

This memorial of the National prison reform congress of Baltimore, To the Senate and House of representatives of the United States, respectfully shows ... Baltimore. 1873.

THIS MEMORIAL OF THE NATIONAL PRISON REFORM CONGRESS OF BALTIMORE, *To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, Respectfully shows:*

That a National Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline was held in Cincinnati, in October, 1870, at which it was voted to form an organization to be known as the National Prison Association of the United States of America, and also to convene an International Penitentiary Congress in London.

The Association was constituted in April, 1871, and the Congress of London was held in July, 1872. The Government of the United States, by a joint resolution of the two Houses of Congress, passed March 7, 1871, placed itself at the head of this movement, and the other governments of the civilized world, both European and American, promptly gave their adhesion. The Congress proved a great success, the credit of which was freely awarded by the other governments to the initiative of the United States. The number of delegates present was about four hundred—more than twenty distinct governments being officially represented. An immense impulse has thus been given to the cause of Prison Reform throughout the world—an impulse which has already made itself felt in all parts of the United States. The proof of this newly awakened interest, and the consequent determination to push the work of solid reforms in that great interest of society which is embraced in Prison Discipline, is found in the Convention now assembled in Baltimore. This body is convened at the call of the National Prison Association—an Association which represents the interest of Prison Reform for the whole country. The single aim of the Association is the prevention and repression of crime, which it seeks through the amendment of the criminal law, the improvement of the penal and reformatory institutions of the country, the study and application of the best means of saving liberated prisoners from a return to crime, and, above all else, the discovery and use of agencies of a preventive character, so as to save the young from a first fall.

As incidental to its main work, the Association desires to collect the broadest, most complete, and most trustworthy statistics attainable, relative to the administration of criminal justice and the State Prisons, Houses of Correction, Common Jails, and Juvenile Reformatories, in every State and Territory of the Union. The Association regards this department of its work as essential to the best success of all the others, and, therefore, of paramount importance; an opinion fully shared by the Congress of Baltimore. The laws of criminal phenomena can be ascertained only by the accumulation and analysis of facts. Returns of such facts, carefully gathered from a wide field of observation, are indispensable to enable us to judge of the effect of any law, or any system of administration, which may have been put in operation. What we want to know is the fact; but a knowledge of the facts

relating to so complex a subject as that of crime and criminal administration implies a mass of figures, collected from all quarters, and arranged and tabulated with reference to some definite object. It is such returns alone that yield inferences of practical value. We want to get an average; but in order to this, we must have a wide scope both in the range and character of the returns. Only on this condition shall we be able to feel that our inferences rest, not upon mere incidents of the phenomena, which may be partial, casual and immaterial, but on the phenomena themselves, apart from variations which are only temporary or adventitious. If, therefore, we would test the average results of a system of prison discipline, we must collect our facts from all quarters. Returns from one or two localities will be without value; they may even prove deceptive and misleading. If we would know what a prison system can accomplish on the average, we must know what it is effecting in the manufacturing towns and in the rural villages; what in the seaports and in the mountains and valleys of the interior; what in the coal beds and the gold mines. The essential, inwrought power of a system of Prison Discipline then comes out and makes itself manifest, when it is seen in conflict with the special obstacles it has to encounter in the commercial, manufacturing, agricultural, and mining populations of a country. The result of its struggle with all opposing difficulties is the result which alone is of any worth to us. And this can be known only as the facts are gathered from all these fields, and are collated, digested, and reduced to tabulated forms upon some uniform system, or at least in a way that will admit of practical comparison.

There is a special fact which this Convention desires to bring to the notice of Congress: it is that the Congress of London, which, but for the action of the United States Government, would not have been held, or if held, would have been a body of far less dignity and weight than it actually proved to be, appointed a Permanent International Commission, whose chief function was expressly declared to be to organize and carry into effect a complete system of International, Criminal and Penitentiary Statistics, based on common principles and so arranged as to be a trustworthy measure and index of Crime, Criminal Administration and Prison Discipline in all civilized countries. It was well understood, and the fact was freely expressed, that so vast a design, and one as beneficent and important as it is vast, can be accomplished only through the generous cooperation of the Governments of the whole civilized world, which, it was believed would be promptly accorded.

