

Too Late

In March, 1905, the governor of Milltopol received orders to take care of the batch of twenty students who had been arrested and sent to his city. The governor, a good-natured general of the guard, was anything but pleased.

"What the devil shall I do with them?" he asked himself. Temporarily he sent them to the government prison, but they had only been there a few days when they began to make mischief. They absolutely refused to live up to the rules of the prison and kept on singing and made all kinds of noises all day and most of the night, therefore influencing the other prisoners, who had heretofore quietly submitted to everything. The noise in the prison attracted a crowd of people outside, who had to be driven away by the soldiers.

It was very unpleasant, and consequently the governor, after a conference with the inspector of the prison, the young lawyer of liberal tendencies, decided to take his advice and send them to the smallest town in the whole district, Norosow.

"When they are there they may do as they please and nobody will ever know anything about it," he argued.

When the inspector of the prison in Norosow heard that he was to receive a number of students he immediately informed his wife, who, of course, hurried to her most intimate friend and told her the news, after making her promise to keep it strictly secret, and it is hardly necessary to say that within two hours the whole town knew of it.

The next morning an immense crowd of people were at the railroad station awaiting the arrival of the train. On the way to the prison the students who were surrounded by soldiers, began to sing revolutionary songs, and their strong, well-trained voices made such an impression upon the natives of Norosow, that only their curiosity prevented them from running away and hiding themselves in their houses, for who might tell but that they might be arrested for listening to sounds of that kind? At the prison the soldiers were received by the inspector of the prison, who in turn turned them over to the wardens, and half an hour afterwards the prisoners were in their cells.

Now they have been staying in the prison for over five months and the inhabitants of the town are feeling very friendly toward them. A number of society ladies are sending them dinners every day, and with the dinner very often comes bouquets of flowers. Hardly a day passes that the students taking their morning walk in the prison yard do not find books which have been thrown over the walls, and the wardens close their eyes and see nothing. All this tickles the vanity of the students but it does not kill the longing in their hearts nor make them forget they are in prison.

None of them, however, feels the loss of liberty as much as the oldest student, Iwan Petrovitch. He did not even look forward with pleasure for the arrival of the mail, although he nervously looked for letters every day. Far away in Siberia his old father was sick and awaiting the return of his son who did not come. Instead came the news that he had been arrested. The old sickness came back worse than ever and he was forced to his bed. Lying on what he knew was likely to be his deathbed, he wrote to his son many letters in which he said that, although he was very weak, he was sure that he would soon be better.

The son, however, read the truth between the lines, and he felt that he must go home once more. After passing many sleepless nights and struggling with himself, he decided to ask for pardon.

Many months went by and no reply came from the czar. The news from home was sadder than ever, and at last the old man wrote frankly that he was very sick and that he felt he could not last long. He ended each letter with the words: "How I long to see you once more, Wania."

It is a summer evening and the students who have just returned from their evening walk, are sitting around a table drinking tea. The door opens and the good-natured inspector enters, holding in his hand a telegram.

"I am to set free one of you," he said with his winning smile. "Who is it? Who is it?" all shouted. Iwan felt the blood rushing to his brain, his heart beat like a trip-hammer.

"Listen, gentlemen," the inspector said, and read aloud: "At the command of the czar, I hereby direct you to set free immediately the former student Iwan Petrovitch on the condition that he never again to return to St. Petersburg. DURNOVA. "Minister of the Interior."

The same evening, Iwan Petrovitch was riding toward Siberia as fast as the express train could carry him. Five days later a telegram addressed to him and informing him of the death of his father reached the train.

DAME NATURE AS AN ARTIST.

Thacings on Rock Which Resemble Human Work.

In the section of the National Museum devoted to geology are specimens of rock surfaces curiously and sometimes beautifully grooved and carved, says the Philadelphia Record. The carvings in some cases are so perfect as to suggest the work of skilled artisans. As a matter of fact, these apparent moldings are not moldings at all, but are the hand work of nature. They represent a convulsion of nature at a point so remote that there is no mode of reckoning it. In other words, they are the rock-scoring of the glacial invasion of the northern part of this country.

