs of society. Leon and Armand Pettyer are there expiating the murder of the lawyer Berneys, whose trial two years ago startled the world by its cynical revela-

At the last sound of the organ the warders must each find a man at his work. Breakfast consists of half a pint of coffee and bread, and the other two meals of the day of soup and vegetables. Three times a week the convicts have fresh l meat, but never wine. The convict who has earned a certificate of good conduct, however, can procure some at the prison canteen, as well as beer and tobacco in stated quantities. Each day the prisoners are taken out of their cells in rotation for solitary exercise in seperate yards. The rest of the time is entirely given to up to the accomplishment of their alloted portion of work, except on Sunday, which is a day of absolute rest. Between the religious services the convicts are at liberty to employ their liberty in their cells as they think proper. The prison library contains a considerable collection of books of travel, and sucn publications as "Magasin Pittoresque from which each man can make a selection. Only those who can neither read nor write are compelled to attend school for instruction between mass and vespers. This takes place in the chapel itself.

Nothing can be more striking than the construction and internal arrangements of this chapel. It is a huge circle, or wheel, consisting entirely of superposed flights of steps, like a circular and reversed amphitheatre, the centre of which forms a raised stage, on which stands the altar, towering far above the heads of the phantom-like congregation. Each row of steps is divided into compartments or pigeon holes, just large enough for a man to sit and kneel. When the hour for divine service has come, the first cell is opened by a warder, and convict No. 1 is lead out, conducted to the chapel, and entering the row to which he belongs, walks to the furthest compartment, which at once closes upon him. Then only No. 2 leaves his cell and goes through the same performance. And so on till all are settled-no man being permitted to move until the one immediately preceding him has entered his allotted pen. After mass they are all taken back into their cells in the same order and with the same precautions.

There are about twelve flights of steps, containing about sixty seats each, but as the circle of the chapel is divided by five or six immense partitions, into each of which the prisoners are carried similtaneously, the operation takes comparatively only a short time. From his stall each convict is able to see and follow every movement of the priest who officiates at the altar on the central platform, while he cannot even catch a glimpse of to the height of the dividing doors, nor can he look over at the opposite row, I dead.

which is hidden by a boarding higher than himself, and which as effectually shuts out from his view those above or below, before and behind him.

The cells are clean and well arranged. Daylight is admitted by a small -indow beyond the prisoner's reach. The ventilation is perfect. In winter the mouth of a hot air pipe g ves sufficient heat, and in the evening the necessary light is procured by a gas jet, to which there is no access from the interior of the cell The furniture consists of a washstand, a commode on the best sanitary principle, a they at least work in common, walk in shelf supporting some pewter utensils, and an iron bed. The bedding is a foundation of sacking, a mattrass, two sheets, one blanket in summer and two in winter, and a bolster. The convict has to fold and put these things away. The bed itself is taken to pieces and placed against the wall, forming a table in front of which is a stool. The remainder of the space is taken up by the implement necessary to the convict's obligatory daily task.

Some of the convicts are shoemakers; others bookbinders, tailors, carpenters, even smiths. The new comer, who knows mission to the interior can only be given | no trade is taught one. Those who have had a superior education are employed in copying student's essays. The produce of each man's labor is divided equally beter portion is again sub divided, one-half being put aside for the day of his liberation, if not incarcerated for life, and the The buildings all converge to a central other deposited at the canteen for his apsis, whence a warder can easily survey private use. His earnings never exceed the six immense avenues or wings, con- two or three cents a day. In the evening, sisting of two stories of cells. While | labor ended, he dines and goes to bed. To some slight repairs were being done to the dreary silence of the day succeeds the dreary silence of darkness.

