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Pendogy.

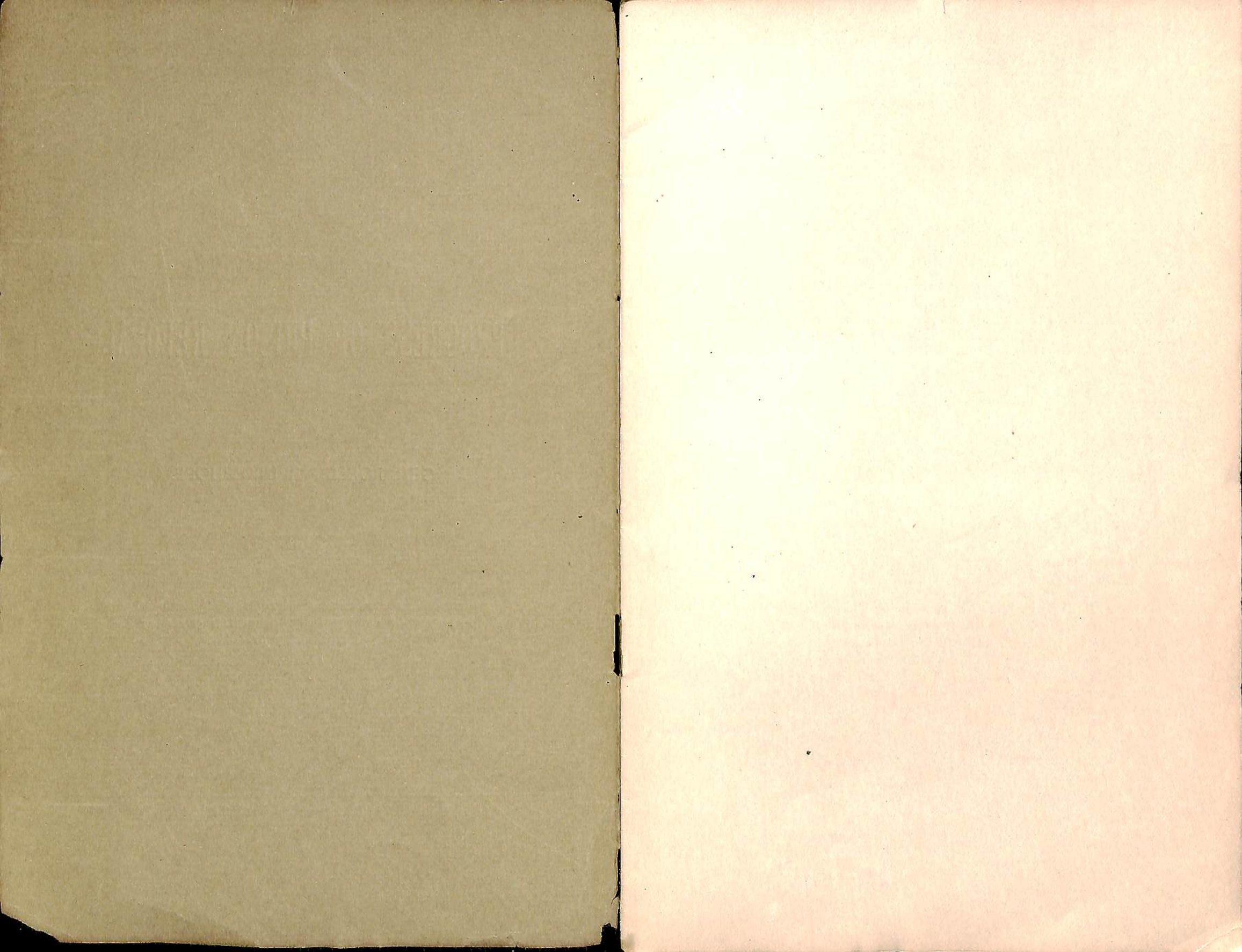
PROGRESS OF PRISON REFORM.

BY

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PROGRESS OF PRISON REFORM.

BY GEN. ROELIFF BRINKERHOFF.

Prisons are as old as history; but prison reform, as we now understand it, is but a child of yesterday. Penology, as a science, is younger than the most of us who are in this hall to-night; and it would seem, therefore, that the story of its progress would not be long to tell. Perhaps it is not, if we confine ourselves strictly, as we must in the main, to such portions of the science as are now recognized as axioms by its acknowledged exponents.