Whether the ice came down by land or sea, whether by glaciers creeping over the face of the country, or by icebergs and ice floes sailing on submerging waters, science is unable to determine. Be this as it may, that the ice came sweeping down over the face of the earth in huge quantities and with irresistible force these rocks in the museum attest.

These rock-scoring are the trails left by the actual invader. To the geologist their character reveals the nature of the vast tracks reveal the trackmaker. The glacialist distinguishes with as much certainty the traces of a glacier of an iceberg or ice flow as a hunter the track of a bear, a moose or a serpent. A glacier may be likened to a prehistoric monster, which leaves a trail of its foot imbedded in the rock. From such slight tokens of its former existence a Prof. Owen builds the semblance of the entire animal, classes it and describes its habits.

For purposes of convenience in geology the common term grooving is used to describe all the effects of the glacial invasion on rock surfaces. Respecting their origin, glacial grooves belong to two classes, which it is of some importance to distinguish. The one class had an existence as grooves prior to the incursion of the ice, and were simply molded and modified by it. The other class owe their origin solely to glacial action.

Previous to the sweeping down of the ice the surface of the rock had been subjected to various destructive agencies, which produced great inequalities in it, among which were surface grooves. Thus the invading ice found furrows formed already. When these lay coincident with its course it was merely to rasp them out and polish and striate their sides. In their remodeled form they sometimes have the aspect of channels due wholly to glacial action, but the observation of the expert often discovers that they could not have arisen solely from glacial abrasion. There must have been a pre-existent channel to guide and, in a measure, mold to itself the abrading ice.

A main element in the grooving was of course, the hardness of the rock. This finds its simplest expression where beds of unequal hardness were slightly upturned so as to present their beveled edges to the ice, which acted along them like a beading plane. In such cases the soft beds were easily removed, while the harder ones were left standing forth as ridges, the whole assuming a fluted surface. Grooves of this sort, which are often to be found among the specimens of a geological collection, the unequal hardness of the rock bears. On a large scale this is thought to have been sometimes an important factor in determining the topography that resulted from glaciation.

That streams of water flow beneath glaciers has been determined by abundant observation, but except in the immediate vicinity of the ice border, where alone observation has penetrated, the precise relations of the ice to the stream are matters of conjecture. Whether the ice continually tends to press down upon the stream and to force it higher and thither at will, or whether the stream maintains itself by melting and wearing back the encroaching ice as fast as it presses up on it, and so retains a constant channel, is unknown. It is regarded as quite certain, however, that such sub-glacial streams have much abrasive power, because they are loaded with fine, rasping glacial silt, a most effective abrasive agency. That they cut for themselves rock channels is unquestioned.

French Bridge Building. Many of the schemes in bridge building have been developed recently. The French, in particular, have been building "transporter" bridges. The Cleveland Bridge Company is building a new high level over the Tyne, in England, for the Northeastern Railway, achieved a record in the cable way, which has been used to carry men and materials. The towers, which it was suspended were about 90 feet high, 1,520 feet apart, and a maximum load that could be carried was ten tons. The main rope was of plow steel wire and was 9 1/2 inches in circumference.

Travelers and Their Cigars.

One of the most important questions which travelers entering France present to themselves is, how many cigars may a man take into the country without coming into collision with the custom-house authorities? A notice has just been posted up in the stations of the French Compagnie du Nord that a traveler may pass through frontier with thirty cigars and one hundred cigarettes free of duty, provided that he declares them at once. If he has more than thirty cigars he will have to pay at the rate of about 25c. or 30c. for each cigar.