The rules of the prison are such that the convicts must replace their hooded masks as soon as the doors of their cells open. They cannot expose their faces even to their warders. If, perchance, a face is seen by a doctor it is paled by the long sunless shadow in which it lives, and the want of bracing, blowing air, for even hand behind its back. It was a convict. | the daily walk of an hour in the prison yards is at best only exercise in cramped Lassages between two high walls, partly roofed, shut in by iron gates, stretching out like the sticks of a gigantic fan, and where a few stunted plants soon wither and die. The prisoners have that flaceld fleshineses which comes from absence of movement and stimulating activity; yet in contradiction to the opinion prevailing in France that no man could stand solitary confinement for ten years without succumbing or getting insane, it has been At six o'clock the peals of an organ | found not to be the case at Louvain. Two of theinmates have dwelt there since 1864, chapel, all the doors of which are thrown | the date of its foundation being transferred to the Central house after a ten years condemned to death, but, owing to the virtual abolition of the penalty of death The music lasts for fifteen minutes, and in Belgium, the King had commuted their may, at the will of the player, consist of sentence to the perpetual entombment of weary significance on the ears of some of penalty by ten years of uninterrupted good conduct, they are sent to Ghent, where the rules of the prison allow o their working in common.

The secondary buildings contain the infirmary, laundry, linen rooms, bath rooms, bakeries, and kitchens, all kept with a scrupulous cleanliness remarkable even in that land of unrivalled cleanliness Huge iron pots contained an abundance of excellent potatoes boiling for the evening meal, and the bread, although brown, was sweet, crisp, and of better quality than that rationed out to the army.

None but isolated cases of revolt have ever taken place at Louvain. These are punishable by incarceration in a subterranean dungeon containing nothing but a single wooden bench, where nearly total darkness prevails. The time of retention within its walls cannot exceed eight days, during which the prisoner is kept on bread and water. This mode of punishment is rarely resorted to, as there is another which is viewed with far greater dread-the privation of work! For those silent recluses, this labor is the only link which connects them ever so remotely with the living world. It is more than an occupation -it is a favor, a recreation, almost a pleasure, and the threat of taking his tools from him never fails to insure the submission of the rebel.

Whether or not the system of solitary confinement has greater advantage for the repression of crime and the security of the community than the system of labor in common now generally adopted in penitentaries, and which only half sequestrates the offender from his fellow creatures, is a question not easily or lightly solved; but it is impossible to leave the Maison Centrale of Louvain, admirable as its administration is in the minutest details, without a feeling of almost superstitious horror at the vision of those miserable beings cloistered in eternal isolation, doomed to unbroken silence, buried in their livery of infamy as in a shroud, the face of each remaining as sealed to his six hundred companions of crime and shame, dropped into the same tomb with himself, as if the lid of a coffin had closed upon it and the hand of death forever obliterated its features.

An Intelligent Colt.

Tom Lenard, oozuhman for A. I. Migeon in Torrington, has taught a 5-year-old colt in his charge a variety of tricks. He will stand with his two fore feet on the end of a barrel, lie down, or kneel at command, and raise his fore feet as if in the act of shaking hands. He will stand upon his hind feet, and imitate the coachman in rubbing the floor with his shoes. He will also follow through the barn and if the coachman offers to go up stairs the colt will put his two feet on the stairway in an attempt to follow, and if chance offers he will steal the whip and run round with it in triumph in his mouth. He will also pick a brush from the floor and his right and left hand neighbor, owing endeavor to brush himself, and like Dike Turpin's Black Bess will lie down as if

Advantages of Travel.

Two beautiful young damsels meeting on Fulton street the other day, says the Brooklyn Eagle, beamed with delight as they scanned each other's Summer finery. "And where have you been, my love," asked the brunette.

"Travelling," responded the blonde. "Been gone three months, studying our own country. Ma said a lady's education was not finished till she had gone abroad, and 'twas vulgar to go to Europe without knowing something of one's own coun-

"How grand," sighed the brunette, whose sight-seeing had been limited to Central Park and Coney Island.

"Yes, but pa didn't want to go a lit, so ma and I planned and planned. Finally I fell in love with a plumber. Pa reasoned with me, so did ma, but I got firmer and declared I'd have my swn way. Ma got awfully uneasy (before pa) and -well, in short, pa concluded to let me travel."

"You naughty thing. But where have you been ?