Prison reform, as a continuous entity, had its beginning in 1773, when John Howard began his investigations and revelations of the prisons of England and Europe. Prior to that time, all through the Christian era, there had been occasional attempts for the amelioration of prisoners. This could not well be otherwise, under the precepts of a religion which taught that men had souls to save as well as bodies to punish; and, therefore, after it came into power under Constantine, Christian rulers not only authorized the humane intervention of the Church, but they even sought and required it,—for example, in charging the bishops to provide, in concert with the magistrates, by regular visits and inquests, that no prisoner should be unjustly detained or submitted to inhuman treatment, and to cause to be released those who, despite the laws, had been shut up in private prisons. So in England, as far back as the reign of Edward VI. (1550), Latimer, in a sermon preached before that monarch, lifted up his voice against the "heathenism" of London prisons. So, in 1704, Pope Clement XI. established a juvenile prison, on a plan similar to what is now known as the Auburn system, with associated labor and instruction during the day and cellular separation at night, and declared that "it was of but little use to restrain criminals by punishment, unless you reform them by education." So, in several other instances, efforts were made for the reformation of prisons; but they obtained no permanent foothold until Howard came, and gave his life to the work, and became a missionary of reform in all civilized countries.

At that time, England was the most enlightened, the most Christian, of all the nations of the earth; and yet her prisons, as Howard found them, "for cruelties, filth, loathsome sickness, and manifold abominations," were horrible almost beyond belief.

When John Howard as sheriff of Bedfordshire made his first visit to the old jail where Bunyan wrote his *Pilgrim's Progress*, the filthy state of the building, and the wretched condition of the prisoners, made a deep impression upon him; but the fact that many innocent persons were detained there for months, and sometimes for years, from inability to pay their fees of jail delivery, so shocked his notions of justice that he instantly proposed to the magistrates to release such persons, and to provide against their future detention by paying regular salaries to the jailers in place of fees they were accustomed to collect from the prisoners. The magistrates, unprepared for such an innovation in jail economy, asked for a precedent; and Howard spent many months in fruitless exertions to find one, in the course of which he visited every town in England containing a prison. He failed to find the precedent he sought; but, nevertheless, he collected a mass of information respecting the management of prisons, which he communicated in a report to the House of Commons, who thanked him for his zeal and humanity, and in June, 1774, passed bills "for the relief of acquitted prisoners, in the matter of fees, and for preserving the health of prisoners."

This was the beginning of prison reform, as we now understand it; but it was a plant of slow growth. Howard, however, was not discouraged, and determined to give his life to the work; and the years that followed were devoted to the visitation of prisons, hospitals, and lazarettos, in all the countries of Europe, and under circumstances of peril, exposure, and suffering which are scarcely paralleled in history since the days of St. Paul.

He died of ship fever, Jan. 20, 1790, in a hospital at Kerson, in Russia, upon the shores of the Black Sea, where he had gone upon a tour of inspection.

In the preface of his book upon foreign prisons and hospitals, in which he announced his intention to make the journey in which he came to his death, he said, "Should it please God to cut off my life in the prosecution of this design, let not my conduct be imputed to rashness nor enthusiasm, but to a serious conviction that I am pursuing the path of duty."

By the revelations made by Howard of the condition of prisons and hospitals in Europe, other men were incited to activity in many coun-

tries; and the result has been more or less of progress in prison management in all Christian nations.

The result of all this agitation has been the evolution of certain well-defined principles which are now recognized as essential to the management of a prison in its best capabilities.

Such prisons are few in number as yet; but their possibility is no longer experimental, and the principles involved in their creation can be specified.

The two dominant ideas in the creation of prisons and in the treatment of prisoners are, or at least ought to be, (1) the deterrent influence upon those outside, and (2) the reformation of the prisoners inside.

The old doctrine of retaliation, with its requirement of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, is not tenable under the Christian dispensation; and experience has shown that it is not effective in attaining the only end proper to be aimed at by any form of imprisonment,—namely, the protection of society.

Until the beginning of the present century, deterrence alone seems to have been considered by legislators in dealing with persons convicted of crime; and they took it for granted that the deterrent influence of punishment would be in proportion to its severity. Even now, with a majority of people, this seems to be the dominant idea. This conception, however, has long since been proved a fallacy.

