IN A RUSSIAN PRISON.

A SUSPECT'S ACCOUNT OF HIS FIRST DAY IN A FILTHY CELL.

Covered Almost Instantly with Mortal and Hungry Vermin—Wearing the Cloak of a Diseased Convict—How Time Is Passed in the Jails of Russia.

I was taken into one of the little courts, in which were four cells, each with room for two persons, but the space between these larger and the wall was so narrow as to make it difficult for all the two to walk at once, instead of three, actually all of us on the bottle. All the cells were open, and the prisoners were in the court; some were smoking their vaunted tobacco, some knitting stockings, some merely lying or sitting in the sun; most of them, however, were engaged in destroying parasites in their hair or clothing.

Several persons surrounded me and asked who I was, how long I was to stay, and where I was going to be put. I answered, of course, that questions is considered impolite in prison society. After having satisfied the curiosity of the questioners, most of whom were in chains and were to be transported to Siberia, I was taken into a cell, where a camp place was shown me on a sleeping bench, with no bed, with a dirty pillow stuffed with straw and no mattress or blanket, for lack of which the prisoner's cloak serves.

The prisoner who showed me my place was the "elder of the ward" (corridor) he was very amiable to me, and recommended me both, remarking that, "most people shy from us, there are only ten of us, in all the other cells there are fifteen; that's why I put you here." The fact is that the elder was holding hopes on me, he had noticed that I wore spectacles, and had therefore concluded that I must be a "gentleman," and, of course, must know how to write, and he was just then very anxious to write a petition.

I, of course, consented, and asked him to explain to me his business. He began an account, from which my attention was distracted by a sudden sensation of burning all over. "Oh! is it they?" he asked, throwing off. "They!" I repeated, wondering. He nodded; my experience was familiar to him. "Never mind," he said consolingly; "they only bite so furiously just at first, you won't feel them after a bit."

ALIVE WITH VERMIN.

I tore off my cloak; my skin was literally covered with vermin. They were in such swarms that I stood horror stricken; it seemed to me that I must die from them. My new friend, still trying to console me, slipped one off each side of my neck and put into the court. Laying down the cloak in the hot sunshine to get warm, we employed ourselves in clearing the skirt of vermin. Before laying the cloak on the ground the elder held it up for me to look at, and it seemed to me to be almost free from insects. But after a few minutes he called my attention to it again.

The vermin hidden in the coarse canvas texture had come out to the heat. It was only then that I understood in what sense the clothing was that had been given me. I drew back with the bitter conviction that it was useless to struggle against such endless legions. But my instructor asserted that there was no need to despair, that I must have patience, and that, by working as it sightless insists a day, one would get rid of a great many in two days. There was nothing for it but to follow his advice; not that I had any hope of success, but rather from sheer desperation. But we had not long to sit in the court. At 7 p. m. our names were called over, and we were locked up in the cell. We fighted some tiny bugs, filled with grease, and went to sleep with our work.

Soon had contrived to get hold of a pack of cards, and spent the time in playing, though with frequent interruptions, as at any moment the sentinel might look in and catch the gamblers in the act, which would have resulted in a month with the confinement of the cards. One of the gamesters, therefore, stood admitting the beauties of the Sahara, acting meanwhile as scout, and give notice with a movement of his foot every time the sentinel approached. Then instantly all the gamblers would put on the most innocent faces and occupy themselves in some other way. At 5 a. m. we were let out. I had not slept at all our allotted one minute's relief from the nuisance of the vermin.

A REVOLTING GARMENT.

The prisoners crowded round the well and drank. Some took off their clothes and washed it, remarking indeed what they did so. The morning chilliness was still in the air. I and my new friend remained out of the day before. He was evidently well accustomed to the work, and looked compassionately upon my awkwardness and clumsiness. "You don't a bit know how to manage; you look half afraid of them. You shouldn't go at it so gingerly! I know whom cloak that is," he went on. "A fortnight ago there was a fellow here, Jack Ford; he used to call him; quite a natural one, you know.

"He was always soft in his head; and then he was ill, too, just all over wounds and sores from head to foot. Well, there he'd lie, and of course he got all over those creatures; he never tried to get rid of them. Of course a decent fellow wouldn't let his cloak get into that state, but the fool didn't care—not he; he didn't seem to have any feeling, somehow.

On learning the biography of my cloak I appealed to him in horror to know whether I could not possibly get it changed for another. He at first maintained that it was quite needless, but a prisoner who had been in Siberia, that one could not catch diseases from clothes, etc., but he failed to convince me. "Of course," he remarked at last, "one can get it changed; it is one's lot, but it can be done; here, sir, anything can be got for money. Why, not only clean things, you can have spirits, and playing cards, paper, pens and ink—anything you like."

My cloak was changed that day. Prisoners are not allowed to have money in their possession, but a prisoner who has money in his account in the office can buy things in the prison shop by order.

The dealer, like a banker, cashes your order, charges his goods (usual prices) and takes 20 per cent. himself for trouble and risk.

That evening I felt far less miserable, in consequence of a clean cloak.—Free Russia.

The Small Boy.

