

population canvassed. This is a population as large as Tarrytown. Yet there are churches in the Auxiliary willing to assume permanently the responsibility of knowing the exact conditions of every individual in a block of these dimensions, and to invite the people within it, in the name of the entire denominational church-membership in the auxiliary, to connect themselves with the Church, her sympathies and services. Business calculations nowadays, to be safe, must be computed to a mill; secular education, in the view of New York State, is not safe in cities unless there is a biennial canvass, house to house: the Church's acquaintance with the population should be similarly minute. The Federation of Churches and Christian Workers in New York City is a co-operant unity of denominations to accomplish this end. It studies the population, man by man, to get at present conditions; it tabulates the facts found; it estimates the adequacy of existing agencies to meet needs disclosed; in recommending new agencies it has a scientific basis for its statements.

Its future is to relieve the busy pastors of the Fifteenth Assembly District of all statistical detail in trying to get at the population, man by man; to co-operate with the Auxiliary through its Committees on Co-operation, Extension, Legislation—whose work always follows that of the Committee on Investigation; and to form, in other regions of the city, Auxiliaries "B," "C," etc., to succeed Auxiliary "A." The Federation, if it is supported, will eventually parish this city among a co-operant Christianity, and its office will contain as accurate and adequate information concerning the educational side of the church life of New York as does the Charity Organization Society's office concerning the alms side.



The Convict Conception of Authority

From the Prisoner's Point of View¹

To the average convict, the guards, with their muskets, like the bolts and bars, become mere accessories to an environment, and not symbols of force and restraint. Unless cruelty or fraud be practiced, the criminal in prison receives no more and no less than he expects. Given confinement, and he admits the details as a matter of course. He certainly does not approve, but he must recognize, the logic of the inevitable; it is the one process of reasoning which has been hammered into his mind by experience.

It is significant to hear a keeper expostulating with a refractory prisoner. "What's the use, Jack?" he will say. "We've got the better of you, and we must have order, you know." And Jack, unless he be wild with rage or despair, concedes that if he were a "screw" he would keep a steady rein, and so sulkily submits.

Hence there is little active antagonism between custodian and ward. Indeed, from the good nature of the one and the deference of the other there springs an apparent amity. A prison is a microcosm, and all within its walls, whether warden, keeper, guard, cook, or convict, share a common citizenship. There is news, for instance, which is intrinsic to it: gossip about new arrivals and reminiscences of departed old-timers; the thousand and one contingencies which must arise where almost every inmate is hoping for a pardon; the state of the various manufactories—whether this shop is about to have a "lay-off" and that a rush of "overtime"—the likelihood of change through the fall election, the meeting of the Legislature, or the visit of some commission; all of which, in connection with that human weakness which causes those acquainted with the world without to be as anxious to tell of events as the ignorant are to hear, produces a sociality as peculiar and limited as it is normal.

Convicts know far more about keepers than keepers do about convicts. The reasons for this are at once apparent: the keepers are fewer in number, and their interest is divided. Many of them, holding positions through political influence, regard duty as merely an unpleasant routine, and have all their heart in the hours of rest. The convict view,

on the other hand, is as intense as it is restricted. Each keeper is an important item in his life, which selfishness, curiosity, and lack of diversion unite in causing him to study. No school-teacher on his platform is an object of such minute scrutiny as the guard on his high stool. Not a movement, not a glance, not a change of dress nor a cast of countenance, but has its interpretation. If any men live in a glass house, prison officials do.

From this keen observation, each officer becomes known by some leading characteristic. Jack the old-timer thus instructs Jack the new man: "So-and-so," he says, "is a crank;" and thenceforward that one is shunned as much as can be. "So-and-so," he continues, "is a good fellow." This is the highest praise, and emboldens the neophyte to ask the recipient for a match or a bit of tobacco if the chance offers. "So-and-so," he goes on, "feels his oats." Here is a note of caution which means that the one described may to-day be affable but to-morrow as unapproachable as a king. "So-and-so," he concludes, "is soft." A snort of contempt greets this intelligence, and though this officer may well be the best-hearted of the lot, he will surely be the one least considered.