In England, this doctrine of deterrence by severity was carried out until the death penalty was inflicted for stealing a sheep. Even as late as the time of Blackstone, only a century ago, one hundred and sixty offences were punishable with death, and hangings were daily spectacles at almost every cross-roads. The results, however, were the reverse of what was expected; and crime steadily increased. At last, under the stimulus of John Howard's heroic life and death, it began to dawn upon the governing classes of England that the religion they professed, and had established by the State, taught a different system for dealing with the criminal classes, and had actually announced that kindness to the lowly and mercy to prisoners would always be the crowning sign of the presence of its Founder upon the earth.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound." And thereupon, slowly, but surely and steadily and continuously, the old sys-

tem, based upon the halter, the lash, and the dungeon, was abolished; and in its place came the Christian conception of the brotherhood of men, recognizing that even criminals are children of a common Father, and that the State, in the place of a parent, should train and discipline, but not destroy, the erring members of the family intrusted to its care.

The result has been that now, not only in England, but in all enlightened countries, the death penalty is limited to such offences as treason and murder; and physical tortures, of all kinds, have been almost entirely abandoned. In their place have come imprisonment, with classification, productive labor, industrial training, and various other appliances and methods for the reconstruction and reformation of the prisoner, so that upon his discharge he shall be a law-abiding citizen, and shall earn an honest living by honest industry.

So everywhere, where these methods have been fully and fairly tested, crime has decreased, and society in all respects has been largely benefited. Deterrence has not been weakened, but reformation has been largely increased.

Classification.—In the reformation of prisoners, the most important requirement, perhaps, is classification. So long as old offenders are retained in association with other prisoners, not much of value can be accomplished by any kind of treatment. This class of prisoners does not include more than twenty per cent. in our penitentiaries, or more than ten per cent. in our jails; but they are the teachers, the organizers, the captains of crime, and their separation from other prisoners is the imperative beginning of all reformatory measures. We might as well attempt the purification of a well with a cesspool discharging into it as attempt the reformation of prisoners with old offenders in association with them.

In Ohio, under recent legislation, any prisoner convicted of a third offence is adjudged a habitual criminal, and may be held for life; and we heartily commend this policy for adoption elsewhere.

This requirement of separation as a preventive of moral contagion is so clearly essential that it seems strange that it is so rarely enforced. In our jails especially, where, on an average, four-fifths of all prisoners are kept, and where a majority are awaiting trial, and many are only convicted of trivial offences, it seems the height of folly to allow free range among them to old offenders; and yet there are not half a dozen jails in the United States where this folly is not practised. A small-pox patient in a crowded school room is no more objectionable than a professional thief in a congested jail.

It is very evident, therefore, that any large advance in the reform of prisons must commence with the county jails; and such separation must be secured as shall not allow any one prisoner to associate with any other prisoner during the period of his incarceration in such jail. This may be considered as Axiom No. 1 in the science of Prison Reform.

After the transfer of prisoners to the penitentiary, classification must be continued; but the extent of it is a matter about which penologists are not entirely agreed. In the Eastern Penitentiary, at Philadelphia, and in all the convict prisons of Belgium, and also with the more hardened criminals in several other European countries, each prisoner is kept separate from all other prisoners during the entire term of imprisonment. This is known as the cellular or individual system. Formerly, the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania was maintained upon this system; but it has been abandoned for many years. Recently, the Director of Prisons in Belgium has questioned the wisdom of its continuance; and the general drift of opinion among penologists seems to be in favor of the system of progressive classification, better known, perhaps, as the Crofton system, which is in operation in various European countries, but notably in Ireland, where it was established by Sir Walter Crofton, in 1854. It is also in operation, in a modified form, at Elmira, N.Y., Sherborn and Concord, Mass., and at Columbus, Ohio.

This system, in its most approved form, is initiated by a period of cellular separation of sufficient length to afford the prisoner an opportunity for reflection and instruction, and to create an earnest desire for employment under the more natural conditions of congregated labor. He is then put to work, in company with other prisoners of the first grade, to rise or fall under the marking system.

The reasons for this change from cellular to congregated labor, as given by Maconochie,—the most philosophical as well as the most practical of penologists,—are that "it is much easier to influence numbers together than the individuals of whom they are composed; and, when moved, they will go much farther,—they assist each other and beget a common enthusiasm. There is also a specific tendency in numbers toward right feeling. On Norfolk Island, I could have done nothing with each prisoner separately. The best of them would have remained dogged under my representations."

"The separate system is the most perfect form of mere coercion that has been devised. Men are utterly helpless in its grasp. They thus make excellent *prisoners*, and those who manage them are en-

amoured of their success with them. But it is scarcely possible to conceive that the most perfect form of bondage, however useful in its place, in the beginning of a course of discipline, can be the best preparation for entire return to liberty."