The Detective's Luck

"Even the more or less built up yarns recounting the exploits of detectives rarely make reference to the almost weird streaks of bullhead luck which all of us occasionally have in snagging people we go after," said a Headquarters sleuth who has had a lot of experience in tracking fugitives. "Seven years ago I made a haul for which I got the glad word all around, and yet it was a piece of work that any sixteen-year-old boy with a pear shaped head could have pulled off, given the same amount of 1,000 to 1 shot luck that drifted my way in connection with the capture.

"A high flying young New York chap, the manager of a branch brokerage establishment in one of the Tenderloin hotels, got in over his head while the boss was in Europe. He gutted the works, taking not only the old man's cash but some tens of thousands of the customers' money. Then he bolted for it. "I happened to know this runaway so the chief tossed the case my way. At the outset of my inquiries among the runaway's pals I found out that the young fellow had often expressed a desire to visit Japan some old day. Having no other clue I determined to take a chance that he'd made for the cherry blossom country, so I made the quick hike to San Francisco."

"I reached San Francisco about 10 o'clock at night, dog tired, and had myself driven to the Palace Hotel, figuring on taking a long sleep before beginning the scour on the following day for my man.

"The hotel was jammed. The night clerk gave me the con grats when I scribbled my name on the book.

"You look like you expect to get three rooms and a bath," he said to me, cheerfully. "That being the case, how'd you like to bunk in with another man?"

"Just as soon sleep with a wet dog," said I. "Why?"

"Because you've got to chum it you're going to abide with us this time," said the night clerk. "House is stuffed and cluttered to the roof. But I can stick you in a room where there's only one other duck—New York fellow, by the way, so you'll probably be able to make out better with him than you might with a bunch of native sons."

"I murmured a few phrases to the night clerk about the jayness of an alleged town that couldn't give an old time guest of a hotel a decent night's rest without doubling him up with somebody else, but the clerk only beamed under my grouchiness and told me that he was doing the best he could for me. I told him I'd take a poke around among some of the other hotels to see if I couldn't get a room for myself, and I started out. All the other hotels were in an even worse state than the Palace. So I hiked back to the Palace, reaching there at midnight.

"Still got the vacancy with the New York dub?" I asked the clerk, and he told me yes.

"And you needn't take it so much to heart, either," said the night clerk. "Wait'll you hear the beef that New York chap will put up when he's gently requested to move over and make room for another."

"So I went up to the room occupied by the New Yorker, with the head bellhop to help me in making an entry of the preempted room. The head bellhop banged on the door—deep snores were proceeding from the room over the transom—but there was no reply until the bellman had stugged the panel for about five minutes and slugged it hard. Then came a voice.

"Hey, what the devil's coming off here, anyhow?"

"And I guess maybe I didn't stick my ears forward when I heard that voice. The man I was after had something the matter with his pipes and he spoke in a high, raspy, shrill tone that could have been recognized anywhere once heard, by anybody. The voice of the man in this room was the voice. I would have bet a thousand of the man I was hunting. "Dey's a gemman heah wot's uh—gwine tuh sleep wif y' all," called out the bellhop.

"I'll be jimswinkled if there is!" came back that piping voice from the room in a tone of considerable peevishness.

"Ain't no help to it, sub," sang out the bellman. "De cluk he say de gemman done uh-gwine tuh sleep wif y' all. Oper de do," please, sub!"

"Open nothing!" piped the man in the room. "Go chase yourself and give us a rest. Nobody backs into this stall while I'm in it."

"I reached out and pulled the bellhop away from the door. Then I put my shoulder to the door and it went in right enough. Then I switched on the lights—and there was my man sitting on the edge of the bed, regarding me with natural enough astonishment.

"Hello, Jeff," I said to him. "Tag. You're it."

"The young fellow saw that the jig was up and he came back to New York with me without any papers. They haven't got through giving me the pat-pat yet for that stunt, and yet, as you see, it is just about equivalent to the stunt of the woman who sticks the pin in a racing program and starts off a 100 yd. shot that proceeds to spread-eagle the field after she's got her eye on it."