The National Prison Association proposes to give special attention to this branch of its work, but it is obvious that to do it well and fully will involve great labor and a considerable expenditure of money. Will Congress kindly co-operate in this work? It is our conviction that the results will justify the wisdom and patriotism of such a policy. This Convention is composed of delegates representing nearly every State and some of the Territories of the Union, and the present communication to Congress expresses its unanimous judgment of the work herein set forth.

By order of the Congress:

HORATIO SEYMOUR, *President.*

E. C. WINES, *Secretary.*

Baltimore, January 24 th, 1873.

The committee, appointed to bring this matter to the notice of Congress, is composed of the following gentlemen: Hon. Horatio Seymour, of New York, Chairman; Hon. Richard Vaux, of Pennsylvania; Gen. J. L. Miner, of Mo.; Gen. B. B. Eggleston, of Mississippi; Hon. C. J. Walker, of Michigan; Gov. F. Smith, of New Hampshire; Hon. Edward Earle, of Massachusetts; Hon. R. K. White, of Kentucky; Hon. Isaac D. Jones, of Maryland; Murray Shipley, Esq., of Ohio; Prof. W. F. Phelps, of Minnesota; Rev. H. W. Bellows, D. D., of New York; and Dr. E. C. Wines, of New York.

Summary of a Discussion on International Penitentiary Statistics, had in the Prison Reform Congress of London, 1872.

Mr. Beltrani-Scalia, of Italy, said that it was needless to show the utility of Penitentiary Statistics, which alone could furnish legislators with the elements necessary for a reform of the penal system, and which, moreover, would furnish judges with valuable hints in the application of punishments. He thought that an International Commission ought to be appointed, comprising representatives of the different Countries, which would lay down the basis of International Prison Statistics, leaving each Government free to determine the form and time of the official publications which it considered useful. The Statistical Congress at the Hague, in 1870, had expressed a wish that the tables be prepared, not only in the language of the country, but also in French. He regarded the suggestion as a good one.

Count Sollohub, of Russia, considered the suggestion of Mr. Beltrani-Scalia, with regard to an International Commission not only wise, but feasible. He felt sure no country would refuse to cooperate.

Dr. Frey, of Austria, thought that a comparison between crime and criminal administration in different countries would be attended with some difficulty, though he hoped not insuperable. A different percentage under different systems might be due to nationality, not to system. Thus, if the question arose how many persons suffered from lunacy under isolated and how many under congregate imprisonment, the percentage of lunacy in the whole country should be considered. So with regard to the rate of mortality in prisons.

Dr. Guillaume, of Switzerland, urged the importance of criminal statistics as a guide to prison reforms; minute information concerning the criminal should be obtained, so that the springs of crime might be ascertained and dried up.

Professor Leon Levi, of England, proposed that an International Commission be appointed by this Congress to lay down the principles and prepare the formulas for a yearly statistical report on Crime and Prison Discipline. Uniformity in the nomenclature of crime is indispensable in order to ascertain its increase or decrease. What was murder in one country was not murder in another. A system should be devised that would guard against ambiguity in this and other respects.

- To carry out the main idea embodied in the foregoing discussion, as well as for other work connected with Penitentiary Reform, a permanent International Commission was created by the Congress of London, consisting of the following gentlemen: Dr. Wines, of the United States, President; Signor Beltrani-Scalia, of Italy, Secretary; M. Loyson, of France; Baron Franz Von Holtzendorff, of Germany; Count W. Sollohub, of Russia; G. W. Hastings, Esq., of England; M. Stevens, of Belgium; Dr. Frey, of Austria; Mr. M. S. Pols, of Netherlands; and Dr. Guillaume, of Switzerland.

N. B. The above committee is to hold its first meeting at Brussels, Belgium, in Sept. 1873.

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