"Like handcuffs and straight waistcoats, separation has a good special application, and, as a medicine, it is excellent for certain phases of moral disease; but it is no more fit for habitual diet than would be senna or ipecacuanha."

"I as much approve of the separate system for short-sentenced prisoners as any one can, but I do not approve of it as a form of prolonged imprisonment."

In Ireland, the progressive system has three stages, and three separate prisons for each sex. This system, as described by Dr. Wines, requires: (1) A penal stage of cellular separation, continuing eight months, which may be prolonged to nine months for misconduct. This stage is passed at Mount Joy, Dublin. (2) A reformatory stage, where the progressive principle comes into play, and where the prisoner, in passing through, must attain four separate classes by a system of marks for character and conduct. This stage is passed at Spike Island, at the southern extremity of Ireland. (3) A probationary stage to verify the reformatory action of the preceding discipline. This is passed at the intermediate prison at Lusk, twelve miles from Dublin. This is really no prison, as far as bolts, bars, and walls are concerned; for there are none. From Lusk, the prisoners are discharged upon ticket of leave.

This tripartite system of prisons has been very successful in Ireland, and also in Italy; but equal results would seem to be attainable in a single prison, as has been shown elsewhere in Europe, and also in this country, at Elmira, N.Y.

In Ohio, we have adopted a tripartite system, but without the necessity of transfer from one to the other, in order to obtain a discharge upon ticket of leave. We have (1) a reformatory for boys and a reformatory for girls; (2) an intermediate prison for young men convicted of their first offence, which is now in process of construction, and is to be conducted on the Elmira pattern; (3) a prison for the more confirmed criminals. Each of these has, or will have, a classification of its own; and a prisoner will go up or go down according to character and conduct, attained through the marking system. We have also a tripartite classification of minor offenders in the workhouse at Cleveland, which is doing well. And we hope to gather all minor offenders in district workhouses, and

then devote our jails exclusively to prisoners awaiting trial, to be kept under the cellular system of absolute separation.

In England, the progressive system is in operation, but not through separate prisons, as in Ireland. Cellular separation is required for all prisoners awaiting trial, and, after conviction and transfer to a convict prison, is continued for a period not exceeding nine months. After this, they are worked in association.

The wisdom of the progressive system has been so fully tested by experience that the consensus of opinion among prison experts the world over now seems to be almost unanimous in its indorsement; and I am very sure we shall make no mistake in recommending it for general adoption in the United States. With Elmira for a model and Brockway for a guide, there is no occasion for any large mistakes in its application.

Industrial Employment.—Another requirement of prison reform is the employment of prisoners in such industries as shall be not only productive, so as to contribute largely to the maintenance of the prison, but which shall also be instructive, so as to prepare the prisoner for self-support after discharge.

In the United States, we have never had, to any large extent, what is known as penal labor, which is labor without production, such as the shot drill, the tread-mill, the crank, etc.; but we have so conducted the prison labor, and so characterized it in our laws, as to make it a punishment rather than a privilege, or as a means of reformation. Productive labor, in any of the forms prevalent in this country, is, doubtless, a vast advance upon the old systems of "penal labor" or of idleness; but it is far short of what the best experience in the management of prisons has shown to be attainable.

Just now, the different forms of convict labor are in controversy in almost every State; and, therefore, it is not possible as yet to say just what particular form of labor is most conducive to prison reform. But, certainly, it can be safely asserted that prison experts the world over are, substantially, a unit in the condemnation of what is known as the contract system, and in the conviction that no large advance in prison reform can be made until it is abolished. Just what should be substituted for it is still undetermined, but yet it is very safe to assert that a preponderance of opinion among our most experienced prison men is in favor of what is known as the piece-price plan.

My own opinion is that the prison management should not be restricted to any particular system, but should be left free to adopt that which experience shall determine to be best. This particular

question, however, is not properly within the province of this paper. The only point I wish to insist upon is that productive labor is a large item of progress in prison reform, and that to its proper administration we must look largely for progress in the future, and that I see no reason why it should not be productive as well as instructive. In fact, if prison labor is placed upon the same plane with outside labor, and every prisoner is credited with what he earns and is charged with what is expended for him, I see no reason why the prison should not only be self-supporting, but should also be the best school possible to make the prisoner self-respecting, and to teach him how to be self-supporting after his release.