The average convict not only knows that it is hard to kick against the pricks, but he is too intent on bettering his own condition to even think of doing so. There is as much mean rivalry and striving for personal advantage in prisons as in the outer world—it would be an exaggeration to say there was more. Hence this knowledge of keepers is expended for the most part in truckling. Jack is an adroit flatterer, the more adroit for his bluntness. He will spring in answer to a fat-witted wish almost before it is formulated. No men are better waited on than prison officials. Their clothes are kept brushed, their shoes blackened, their beards deftly shaved. Start not, gentle visitor, on the alert for outbreaks and bloodshed, at the audacity of thus exposing the throat to the blade. That convict barber has but one thought: will the reward for his skill be a plug of tobacco or an extra ration from the hospital?

Such obsequiousness might well deceive trained judgment; but, in reality, the convict opinion of prison officials is not flattering. It grows more contemptuous as it nears the lower grades; for Jack has luxurious notions, and a man who is content to work for sixty dollars a month seems a poor creature to him. He is fond of comparing his own condition with that of the guard, to the disadvantage of the latter. This, of course, is nonsense; yet it may be said that ordinary prison service implies a coarse, harsh, tedious life of exposure, long hours, and insufficient pay. High rank, however, appeals to the convict's imagination. It always represents wealth and power to him. This effect is strengthened if the warden holds himself aloof and only appears, like a *deus ex machina*, for the settlement of trouble. Then the most refractory will quail before the majesty of his glance.

Convicts are skeptical as to the honesty of their keepers. This conception is largely an inheritance; for in the past, far more than at present, money could do much in prisons. The contract system had a demoralizing, blighting effect; and officials, seeing greed authorized to exceed not only the instincts of humanity but of decency, followed a pernicious example, and took when and what they could. While wardens and deputies are now for the most part men not only of capability but of conscience, it must be said that too little attention is still paid to the selection of the rank and file of prison service. If a man be healthy and burly, with perhaps a local reputation as a pugilist, and surely the favor of some ward politician, he is likely to be appointed. These are not the qualifications for a position of trust; nor are the temptations to be resisted insignificant. If a guard yields once to a bribe, he is ruined; for within twenty-four hours the tidings will have sped from flagging to topmost tier that he is "crooked," and thereafter every man Jack with an odd coin feels that he has him at beck and call.

The amity existing in prison is merely a *modus vivendi*; beneath it there is much real bitterness. The convict feels that he is despised; that any favor is either a condescension or a purchase. "They care no more for us

¹ By the author of "A Man of Education in Prison: A Personal Experience," in The Outlook for August 8 last.

than they do for dogs," he will grumble. There is a prison rule, inevitable perhaps, that in any controversy the word of a keeper must be taken. This works for discipline, but not for reformation. In fact, there is far more self-respect inculcated in training-stables than in prisons; but then horses have a commercial value, and are, hence, intrusted to experts. And yet, paradoxical as is the phrase, and strange as it may seem, it is probable that courts of honor among convicts would render fair judgments.

There is also a latent distrust which the slightest change in routine will bring to the surface. Jack's rights are so few that he is well informed of them. In many cases, however, he is not well informed as to restrictions or the reasons for them. One who has little will fight fiercely for its preservation; and from this instinct, too seldom considered, come the vast majority of prison disorders. The convict rebels, not to gain something, but to retain it. There should be more confidence from the management to the managed; it would allay the convict's eternal suspicion that somebody is getting the better of him. The hardest thing to make Jack believe is that there is any public or private interest in him save that he may be securely held.

The convict, then, is selfishly submissive; he has regard for his commutation, or what he calls his "good time;" he has a wholesome dread of the dungeon, and of bread and water; and a mean but natural desire to be better off than his fellows. Yet in all this perfunctory obedience there is an undercurrent of determination to do as little as possible, to skirt as closely as may be to the line of insubordination so characteristic of slavery. He is subjugated, but not reconciled; like the sepoy, he serves for fear of a worse fate befalling him. Though in a dull sort of a way he admits to himself that a prison must be a prison, he is prone to deep if not loud revilings; but these curses are directed more towards those who, he believes, impelled him thither than those who now hold him there. And this distinction on his part naturally leads to the consideration as to what the average convict thinks of the merits of his incarceration.

