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notice of the escapes had not been
communicated to them until after the
incident had gained publicity in the
press. A curious thing about this
occurrence is that one of the men
had a notorious record, and was
wanted in New Hampshire, information
that should have been available
when his removal to an asylum was
under consideration, so that deporta-
tion might have been effected, if he
were an American, and this country
relieved of the cost of his maintenance.
Rockwood Asylum has never
been classed as an institution for the
criminal insane, and his incarceration
there, in view of his record, is
inefficient. The treatment of the
case indicates ignorance of the man's
identity and antecedents.

The incident recalls the celebrated
Thomas O'Reilly case, when a pris-
oner serving fifteen years was re-
leased within a year in mistake for
another O'Reilly. Whether these in-
cidents are due to accident or laxity
we are not in a position to judge, but
the government should investigate
the cause, and take into serious con-
sideration the early appointment of a
suitable man as warden of this peni-
tentiary.

WHEN CHRISTMAS HAD NO JOY.

No day in the year has such a hold
upon the popular fancy as Christmas
Day. Young and old, rich and poor,
feel in some degree the spirit of good-
will, and make the day one of joy
and gladness by the exchange of
gifts. In the Christian world it is
celebrated in commemoration of the
Nativity or the Birth of Christ, and
is fittingly observed by religious ser-
vices. Its origin is shrouded in tra-
dition, but no one now living would
wish to see the spirit of Christmas
and the festivities associated with it
disappear.

There was a time in history, how-
ever, when the observance of Christ-
mas was forbidden by law. This was
during the Puritan domination in
England. The object of the warlike
saints who surrounded Cromwell was
the settlement of a free and pious
commonwealth, and among many re-
straints imposed a ban was placed
upon Christmas festivities. The
Long Parliament gave orders in 1644
that the twenty-fifth day of Decem-
ber should be strictly observed as a
fast, and that all men should pass it
in humbly bemoaning the great na-
tional sin which they and their fathers
had so often committed on that
day by romping under the mistletoe,
eating boar's head, and drinking ale
flavored with roasted apples. No
public act, we are told, irritated the
common people more, and on the
following Christmas riots broke out
in several places, and the prescribed
services were openly read in the
churches. Such was the spirit of the
extreme Puritans. All public amuse-
ments were vigorously attacked.

But the rule of the Puritans passed
with the death of Cromwell, and a
great reaction set in with the Res-
toration. The wit and the Puritans,
never on friendly terms, looked
upon the whole system of human life
from different points and in differ-
ent lights. The earnest of one was
the jest of the other, and the pleas-
ures of each were the torment of
the other. To the stern precision
even the innocent sport of the fancy
seemed a crime. To the light and
festive nature the solemnity of the
anti-Puritan reaction pervaded every
phase of social life. The playhouses,
shut by the meddling fanatic in the
day of his power, were again crowd-
ed, and from the day on which they
reopened they became seminaries of
vice. In literature only Bunyan and
Milton escaped the contagion that
placed the literature of the day on a
low plane. Nor was this all. The
statesmen who followed the Puritans
were men who were not conspicuous
for their virtues; for the austere
practices of the Puritans were held
in contempt and the standard of mor-
als lowered in consequence.

THE PENITENTIARY WARDEN-
SHIP.

The wardenship of the Portsmouth
Penitentiary has been vacant for
some months, and it is inconceivable
that such an institution can be per-
mitted to run for any length of time
without a responsible head. A tempo-
rary head may be ever so efficient,
but it is not in the interest of a large
institution such as a penitentiary, in
which the chain of responsibility is
powerfully influenced by the person-
ality of the warden, to leave the ad-
ministration in an unsettled state. A
permanent official possesses a sense
of individual responsibility for every
department that no temporary in-
cumbent possibly can; and when he
is the right man in the right place
subordinates learn a proper appre-
ciation of their responsibilities, which
results in consistency of effort and
due vigilance at all times.

Since 1912 there have been four
different wardens, two of whom were
acting wardens, and there is at pre-
sent another acting warden. This
condition cannot fail to result in a
lowered state of efficiency that calls
for the appointment of a capable
man in the prime of life who pos-
sesses not only the necessary train-
ing, but also a just appreciation of
the humanities.

But the wage earners were not by
any means the poorest class, for be-
neath them was a class in constant
receipt of poor relief, estimated at
one-fourth of the population. The
poor rate was the heaviest tax borne
by our ancestors, and it amounted to
about seven hundred thousand
pounds, a little less than half the en-
tire revenue of the crown. The bene-
fits that have come to the common
people with the march of civilization
are amazing when cast into relief by
the conditions of life two hundred
and thirty years ago, and would be
missed painfully by the laborer as
by the peer. The market place that
can now be reached in an hour was
distant a day's journey. The streets
of towns and cities were absolutely
dark at night, and the pedestrian
was in constant danger of breaking
his neck or of having his head broken
and being plundered of his small
earnings. To-day any workman who
falls from a scaffold, every person
run over by a car, is able to receive
prompt surgical treatment and com-
pensation for his injuries, benefits
that all the wealth of a kingdom
could not purchase at the time we
write of.