The Indefinite Sentence.—In the line of prison reform there is, perhaps, no step forward more important than what is known as the indefinite sentence. By this is meant a sentence which has no specific limit, but the criminal is simply convicted and sentenced for the crime of which he is charged, and may be held for the maximum period of imprisonment specified by the law or may be discharged at the minimum period thus fixed. For example, burglary under the laws of Ohio is punishable for a period not less than one year, or longer than ten years, so that, under the indefinite sentence for this crime, the convict may be held for ten years or he may be discharged in one year.

An indeterminate sentence is one which has no maximum limit; but, as there are no examples of it in actual operation in any prison at present, we will confine ourselves more especially to the indefinite sentence which is in operation at Elmira, and also to a limited extent in Ohio.

These forms of sentence, however, are similar in effect, and assume as a principle that a person convicted of crime is morally diseased, and should be sent to prison, as an insane patient is sent to a hospital to be cured, and should not be discharged until cured.

This form of sentence was first advocated by Frederick Hill, Inspector-General of Prisons in Scotland, and was first put into operation, in a modified form, by Maconochie at Norfolk Island, in 1836, with a success in the way of reformation which has rarely been equalled. It has been approved by the best authorities upon penology in all countries; and Dr. Despine, of France, one of the deepest thinkers on penal science, goes so far as to say that the indeterminate principle will become a necessity whenever a real reformatory system of prison discipline comes to be generally introduced, and pursued in sober earnest. This doctrine has also received

the emphatic indorsement of Dr. E. C. Wines, the greatest of all our American penologists; and the argument, as stated by him, seems unanswerable:—

A criminal is a man who has committed an offence, and deserves punishment. But he is also a man morally diseased, and needs a cure. The prison is intended to effect both these ends,—the punishment and the cure; nay, to effect the cure by means of the punishment. Now, as it is clearly impossible to predict the date of a sick man's restoration to bodily health, so it is no less impossible to foretell the day when a moral patient will be restored to moral soundness. So that, by fixing the duration of the sentence in this latter case, we run a double risk; namely, on the one hand of turning the criminal loose on society before he is cured, and on the other of detaining him after he is cured. So that, by making his release depend on the mere lapse of time, we are almost sure of committing a wrong on one side or the other,—a wrong to society or a wrong to the prisoner. Still, again, the protection to society is at once the end and the justification of imprisonment, unless he is reformed by it. But society is not protected by the criminal's imprisonment, unless he is reformed by it. There is the same reason, therefore, for keeping as for putting him in prison until there is a moral certainty that, if set at liberty, he will not go out to prey upon honest people, and to despoil them of their property. In such a case, the end for which he was imprisoned (the protection of society) fails utterly. The State is cheated of its due benefit, and receives absolutely nothing for all the trouble and expense it has incurred in the apprehension, trial, conviction, and incarceration. Once more, experience has shown that it is impossible to adjust penalties to degrees of guilt, and that standards of punishment are more easy to imagine than to realize. In what principle, then, can we find relief but in that of reformation or cure? But, since a cure cannot in any case be predicted with absolute certainty, and since, if it could, the time required for its accomplishment cannot be measured in advance, no alternative seems left except that of sentences undefined in extent. We do not set the madman free till he is cured of his madness. Neither can we safely nor even justly set the criminal free till he is cured of his proclivity to crime. As the safety of society and the good of the lunatic require that his confinement should be regulated upon this principle, so equally do the safety of society and the good of the criminal require that his detention should be adjusted upon the same principle.

Of course, a prison conducted upon this principle requires the highest wisdom, capacity, and integrity for its administration; and its adoption in the average American prison, where the management is changed with every change of political parties, and where brute force and party fealty are the main requirements for a prison officer, would be preposterous. So with all other reformatory measures, if politics

is to rule our prisons and trained efficiency is to be secondary, the best thing to do is to return to the old slave system of contract labor, and make the dominant idea money-making instead of manhood-making.

The American people, however, we may trust, are not demented; and, now that the question of civil service reform is up for settlement, let us have the faith to believe that it will be settled right, and that the spoils system will go glimmering into the dream of things that were.

Conditional Liberation.—Another phase of progress in prison reform, which is of great value, is that of conditional liberation. It had its origin in a blind attempt of the British Parliament to deplete the prisons of the kingdom, which had become crowded on account of the repeal of laws establishing penal colonies. The results were generally unsatisfactory; but, fortunately, the administration of the law in Ireland fell into the hands of Capt. (now Sir Walter) Crofton, through whose genius the system of progressive classification was invented, in order to sift out the prisoners best entitled to a ticket of leave. The result was the creation of a new era in the management of prisons, which has now become a leading feature in all reformatory systems.