There is a story told of Frederick the Great that one day he visited a prison and questioned the inmates as to the justice of their punishment. Each one protested his innocence, with a single exception, and that one replied: "Yes, your Majesty, I deserve all I got, and far more. From the days of my youth I have been a malefactor; there is no crime on the calendar which I have not repeatedly committed." Then the monarch called the warden to him and said: "Release this man at once, lest he corrupt all the other good men."

Now a cursory examination of the convicts in any modern prison might not reveal even this single exception. Convicts always protest their innocence, even when they have pleaded guilty. A little cross-questioning, however, will lead to qualifications. "Well, they didn't prove it, anyway," says one. "Well, the District Attorney wasn't square," declares another. In all who finally concede some fault on their part, there remains a sincere sense of wrong. A portion of this grievance is doubtless inevitable; every trial is but an approximation to the truth; and no one has so keen a view of the divergence as he who necessarily knows all the circumstances.

But one strong element in this doubt as to the equity of the law is the convict's experience with the police. The Lexow investigation created no sensation in prisons. The fact that it was ever permitted to take place aroused a mild surprise; but the general verdict as to its results was that they were a mere skimming of the truth. "Oh, don't I wish I had been called!" was a frequent exclamation. Now, the corruption thus revealed is not indigenous to the metropolis; wherever there is opportunity, there it rankly grows. Is the village constable who gives a tramp money to get drunk with in order that he may then arrest him and thus gain the resulting fees any better than the police captain who accepts tribute from the swindlers in his precinct? There is, indeed, a phase of police abuse peculiar to large cities which is technically known as "the

third degree." This species of torture is a process of intimidation, and a recourse to superstitious fears, through which the criminal is induced to confess. What use is there of telling one who has been a victim to it of the constitutional props and restrictions which protect a citizen? Say to him that no man can be compelled to incriminate himself, and his answer will be, "I know better."

Prosecuting officers, also, are responsible for this skepticism. The blame, however, rests not so much with them as with the public who persist in measuring success by the number of convictions. How ridiculous it would be to inform the average convict that the District Attorney is a quasi-judicial officer whose first duty it is to have the truth revealed! "Nothing of the sort," Jack would retort. "Don't I know? Haven't I been there? He twisted what I said in the police court to mean something different; he misrepresented this, he concealed that;" and so on and so on, each one telling a similar story, until the instructor would be forced to believe that the foremost legal maxim is that the end justifies the means.

The convict's opinion of courts rises from contempt for a justice of the peace to awe for the high tribunals; but in it all there is very little genuine respect. If there is one idea more firmly fixed in the convict mind, it is that money is all-powerful. This belief is natural; for the average convict is too ignorant to reason except from what he sees and hears. He knows that the vast majority of his fellows are poor; he knows that the vast majority of the defendants who delay trial, who are bailed, who take appeals, who get pardons, are rich. What, then, is his conclusion? He reads the newspapers, too, industriously, and what he gleans confirms this view. Many a case of defalcation, smothered through influence and forgotten by a self-enwrapped public, is a stock argument in prisons that justice can be purchased.

For it must be borne in mind that convicts continually discuss the law with that fatal fondness which talks the most of what it knows the least. And this ignorance is appalling. The convict will implicitly believe that any power is vested in the law except a power for good. To him it seems as malignant as it is mighty. Many legal distinctions, the effects of which he only can comprehend, aid this conception. For example, the difference in degree of punishment between some minor forms of burglary and larceny is more curious than equitable. Why should a man be punished more severely for breaking into a hen-roost than for filching a purse? Perhaps the answer that this was an old English distinction which tended to preserve the sanctity of home, so that the mere raising of a bolt was a felony, might not be regarded as entirely satisfactory by one who had received a long sentence through his lack of discrimination. His fellows would surely cite germane cases of harsh penalties for breaking into a freight-car, and claim that these were induced by the wealth of the railroads.