"Just everywhere. First South

"Oh! then you had a chance to study some of those Southern problems one is always reading about ?"

"I don't remember them; but pa first tramped me over miles and miles of battlefields, and I saw where—Oh! what's his name !- Oh! that big general; you know who I mean ?"

"Yes," responded the other, eagerly. " never mind his name."

"Well, we saw there-Oh! Grant, that's it; where Grant and Lee, yes, I'm sure t'was Lee, fought, or bombarded, or surrendered; anyway, I don't remember details. And then we went to Mexico, and that was awful; flies and sand, and pa just wore me out with his old Spanish towns, and graveyards, and dug up things. But ma said it was all important, and wanted to be able to describe them all so I just got through somehow.'

"How lovely to travel and improve one's self !" murmured the listener with an admiring eye on Kitty's terra-cotta

"So ma says. Well, then we went to Utah, to Salt Lake City.'

"Oh! those horrid Mormons! Did

you .eally see them ?" "Yes indeed, and made a study of them. Ma said that was proper. Were there two or three days, and such dowdies as those women are, and the men-well, they are too insignificant. Pa took us to the-the-Oh, Temple-no, Tabernacle, Twas ever so queer, and ma got me a book on s'atistics and things; so I'll be

"How splendidly you'll be able to converse with everyone! I quite envy

way up, see?"

"Yes, ma says that few girls have such opportunities, and I mean to improve mine. Then we've been to California, and oh, such big trees and those wretched little Chinamen. San Francisco isn't much to see. The shops are not any nicer than Brooklyn. But St. Paul is too lovely. Got one of those stylish looking ulsters. Will you believe me? Pa wanted to drag me off to see the falls of-of-Millie or Minnehaha, just because Whittier, or Lord Byron, or some Tom, Dick, or Harry wrote a poem about it. But we only had two days there, and I was a

"And you have seen all the great, grand West-the splendid mountains, the rolling prairies, and breathed that pure

"Oh, my! yes!" interrupted the tourist eagerly, "and we visited a real mining camp. But I soiled my new silk jersey. I was so disgusted. But pawell, once get him started and there's no going back. Chicago and Cincinnati are not like New York. Thank goodness, we are home. Travelling is improving and all, but pa did manage to take us to some horrid places. Now ma says, 'Europe next Spring, to give a final polish.' Pa is awfully contrary, but ma and I are patient with him, and we generally work together. I guess he will give in."

"Of course he will," murmured the brunette, "for he must be proud of you.' "Oh! he is, but pa is queer and thinks it silly to show one's feelings. But come round to lunch some day, and I'll tell you more. Ma says next thing to travelling one's self is to cultivate those who have enjoyed the privileges."

"How kind you are, dear !" "Good-bye."

And the sweet creatures separated, one buying her ribbons with an envious soul, the other selecting ruches with complacent pride.

The Well-Dressed Man.

The golden rule in dress is to keep clear of extremes. The well-dressed man never wears anything striking or peculiar, and his garments are always of the best material, one suit that cost \$50 being preferable to two suits that cost \$25 each -and the tailor's risk, it will be observed is just the same in both cases. We are bound to add, however, that the gentleman who has but one suit instead of two can not escape embarrasment when it comes to sending his trousers to the shop for the purpose of having the wrinkles pressed out of them. The proper cut for coat and vest is that which makes them fit snug around the waist and loose over the chest, as the polite citizen is thus admonished at every turn that he will not only look better, but also feel better if he stands straight.

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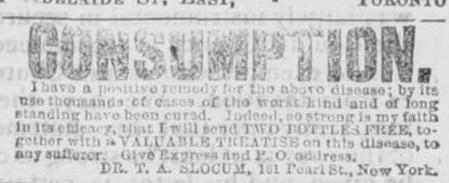
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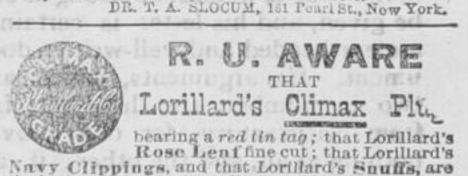
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