This system, with its three separate stages in three separate prisons, has already been described. The ticket of leave, however, in reality constituted a fourth stage of equal, if not greater, value than the others.

The ticket of leave was simply a conditional release, and valid only during good behavior; and, upon breach of its terms, the prisoner could be recalled, and compelled to serve out his term of sentence within the prison walls. Under Crofton's system, the prisoner was not released until a place of employment was secured for him; and then he was required to report at stated periods to some police officer or other person designated by the prison officers. So long as his conduct was good, the instructions were to encourage and help him; but, if otherwise, he was to be returned to prison. The success was admirable, and the number of convicts in Ireland sank in a few years to one-fourth of the former number.

In England, however, where the ticket of leave was granted without the progressive system for selection, and without subsequent supervision by the police, the results, as might have been expected, were unsatisfactory, and continued so until 1864, when a new penal servitude act was passed, ordering that all convicts on parole or

ticket of leave should report themselves to the police every month. Since then, as in Ireland, crime has steadily decreased; and this form of conditional discharge is now fully established as a principle of the highest value.

In the United States, the ticket of leave, upon the Crofton method, is now in operation at Elmira, in Massachusetts, and recently in Ohio. In reformatories, also, the system is in general operation in connection with the indefinite sentence.

In many of the States, we have what are known as conditional pardons, which is a form of parole or ticket of leave, which is of some value, but not of the highest on account of the absence of police supervision.

A ticket of leave, at its best estate, must be earned by good conduct under the progressive system. Otherwise, it is apt to degenerate into mere favoritism, and results in more evil than good, as it did in England.

The ticket of leave should be purely a reward of merit, and outside influences should have nothing whatever to do with the granting of it, except in the guarantee of employment; and, after it is granted, it must be followed by careful supervision and regular reports at stated periods.

Education.—Of the agencies of progress in the reformation of prisoners there are none more powerful for good than education. Among the causes of crime, ignorance is probably the most potent of all. Of prisoners in the United States, one-third at the North and two-thirds at the South are entirely illiterate, and can neither read nor write; and, of the remainder, a majority have but a smattering of school education, and but very few have any industrial training.

If, in the term education, we include industrial and moral training, we shall find but a small percentage of prisoners who can be considered educated. Under these circumstances, progress in the reformation of prisoners can only be accomplished largely by educational methods; and these methods must be persistent, continuous, and compulsory.

At Elmira, every prisoner goes to school; and he cannot obtain his discharge except by passing the different grades, through rigorous examinations and by attaining the required marks.

Every prison ought to be conducted so that every prisoner should learn to read and write, and should be so trained in some industrial employment as to be able to earn an honest living when he goes

out. Any prison which falls short of these requirements fails to attain even the minimum demands of prison reform, and needs reconstruction.

When we remember that a large majority of all prisoners are young men, whose habits of mind and body are by no means fossilized beyond the capacity of change or reconstruction, we can understand the effect of steady, daily discipline in these educational lines, and especially when supplemented by the enormous leverage of the indeterminate sentence. The truth is, such forces, wielded by a humane, just, and kindly administration, are almost irresistible in their power for good; and the prisoner finds himself re-created, in spite of himself, by the commanding power of habit. Maconochie does not exaggerate in the least when he says, "By right arrangements, and with God's blessing, we may approach indefinitely near to the reform of *all* our criminals."

Prison Punishments.—Perhaps in no one thing is progress in prison reform more conspicuous than in the amelioration of prison punishments. A dozen years ago, and there was scarcely a prison in the United States where corporal punishments were entirely abandoned; and, twenty years ago, almost any warden would have laughed at the idea of conducting a prison without the daily infliction of bodily pain in some form. Even now there are but few prisons where corporal punishments are entirely out of use; but, in all well-conducted prisons, they are now the exception, and not the rule. And so rapidly are they disappearing that, within another decade, it is safe to predict they will only be known as relics of barbarism.

Last October, at the National Prison Congress in Detroit, when Major McClaughry, with twelve years' experience as warden of the penitentiary at Joliet, Ill., announced the entire absence of corporal punishments at the great prison under his care, with its sixteen hundred prisoners, and declared that any officer who inflicted such punishments not only injured the discipline of the prison, but degraded himself, he was greeted with applause which seemed substantially unanimous.