Then doubtful convictions have a woeful effect. There is no limit to their remembrance. Thus it is an axiom in prisons that the Greek who was sentenced for life in New York City for the killing of "Old Shakespeare" was a victim of official ambition. One such case as lately occurred in Brooklyn, where a criminal received a life sentence for the theft of a small amount because this was his second offense, has a far greater influence for evil through the distrust of the law which it causes than its example can have a deterrent effect. "He was a poor man," Jack will say, "and so they railroaded him."

There is another sort of legal ignorance prevalent in prisons, and that is regarding the right and wrong of those offenses which are punished as injurious to society rather than as crimes *per se*. Take the counterfeiter, for example. It is impossible for him to see that his success is other than a "smart thing." "Why," he will retort, "the Government is many hundreds of thousands ahead of the game each year from the money which is burned up or sunk at sea. Why shouldn't I have a little of the profit?" Some such sophistry, too, is at the command of all violators of the revenue laws. As for such private swindlers as green-goods men, they firmly believe that they are public

benefactors. "It served them right," they will stoutly maintain, referring to their victims; "weren't they trying to defraud?" From all this there rises a habit of justification which may account in part for the lack of remorse in prisons.

From these considerations and many others it comes about that the convict's conception of authority, whether in prison or out, is of a power which has in some way, generally underhanded, gotten the better of him. While he is confined, personal motives make him submissive. In the outer world he thinks the chances are more in his favor, and he takes them. Thus it is that incarceration is but a truce in warfare on society. For much of this failure in reformation the convict cannot be justly blamed. His own unworthiness is an argument in his behalf. Much cannot be expected from one of his mental and moral caliber. But it speaks ill for modern society that its involuntary ward regards its rule as that of a monster, amenable only to the sop of money, and both rapacious and ruthless. It speaks ill for civilization that the only result of its punishment is a fear of being caught. Until there is some sort of development in prisons there will be degeneration; until men are taught the truth, they will greedily swallow lies.

What, then, is the remedy? Defendants should be more fairly treated; expediency is no justification for the violation of rights. When convicted, they should be brought to recognize, if not the enormity of their offense, at least the fairness of their condemnation from the standpoint of social order. There should also be such instruction in prisons that it would be impossible for the majority of convicts to believe, as they now firmly do, that crime consists not in the act but in its detection. The wise parent punishes his child when occasion warrants, but he always tries to make that child feel that in this punishment he has been kind.

The Woods in October

By Caroline A. Creevey

There is a peculiar fragrance about the autumn woods—a fruity, spicy, balsamic odor, suggesting ripe grapes and pine woods. It is nature fruiting. Seeded asters and goldenrods, half-dried leaves, aged thoroughwort flowers, sassafras, all such things contribute to this subtle fall atmosphere, so delicious to breathe and smell. But it needs the warm sunshine to bring it out, just as new-mown hay needs the heat to make it sweet.

On a sunny day in October one should take a holiday in the woods. For there is no other month like this. We love the pale, shy beauty of spring and the rare day in June. But summer brings its fierce heats, and September is usually a dusty, drouthy, windy month. Suddenly the gorgeous skies and soft airs of October are upon us, making us long to dream a lifetime away surrounded by this perfect atmosphere, and this beauty which is like the purple robe of a queen bedecked with gems.

Leave wraps at home, and take the botany-box. Flowers in October? Certainly, a rich, handsome bouquet.

Not all the asters and goldenrods have gone to seed. Many, like other members of the great composite family, have fashioned their feathery dust-brushes which, with fruit attached, are borne lightly on the wind into every nook and cranny of wood and pasture land. But there are still yellow, fan-like, fountain-like spikes of late goldenrods well worth picking. One of the prettiest of these is *Solidago cæsia*, whose little heads of blossoms lie snugly against the stem, over a leaf, thicker and thicker towards the top. *S. Canadensis* is one of the rough and tall species, with crowded flowers in a one-sided feathery panicle.