NOVEL TIN CAN CLUBS.

Their Mission is to Supply the Demand for New Forests.

B. H. Green of Monterey, Cal. has sent out a circular giving information regarding the Tin Can clubs through whose beneficent activities he expects to see the country supplied with needed forests.

The attempts to cultivate tree claims in the Dakotas many years ago were rather discouraging, says the National Magazine, but Mr. Green insists that he has been successful in planting tree seeds, nuts and cuttings in refuse tin cans, and can now show an oak tree twenty feet high only eight years old and also a redwood tree grown from seed, which is now fully thirty feet high and only twelve years of age.

Mr. Green insists that a tomato can with a fair sized hole punched in the bottom and filled with good earth is just the thing needed to start a tree in and that if the earth is never allowed to become dry the growth of the tree will be amazing. Later the little trees are transplanted without removing from the cans, for the rust eats away the can sufficiently to allow the roots to free themselves as they need more room.

Nebraska Sod House.

There are few surviving examples of the primitive style of architecture once in fashion on the plains. Within a radius of many miles of Central City, Neb., only one sod house that is inhabitable, can be found. It is the residence of Oscar Nelson and is situated south of Polk in Hamilton County. For thirty years it has sheltered Mr. Nelson and his wife, and within its walls three children were born and raised. It has weathered some very severe storms and proved so staunchly built that surprisingly few repairs have been needed. Nebraska soil has proved reliable in many ways. But few other instances can be cited of it standing the test for thirty years when forming the walls of a sod house.

Reed Laths in Germany.

Consul H. W. Harris of Nuremberg, writes that the use of small reeds as a substitute for plastering laths is common in Germany. The reeds are chiefly imported from Hungary by Danube boats, and vary in length from 1 to 2 1/2 yards or even more, and from 1/2 inch to 1 1/2 inches in diameter.

By machinery these reeds are fastened together by wires to form a mat as wide as the reeds are long, and this is cut and fastened to walls in place of laths. In some cases builders require the matting to be put on double, the aim being to have the reeds in the upper mat fall at the interstices in the lower mat.

The Spanish Onion in Song.

How many people would guess the meaning of a "Spanish onion song?" This strange phrase—one of the many to be found in the professional's dictionary of slang—is used to denote the music hall ballad, and owes its origin to the fact that no self-respecting member of its race would be without a pathetic reference to "dear old mother" or "somebody's sweetheart far away." Now, pathos draws tears, and so do onions. The rest is obvious.

Politely Garbled.

Sir Algernon West in his recently published reminiscences, tells the story of Robert Browning. "When he had become famous some one wanted very much to meet him. A kind friend arranged a meeting, and the guest besieged Browning with questions and conversation during the dinner, and even after dinner he continued button-holing his victim. 'Come,' said the poet, 'this will never do; they will say I'm monopolizing you.'"

Trials of a Chaperon.

Miss Mayme (on vacation)—"O, auntie, it's such a luxury to have nothing to do but just loll in a hammock with my precious Shelley or even the 'Vicar of Wakefield'!" Elderly Relative—"Child if I hear of any more such scandalous doings I shall write to your mother!"

Gorilla and Man.

The gorilla is in stature about the same as man, but is far behind him when it comes to the contents of the brain-pan. The greatest capacity of the gorilla's brain is only 34 1/2 cubic inches, the least 23, as against 62 in the least capacious human skull and 114 in the greatest.

Cat Photographers.

A young woman looking for rugs told a New York salesman that she wanted a shade to match her cat. Speaking of cats, there are photographers in the city who make a specialty of posing cats for pictures. A studio in New York has specified hours for posing.

Medical Air Locks.

Tunnels in course of construction are now provided with medical air locks, where workmen afflicted with "bends" can be treated under pressure.

A Natural Hat's Lining.

Little Maggie's father had a bald spot. "What's having, him, at bed-time one evening she said: "Stop down, papa; I want to kiss you on the head where the lining shows."

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