The Cyclops invented a small boy and entered him for a mile or more through the forest, and then put him down to play with him. A hole in the ground happened to be near at hand, and the small boy took a header into it and was seen no more. The small boy in the same the world over—he lies on him.—Detroit Free Press.

Love for the Sea.

I stepped on the rear platform of a street car the other day to talk with the conductor, a fair faced, gray bearded Norseman, whose respectful yet dignified manner was particularly attractive. He told me that his work kept him busy from 4 in the afternoon to midnight. "What do you do all day?" I asked. "As often as anything else," said he. "I go down to the wharves to see the ships. I was a sea captain for twenty-five years, and I love the sound of the waves and the smell of tarred rope." The old fellow's eyes glistened at the sight and doubtless at that moment he had pleasant visions of tumbling seas and strong canvas in the far north.—New York Star.

THE GROWLING MERCHANT.

How He Satisfied a Desire to Get Even with People Not Trading with Him.

It was a small and untidy looking man in the shoppe, to whom two women came, and he said to them: "The big stores swallow the small ones, and my business has been just about gulped down by the monopoly of the big stores. These great concerns offer advantages. All right. But I get even with some of the ladies who go to my door to buy elsewhere. I have plenty of time to stand behind the glass door and watch the trap that I've set for the shoppers that engage me. The idea that never any real good has a dozen little sewed holes that I take good care shall be kept open to pinch the fingers of every polite lady' underfoot. The morning business was dull, so I went to my door and watched.

"A fat woman was coming along. She wore a fur boa and a big hat with ostrich. On she came, and with her silk umbrella swung like a pendulum with such alternate ease, and immediately came to the ground in a stately fashion that delighted me to see. Why is it that ever lady swings an umbrella in the same way? Forward it goes in graceful movement when the lady is advancing, and, long it hits the ground when the right foot is planted. On came the fat cheek. Would she be caught? I held my breath in excitement and let myself my after dinner cigar she would. She was right over it now.

"The umbrella came down straight, and the point slipped with the ease of unemployment into the waiting hole. But there was nothing unemployed about the lady when she stopped. She held fast hold of the umbrella handle, and was whirled violently round like a mustang caught in a lasso. I was most surprised I did not fall into her face, and all her eighty odd pounds tumble through the sick into the small hole beneath. A man or two expressed against her, just as I thought she was an inhuman being, and the very fur on her cloak my close, in sympathy with her feelings. This is the story of a long sickness, and I should be as she worked her umbrella back and forward until it came up, a little scratched.

"The next victim was a lady who carried high her knights head. Her umbrella had a bamboo handle. I knew this by the way it flew through the air. "There is no sense of fun in our dear sex," said I, "and I will give a piece of bamboo half a cheese and it can make a picnic for a whole street full." The lady was paralyzed. She felt her umbrella give her a violent blow on the hand, and when she looked down to remonstrate it wasn't there. When she turned in a dazed manner and watched it flying down the sidewalk she gave a cry of despair and started after it. The bamboo completed its eccentric flight by catching a policeman on the ear, and lay on a bleak on the ground as though it wasn't laughing to the strength the silk. He never picked it up and looked steadily at the policeman.

"I saw caught a heel in my trap—a long, slender, pointed heel, so foolish of construction that only a dozen of fashion can be kept. Of fashion and the ring would the next day, and I was quite bitter for some time against the sex, but this is the only thing my trap has cost me, and it is cheap at the price."—New York Sun.

The Big Canals of the World.

The longest canal in the world is the Imperial canal of China, which starts from Pekin, connects the Hoang Ho, Yang-tse-Kiang and a number of other rivers, passes by the gates of Ferrous cities, and with its branches affords nearly 2,000 miles of water communication in the heart of the empire. The next in length is the Ganges canal, constructed for the purpose of irrigating the plains between the Ganges and the Jumna. The main line is 510 miles in length, and its branches probably double this distance. The Erie canal is the third, 363 miles in length, began in 1817 and finished eight years later. There are several canals in Europe which have been in remote antiquity. The Languedoc canal, connecting the Atlantic with the Mediterranean, is 148 miles long, and by means of a hundred or more locks ascends to a point 600 feet above the sea.

The largest ship canal in Europe is the North Holland canal, from Amsterdam to the Helder, a distance of fifty-one miles. The Forth and Clyde canal in Scotland is thirty-five miles, and the Caledonian some twenty-four. Two large canals in England exceed one hundred miles—the Grand Junction and the Leeds and Liverpool. It is estimated that the canal navigation distance of Great Britain at the time when canals were most used exceed 4,000 miles, and that of the United States exceed of 4,000.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Indian Ideas of Future Life.

The Iroquois and Hurons believed in a country for the souls of the dead, which they called the "country of souls." This country lies to the west, from which direction their traditions told them they had migrated. Souls must go there after death by a very long and painful journey, climb many mountains and cross many rivers, and just as the long sought haven appears in the distance the spirit must cross a long, narrow bridge and fight with a monster dog which stands guard at the west end. Weak souls are not equal to this task, and fall into the river, where after death by a very long and painful journey