

no such example has ever been seen before among the most enlightened nations. Did Puritans and Cavaliers ever join hands in harmony, or the Jacobites and the followers of the House of Hanover? It was only after the scaffolds and proscriptions of the Restoration, offset later by those which followed the bloody field of Culloden—it was only after generations had passed and death had removed the last of the "Pretenders" that Great Britain ceased to be torn by insurrections and party hatreds. But even at this day, what Irishman can tamely accept the position into which England has forced his country? What Polish patriot has ever acknowledged that Russian conquest was best for his people, though more than half a century has elapsed since its completion?

No nation ever passed through such an internal conflict as ours. The nearest approach to it was the struggle of La Vendée against the French Republic in 1793-98; and after three generations it can hardly be considered as altogether ended, for no Vendéan leader has ever given hearty and complete allegiance to any government that France has had since those days, except to the Bourbon restoration. The descendants of La Rochejaquelein, of Charette, Lescure, and Cathelineau, as well as the sons of the brave and fanatical Vendéan peasantry of '93, are to-day the bitterest foes of the Republic, and proclaim openly, even in the National Assembly, their purpose to destroy it and to reëstablish "the throne and the altar" upon its ruins.

Now mark the contrast. We have not had to wait until another generation took the place of the combatants. Less than twenty-five years after the close of our gigantic war the very men who fought it meet spontaneously in fraternal concourse, without the least utilitarian or political purpose, but simply in obedience to the irresistible impulse of their hearts, whose desire for union and harmony amounts to enthusiasm; and the unanimous sentiment of all is one of exulting happiness at the result which has made us one people, more thoroughly united than we ever were before, rallying with boundless devotion around the national flag and Government.

What is the cause of this wonderful contrast?

Respect for each other's valor, though a factor, would not have sufficed to efface animosities. Surely the Russians must have honored the Polish patriots' bravery; and the Blues, who fought for the Republic, could not help respecting the reckless daring of the Whites, who fought for king and altar in La Vendée. But this feeling has failed to allay the rancor and hatred caused by past but still unforgettably cruelities.

Nothing can account for the contrast but the superior intelligence, generosity, and magnanimity of the American people, who even in the heat and violence of conflict never regarded as a crime an honest difference of opinion, even though carried to the extreme of armed resistance. Whatever may be said by those who never realized what war has been and is in other lands, there is no question that, on the whole, our war was the mildest and most humane ever fought, and the freest from those excesses usually considered the inevitable concomitants of war. There were no slaughterers of prisoners after surrender, no scaffolds, no *fusillades*, no *noyades* of the vanquished, as in Poland and La Vendée; and never were fewer men executed as spies, or guerrillas (*francs-tireurs*), according to the

recognized code of war. And when, at the final act of the drama, the conqueror had the power to demand unconditional surrender, how generous were the terms offered, how regardful of even the soldierlike honor of the conquered!

Although after the struggle of arms had ceased, some oppressive legislation, which would have better been omitted, prevailed for a short time, yet not one of the so-called rebels was deprived of his life or property, or driven into banishment, for any act done during the war. Years ago even the most prominent supporters of the late Confederacy were readmitted to all the privileges of American citizenship. As said Governor Beaver the other day, "You are our equals in courage, perseverance, and intelligence; our equals in all that dignifies and adorns the American character." He might have added also—equals in devotion to our common country.

This is why there are no bitter and revengeful memories of bloodshed, otherwise than on the battle-field in honorable warfare, to perpetuate hatred and animosities between us and our descendants. This is why the Confederate veterans acknowledge in all sincerity of heart that the war ended in the way that was *the best* for the entire country, and why those who wore the blue and the gray can clasp hands with heartfelt sympathy and affection, and all of us, North and South, are ready to shed all our blood, if need be, in defense of our truly reunited country. This is why we have no Poland, no Ireland, no Vendée in our blessed land. This is why we can point all other nations to the unequalled record of American generosity, forgiveness, and magnanimity, far more glorious than the victories of war. Above all, this is why we can leave to our posterity the noblest inheritance and the noblest memories that any people ever had. May they ever remember the grand old maxim: *Noblesse oblige!*

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#### Is the Siberian Exile System to be at Once Abolished?