Still more important is the benefit
which all orders of society, and es-
pecially the lower orders, have de-
rived from the mollifying influence
of civilization on the national char-
acter. It is pleasing to reflect that
the public mind was softened while
it ripened, and that we have become
in the course of ages not only wiser,
but a kinder people. There is
scarcely a page of the history or
lighter literature of the seventeenth
century that does not contain proof
that our ancestors were less humans
than their posterity. The discipline
of workshops, of schools, of private
families, though not more efficient
than at present, was infinitely harsh-
er. Masters were in the habit of
beating their servants. Husbands of
decent station were not ashamed to
beat their wives, and knowledge was
imparted by beating. The populace
showed no mercy to a prisoner, and
if he were put in the pillory he was
fortunate if he escaped with his life
from a shower of stones. Gentlemen
formed pleasure parties to the jail
on court days when women were
sentenced to be whipped. A present-
day boxing match is refined compar-
ed to the fights that were then ven-
erated diversions. Frequently weap-
ons were used, and the loss of an
eye or a finger was hailed with de-
light. The prisons were hells on
earth, seminaries of every crime and
every disease. But on all this misery
society looked with profound indif-
ference. Nowhere could be found
that restless compassion which in
our own time extends a powerful pro-
tection to all human being wherever
found. The more we study the an-
nals of the past the more we rejoice
that we live in a merciful age, in
which cruelty is abhorred, and in
which pain even when deserved is in-
fllicted reluctantly and from a sense
of duty. Every class has gained
largely by this great moral change;
but the class that has gained most
is the poorest, the most dependent
and the most defenceless.

It may at first sight seem strange
that society, while constantly mov-
ing forward with eager speed, should
be constantly looking backward with
tender regret. This springs from
our impatience of the state in which
we live, and while it stimulates us
to surpass preceding generations,
disposes us to overrate their happi-
ness. It is unreasonable and un-
grateful in us to be constantly dis-
contented with a condition which is
constantly improving. We labor

under a deception similar to that
which misleads the traveller in the
Arabian desert. Beneath his feet all
is dry and bare, but far in advance
and far in the rear is the appear-
ance of refreshing waters. A simi-
lar illusion seems to haunt nations
through every stage of the long pro-
gress from poverty and barbarism to
the highest degrees of opulence and
civilization. Comforts and luxuries
are now within the reach of the
thrifty and diligent that were former-
ly unknown; medical science has
added many years to the life of the
average citizen; and when we study
the matter closer we find that the
progress of science and the increase
of wealth have in reality benefited
the many much more than they have
the few.

Canada-East and West

Dominion Happenings of Other
Days.

Father Marquette.
Few more heroic figures ever ap-
peared in Canadian history than the
intrepid Father Marquette, who was
born in Laon, France, in 1637. He
was a member of one of the oldest
and most honored French families.
But being of a religious mind, at the
age of 17 years he turned from the
world and became a member of the
Society of Jesus. When his studies
were completed he volunteered for
mission work in the new world. In
September 1666 he landed at Three
Rivers, Que., and after learning the
language of the Montagnais Indians
he spent a couple of years with them.
Then he journeyed up to Lake Huron
and across to Saint Ste. Marie, where
he erected a mission with a mission-
ary who joined him a little later.
He went on to Lapointe a couple
of years afterwards and started work
there among the Indians. War broke
out and the Indians left for Mack-
inaw with Marquette accompanying
them in their migration. In 1673
he was chosen to accompany Jollette
on his mission of discovery down the
Mississippi River down which they
were the first explorers having de-
scended to Arkansas. They returned
via the Illinois. Then they came
back to Lake Michigan but he had
not been back long when he received
orders to open a mission on the upper
waters of the Illinois. He started
to do the work that had been com-
mitted to him but he was taken
very ill while travelling with the
Indians. It was a return of an ill-
ness that had previously threatened
his life. The natives brought him
out of the woods to some friends and
did everything they could to restore
him to health but his strength had
been sapped by the hardships he had
undergone and so he passed away.
He was one of the most daring ex-
plorers of the old regime.

The Reason Why

Why Does a Human Being Have to
Learn to Swim?
It is strange isn't it, that almost
every animal, except man and possi-
bly the monkey, knows how to
swim naturally; others such as
birds, horses, dogs, cows, elephants,
can swim as soon as they can move
about alone.
The trouble with man in this con-
nection is that his natural motion is
climbing. He has been a climber ever
since he was developed from the
monkey, and when you throw him
into the water before he has learned
to swim, he naturally starts to climb
as a climbing motion won't do
for swimming, the man will drown.
This climbing motion is as much
of an instinct in man and monkeys as
the instinct in dogs which causes him
to turn round once or twice before
he lies down just as his forefathers
used to do ages ago when, as wild
dogs, they had to trample the grass
before they could lie down
comfortably.
—From the Book of Wonders,
Published and copyrighted by the
Bureau of Industrial Education, Inc.,
Washington, D. C.

Rippling Rhymes

TIME OF TRIAL.
I set down this plaintive ditty in a time that tries
my soul; for in our afflicted city water's scarce,
and there's no coal. And the river that supplies us is a
mockery that's vain, and a cloudless sky denies us
anything that looks like rain. Life's so dismal
could chuck it, with a last despairing yell, for I have
to take a bucket and pack water from a well. From
the coal mines all the toilers have departed, as I
write, and we cannot fire our boilers, and there's no
electric light. And I have to use a candle that is
made of rancid grease, and the street cars have
been stabled, and the town has doused its lamps, and
a fellow is enabled to try out his rusty limbs. Through
the darkened streets I stumble, spraining foot and
bruising knee, and I groan around and grumble when
I bump against a tree. I have many woes and bothers,
but through all this thought survives: It's the kind
its tester, I am glad things are so planned that I'm not my own ancestor,
with a candle in my hand.
—WALT MASON.

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The British government has estab-
lished a research station to determine
the fuel value of coal and its pro-
ducts and especially to ascertain the
extent to which low grade coal and
sullied waste can be utilized.
German experimenters are trying
out electrical machinery for cutting
peat.
About 4 per cent. of children are
left handed from birth.