I always fancy there is a sort of freemasonry between goldenrods and asters which makes them come and go together, in love with each other's company. Here is one of our most delicate species, a fine and soft aster with white, pink, or purplish rays, and yellow or brown centers. This larger purple aster is the *Spectabilis*. Its rays are an inch long, its broad flowers few on the stem. This and

the New England aster attain their greatest perfection along the roadsides of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

If we take this enticing path leading into the grassy borders of a chestnut wood, you shall have a genuine surprise. I have been here before, and know the place for a haunt of one of our prettiest fall flowers, the closed gentian. Here they are tall, straight spikes, yonder they blue the ground; and why, for color, is it not as ravishing a blue as its fringed sister over which poetry is written? Often a central flower of the cluster of closed gentians affects a rich plum color.

Down deep in the dried grass is the purple polygala, modest and shy, but pretty. It has been in bloom since August, and likes best a marshy place near the seashore. But here it is also in the New Jersey woods.

What a wealth of painted leaves around us, in the sweetgum, the white birch, the sumachs and dogwoods, grapevines and Virginia creepers! Here is one shrub of black alder (*Ilex verticillata*), with its red berries clinging to gray stems. The berries will stay on till Christmas, after the leaves have dropped. Near by is this curious magical shrub, the witch-hazel. Reversing the almost universal rule, it flowers in late autumn, and fruits the following summer. Its pretty little clusters of pale yellow flowers lie along the stem—four long, narrow petals, a four-parted calyx, with bractlets at its base. It is certainly one of the latest of our flowers.

Here at our feet is the broad, now yellowish leaf of the baneberry, with its pearly white berries on thick red stems. We must not eat them. They are beautiful to look at, but deadly to the stomach.

Here is a white goldenrod, the only white species, which many people call an aster. It has flowers along the stem, rather after the aster style. It has a pleasant fragrance, something like that of the common cudweed. We may as well add to our bouquet that lonely spike of the double-bristled aster, with its few whitish, rather seedy-looking flowers. They resemble old-fashioned garden feverfews, and are not a real aster (botanically, *Diplopappus linariifolius*).

We are following, now, a path leading into the darker woods. Chestnuts and hickory-nuts will soon dot the ground, but if you want any you must get here early, for swarms of Italian boys will pick them into bags and roast them on the streets of New York. At present we are safe from such intrusion, for only last year's old burrs are lying under the trees.

Here the small-leaved partridge-vine makes mats on the ground, and its red berries peep from the leaves. Winter-green berries keep them company; and this is a late hawkweed, with yellow-tasseled flower, and a rosette of rough leaves at the root. It is restful, quiet, and warm in these dark woods, but our path leads at length out of "dim aisles" around a thicket of blackberry-vines, milkweed, and Joe Pye weed. We slide down a bank, cross the road, and enter a broad pasture. In springtime blue violets and spring-beauties carpet the place. Now the reddening leaves of its low huckleberry-bushes are brightened with clumps of asters and goldenrods.

We come to a pool, down in a dell—unwholesome-looking, stagnant water, covered with green scum. Here are growing big yellow flowers in profusion. They are not sunflowers, but a showy, large burr-marigold, one of October's pets. Each seed in the center is crowned with a pair of hooks, quite strong, to fasten into clothing, or the fleece or hair of animals, so to get a free ride and a new place in which to plant themselves. Look at your skirts, and you will see that you are acting as disseminator for another shrewd plant, the *desmodium*, whose triangular "stick-tight" pods clung to us in the chestnut woods. With these handsome burr-marigolds, delicate white smartweeds, and their cousins, "my-lady's-tear-thumb," are growing. Run your finger up the tear-thumb stem, it will be scratched. Run it down, the stem is as smooth as satin. By means of this kind of a stem, the plant helps itself to climb out of the mud where it must otherwise lie prone.

We must scale another fence and cross a second pasture. Red berries of the nightshade—not the deadly European