I DO not believe that the exile system is upon the eve of abolition, nor that it will be abolished within the next ten years; and I will state, as briefly as I can, some of the reasons for my skepticism.

The number of criminals now sent to Siberia annually, not including innocent wives and children, varies from 10,000 to 13,000. These criminals may be divided, for my present purpose, into five great classes, viz.: First, hard-labor convicts; secondly, compulsory colonists; thirdly, communal exiles (persons banished, on account of their generally bad character, by the village communes to which they belong); fourthly, vagrants; and, fifthly, political and religious exiles. The proportion which each of these classes bears to the whole number of banished may be shown in tabular form as follows, the figures being taken from the report of the Bureau of Exile Administration for the year 1885:

Criminal Class.	Number.	Per cent. of whole number.
Hard-labor convicts.....	1551	15.16
Compulsory colonists.....	2841	27.78
Communal exiles.....	3751	36.66
Vagrants.....	1719	16.80
Political and religious exiles.....	368	3.60
Total.....	10,230	100.

When this great body of offenders reaches Siberia it is divided into two penal classes, viz.: First, criminals who are shut up in prisons, and, secondly, criminals who are assigned places of residence and are there liberated to find subsistence for themselves as best they may. The first of these penal classes—that of the imprisoned—comprises all the hard-labor convicts and all of the vagrants, and numbers in the aggregate 3270. The second, or liberated class, includes all of the compulsory colonists, all of the communal exiles, and most of the political and religious offenders, and numbers in the aggregate nearly seven thousand.

It is manifest, I think, that when a flood of ten thousand vagrants, thieves, counterfeiters, burglars, highway robbers, and murderers is poured into a colony, the class most injurious to the welfare of that colony is the liberated class. If a burglar or a thief is sent to Siberia and shut up in prison, he is no more dangerous to society there than he would be if he were imprisoned in European Russia. The place of his confinement is immaterial, because he has no opportunity to do evil. If, however, he is sent to Siberia and there turned loose, he resumes his criminal activity, and becomes at once a menace to social order and security.

For more than half a century the people of Siberia have been groaning under the heavy burden of criminal exile. More than two-thirds of all the crimes committed in the colony are committed by common felons who have been transported thither and then set at liberty, and the peasants everywhere are becoming demoralized by enforced association with thieves, burglars, counterfeiters, and embezzlers from the cities of European Russia. The honest and prosperous inhabitants of the country protest, of course, against a system which liberates every year, at their very doors, an army of seven thousand worthless characters and felons. They do not object to the hard-labor convicts, because the latter are shut up in jails. They do not object to the political and religious exiles, because such offenders frequently make the best of citizens. Their protests are aimed particularly at the compulsory colonists. Half the large towns in Siberia have sent memorials to the Crown asking to be relieved from the burden of communal exile and criminal colonization; nearly all the governors of the Siberian provinces have called attention in their official reports to the disastrous consequences of the exile system as it is now administered; the liberal Siberian newspapers have been hammering at the subject for more than a decade; three or four specially appointed commissions have condemned criminal colonization and have suggested methods of reform—and yet nothing whatever has been done. Every plan of reform submitted to the Tsar's ministers up to the present time has been found by them to be either impracticable or inexpedient, and has finally been put, as the Russians say, "under the table-cloth." Not a single plan, I believe, has ever reached the stage of discussion in the Council of State.