All honor to Capt. Maconochie, who fifty years ago inaugurated the new era, and declared that "vindictive personal punishments are corrupting in their influence. They appeal to the craven feelings of men, but they much more generally stimulate their ferocious and sensual ones!"

Again, in connection with the additional degradation of convict clothing, he wisely says: "What do manly though degraded men

care for chains, stripes, yellow jackets, dark cells, etc.? They despise even more than they hate them; and a fruitful source of crime, where they prevail, is the coveted honor of braving them."

The truth is, if we expect to reform men or even maintain the highest discipline, we must appeal to something better than the lash, the thumb-screw, or other form of physical torture. Possibly there may be exceptions; but, certainly, they are very rare.

Religion and Prison Reform.—As an element of progress in prison reform, religion, also, is entitled to the highest consideration. As Christianity has been the impelling force in the creation of prison reform, it must remain an instrument in its administration, if the best results are to be attained.

If men are to be reformed in prison,—or out of prison, for that matter,—the highest leverage that can be brought to play upon them is the recognition of their relations to God and the future. Education, as far as it is an unfolding process by which a man attains to a knowledge of his obligations and his limitations, is admirable, but not otherwise. As a standard of morals and as a sanction to the demands of the State, the divine law, in the nature of things, is a necessity of government everywhere, which cannot be dispensed with.

A godless prison, except as a pandemonium of wickedness and cruelty, is inconceivable; and hence there is no example in history of any permanent progress in prison reform except under the influence of Christianity and its teachings.

Christianity, however, as an official department of prison administration, is of recent origin. Sixty years ago there was not a resident chaplain in any American prison. To-day there are but very few American prisons without a chaplain, and certainly there are none where some form of religious service is not considered essential upon the Sabbath day.

Religion, however, as a motive power in prison, ought not to be confined to the Sabbath day or to sermons by the chaplain. On the contrary, the best work of the chaplain is done outside of the pulpit, by daily contact with the prisoners; and, in this work, he ought to have the co-operation of the prison officers and employes to an extent which shall make the whole atmosphere of the prison essentially religious. Example is more than precept; and words are of little value, unless they are emphasized by daily deeds of kindness and charity in all the relations of prison life. Cant and formalism are worthless anywhere; but, in prison, they are doubly wicked, for the prisoners have no escape to something better. Nevertheless, I am profoundly impressed with

a conviction that religion in its purity is absolutely essential for any large success in the reformation of prisoners.

The chaplaincy of a prison, however, in its requirements for consecration and self-sacrifice, is as imperative in its demands as any missionary station in the heart of heathendom; and no man can fill it acceptably, unless he is imbued to the utmost with the missionary spirit. There is no place in the world where a perfunctory official is more quickly detected and rejected than by prisoners, and there is no place on earth where true godliness is more highly appreciated.

In this work of securing proper religious influences in our prisons, Christian men and women outside ought to co-operate more largely than they do; and there are but few forms of Christian effort which can be made productive of greater good.

Because organized communities, as cities, counties, and States, have taken control of our charitable and correctional institutions, it does not follow that Christian men and women have nothing further to do for the care of the afflicted or the erring. If we are to contribute nothing but taxes, and have them ground out by official machines and distributed by official almoners, and consider that we have done our whole duty in the premises, then away with them forever; for they are worse than useless!

That such feeling exists is evident; and it must be corrected, if progress is to be made with power.

Money, doubtless, is a necessity; but personal service is a greater necessity.

Prisoners' Aid Associations.—Just now, perhaps, there is no form of organized Christian effort, in connection with prisoners, which can be made more effective, than in the formation and active operation of associations to aid and care for prisoners after their discharge.

In our prisons, as now constituted, the liberation of a prisoner at the expiration of his sentence is a matter of small moment to the prison management. He has served his term, and discharged his obligations to the State. The doors are opened; and, as he goes out, the books are closed with the doors, and the State ends all further interest in his welfare. The discharged prisoner, of course, goes where he is most welcome, and that, as a rule, is to his old haunts and among his old companions in crime; and "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

In most cases, this is the only thing he can do; for society will not give him a chance to do anything else. The brand of Cain is upon him, and every man's hand is against him.

If he had leprosy or small-pox or yellow fever or cholera, the hospitals would be open to him, and he would have a chance to live; but, as a discharged convict, all doors are barred against him. If, by falsehood or deceit, he obtains a living without a breach of the law, he has degraded his manhood, and must live in such constant dread of exposure that life is a burden.