Within the past five years great pressure has been brought to bear upon the Government to induce it so to modify the exile system as to relieve the Siberian people of a part of their heavy burden. Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi, the Chief of the Prison Department, has made a journey of inspection through Siberia, and has become convinced of the necessity for reform; General Ignatiev and Baron Korff—both men of energy and

ability—have been appointed governors-general in eastern Siberia and have insisted pertinaciously upon the abolition of criminal colonization; the liberal Siberian press, encouraged by the support of these high officials, has assailed the exile system with renewed courage and vigor; and the Tsar's ministers have been forced at last to consider once more the expediency, not of abolishing the exile system as a whole, but of so modifying it as to render it less burdensome to the inhabitants of a rich and promising colony. In giving the subject such consideration the Government is not actuated by humane motives—that is, by a desire to lessen the enormous amount of misery which the exile system causes; it wishes merely to put a stop to annoying complaints and protests, and to increase the productiveness and tax-paying capacity of Siberia. In approaching the question from this point of view, the Government sees that the most irritating and burdensome feature of the exile system is the colonization of common criminals in the Siberian towns and villages. It is this against which the Siberian people protest, and it is this which lessens the productive capacity of the colony. Other features of the system are more cruel,—more unjust and disgraceful,—but this is the one which makes most trouble, and which, therefore, must first have attention.

Just before I left St. Petersburg for the United States on my return from Siberia, I took breakfast with Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi, the Chief of the Russian Prison Department, and had a long and interesting conversation with him concerning the exile system and the plan of reform which he was then maturing, and which is now said by the London "Spectator" to involve the entire abolition of exile to Siberia as a method of punishment. The view of the question taken by Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi at that time was precisely the view which I have indicated in the preceding paragraph. He did not expect to bring about the abolition of the exile system as a whole, nor did he intend to recommend such a step to the Tsar's ministers. All that he proposed to do was so to restrict and reform the system as to make it more tolerable to the Siberian people. This he expected to accomplish by somewhat limiting communal exile, by abolishing criminal colonization, and by increasing the severity of the punishment for vagrancy. The reform was not intended to change the status of hard-labor convicts, nor of administrative exiles, nor of political; and Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi told me distinctly that for political convicts a new prison was then building at the famous and dreaded mine of Akatui, in the most lonely and desolate part of the Trans-Baikal. Of this fact I was already aware, as I had visited the mine of Akatui, and had seen there the timber prepared for the building. It was the intention of the Government, Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi said, to pump out the abandoned Akatui mine, which was then half full of water, and set the politicals to work in it.

At the time of our conversation Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi did not regard the complete abolition of the exile system as even possible, much less practicable. He estimated that it would cost at least ten million rubles to build in European Russia the prisons which the abolition of the exile system would necessitate, and he did not think that, in the straitened condition of the Russian finances, it would be possible to appropriate such

an amount for such a purpose. Furthermore, the complete abolition of the system would make it necessary to revise and remodel the whole penal code, and to this step objections would probably be raised by the Minister of Justice. Under such circumstances, all that the Prison Department hoped to do was to make such changes in the system as would render it less objectionable to the Siberian people and less burdensome to the commercial interests of an important colony.

Since my interview with Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi, the scheme of reform which he then had under consideration has been completed, and, if it has not been "put under the table-cloth," it is now awaiting the action of the Council of State. I have every reason to believe that no material change has been made in it since I discussed it with its author. Its provisions have been published repeatedly in the Siberian newspapers, and as recently as May of the present year the "Russian Courier" printed an abstract of it by sections. The plan is, in brief:

*First.* To substitute imprisonment in European Russia for forced colonization in Siberia, and to retain the latter form of punishment only "for certain offenses" and "in certain exceptional cases." The "Spectator" may have taken this to mean that the whole exile system is to be abolished; but if so, it misunderstands the words. The meaning is, simply, that one class of exiles—namely, "poselentse," or compulsory colonists—are hereafter to be shut up in European Russia, unless, "for certain offenses" and "in certain exceptional cases," the Government shall see fit to send them to Siberia as usual. This reform would have affected in the year 1885 only 2841 exiles out of a total number of 10,230.