Under such circumstances, is it surprising that statistics should show that sixty per cent. of discharged prisoners drift back again into lives of crime? In fact, is it not a substantial certainty that, unless discharged prisoners are enabled to support themselves by honest industry, they will assuredly make society support them?

In Great Britain, these facts were realized years ago, and they have found, to a large extent, a remedy in the organization of what are known as prisoners' aid associations; and they now number over sixty, and every prisoner in the kingdom knows, when he goes out, he can have a chance to live by honest industry, if he wants to. In fact, every prisoner, upon his discharge, is met by an agent of one of these associations, and invited to the opportunities of an honest life. The results of this kind of work are exceedingly valuable; and the post-penitentiary treatment of criminals is now considered, in England, indispensable in the work of reforming criminals.

If we are to keep pace with our British brethren, we must go and do likewise.

Conclusion.—There are many other steps of progress in prison reform of great value, if we had time to consider them,—such, for example, as the improved construction of prisons, the establishing of separate prisons for women, the professional training of prison officers, the unification of prison management, cumulative and probation sentences for minor offenders, and many matters of detail in the internal management of prisons. What we need, however, more than anything else just now, is a public sentiment so educated and aroused that it will no longer tolerate the fossilized iniquities which we have inherited from a paganized past. For progress in these directions, we have a right to look with hope to the younger States, where everything is new, and where they are at liberty to adopt that which is best without entailing additional expense. Here, in Minnesota, where a new prison is about to be constructed, you ought to see to it that the new era, and not the old, shall be recognized and adopted.

Perhaps one of the best things to do just now for the promotion of prison reform is to educate our members of Congress to the adop-

tion of a prison system for the United States prisoners which shall be a model for the individual States in construction and management. There is a bill pending now in the House of Representatives, which has been framed under the auspices of the National Prison Association, and which, if adopted, will create a system of graded prisons, and afford an opportunity to adopt the best experience of the world in prison management. This bill is "House Bill No. 8211," and every friend of prison reform should see to it that his representative shall not remain in ignorance of its merits.

United States prisoners, who now aggregate about ten thousand a year, are scattered far and wide through the several States and Territories. Those convicted of felonies average over one thousand, and are all confined in Northern penitentiaries from Maine to California. They are supposed to receive, and possibly do receive, the same care as the State prisoners with whom they are associated; but the officers having charge of them are not appointed or controlled by the United States, and the prisoners have no one to look to for protection except an annual inspector from the department of justice. These prisoners, in the main, are far away from home and friends; and those from the South are in a climate to which they are not accustomed, so that imprisonment to them is a heavier punishment than to their associates.

It should be remembered also that United States prisoners, as a rule, are a higher grade of men than ordinary criminals; and this of itself is sufficient to indicate a treatment which shall be reformatory, and not destructive, as at present.

The United States, so far as I am aware, is the only country on the globe where the government condemns its citizens for violations of law, and then shirks all responsibility for their care and discipline. It is a shame to our civilization, and ought to be corrected.

In the consideration of prison reform, which properly includes all methods for dealing with the criminal classes, it is very evident that we, as a nation, are not abreast of the best experience of the age. It is true we have here and there individual exceptions, but they are mere oases in a continental desert. So startling is the increase of crime that it is very evident that society itself is in jeopardy, unless something is done to arrest and reverse this order of growth.

According to the United States census tables, crime has more than doubled every ten years for half a century past; and still the tide is rising. It is evident that something must be done, or we die.

Elsewhere, the reformatory methods we have described have

resulted in a reduction of crime; and, year by year, it goes downward instead of upward, and common prudence indicates that we should adopt such methods.

It is to the apathy of the churches, more than to anything else, that we must ascribe the slowness of prison reform. Where Christianity fails in philanthropic work, everything fails; for outside of it there is none.

What we need more than anything else is a rebaptism of the churches with that divine afflatus which manifests itself in personal service for the good of others, and recognizes the crowning fact of philosophy, as well as of Christianity,—that *the only way to get good is by doing good*.

If Christians will remember the admonition of their Master, and will do the work indicated by him as their reasonable service, our jails will cease to be the schools of crime that they are, and our penitentiaries will go forward to a higher plane of usefulness and efficiency.

And so also with our benevolent and charitable institutions. What we need for their advancement more than anything else is the active co-operation of Christian men and women, and of Christian churches, to an extent which shall compel a higher manifestation of public sentiment and of public law.

"Then shall the King say, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