*Second.* The plan proposes to increase the severity of the punishment for vagrancy by sending all vagrants into hard labor on the island of Saghalien. This section is aimed at runaway convicts, thousands of whom spend every winter in prison and every summer in roaming about the colony.

*Third.* The plan proposes to deprive village communes of the right to banish peasants who return to their homes after serving out a term of imprisonment for crime. This is a limitation of the exile system as it now exists, and in 1885 it would have affected 2651 exiles out of a total of 10,230.

*Fourth.* The plan proposes to retain communal exile, but to compel every commune to support, for a term of two years, the persons whom it exiles. The amount of money to be paid for the support of such persons is fixed at \$18.25 a year per capita, or five cents a day for every exile. To what extent this would, in practice, operate as a restriction of communal exile, I am unable to say. The "Siberian Gazette," in a recent number, expressed the opinion that it would affect it very slightly, and attacked the plan vigorously upon the ground of its inadequacy.

*Fifth.* The plan proposes to modify sections 17 and 20 of the penal code so as to bring them into harmony with the changes in the exile system above provided for.

This is all that there is in the scheme of reform submitted by the Prison Department to the Tsar's ministers. It is, of course, a step in the right direction, but it comes far short of a complete abolition of the exile system, inasmuch as it does not touch the banishment to Siberia of political offenders, nor the transpor-

tation of hard-labor convicts to the mines, nor the deportation of religious dissenters; and it restricts communal exile only to a very limited extent. The plan has been discussed at intervals by the Russian newspaper press ever since the return of Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi from his Siberian journey of inspection, and I have yet to see the first hint or intimation that the Prison Department has even so much as suggested the entire abolition of the exile system. The plan which Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi outlined to me is precisely the plan which, according to the Russian and Siberian newspapers, is now pending.

The only question which remains for consideration is, Will this limited measure of reform be adopted? In my judgment it will not be. Before such a plan as this goes to the Council of State for discussion, it is always submitted to the ministers within whose jurisdiction it falls—in the present case to the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of the Interior. Two of these officers have already disapproved the plan of the Prison Department, in whole or in part, upon the ground that it is impracticable, or that it goes too far. The Minister of Finance opposes it *in toto*, and says that "the reasons assigned by Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi for the proposed changes in the exile system are not sufficiently convincing." I have not space for Mr. Vishnegradski's argument against the reform, but it may be found in the "Siberian Gazette," No. 34, p. 4, May 20, 1888. The Minister of Justice declares that the proposed reform cannot be carried out "without the essential destruction of the whole existing system of punishment for crime"; and that "the substitution of imprisonment in European Russia for colonization in Siberia is impossible." Furthermore, he goes out of his way to say that "exile to Siberia for political and religious offenses must be preserved." ("Eastern Review," p. 11, St. Petersburg, April 22, 1888.)

Of course, the opposition of two powerful ministers is not necessarily fatal to a measure of reform of this kind; but, since in the present case they are the ministers who are most directly interested, their influence is very strong, and if they be supported by the Minister of the Interior they will almost certainly be able to withhold Mr. Galkin-Vrasskoi's plan from the Council of State. They will simply "put it under the table-cloth," and report to the Tsar that they find it utterly impracticable.

If this were the first time that the question of Siberian exile had been agitated, and if this were the first measure of reform that had been submitted to the Tsar's ministers, there might be some reason to hope for a change in the existing situation of affairs; but it is an old, old story. Able men than Galkin-Vrasskoi have condemned the exile system and have submitted plans of reform; stronger governors-general than Ignatief and Korff have insisted upon the abolition of criminal colonization; but their efforts have always been fruitless, and their plans have always been found "impracticable." After such an investigation of the exile system as I have recently made, I hope with all my heart that it may be abolished, and I shall do all that lies in my power; but I greatly fear, nevertheless, that it will remain, for many years, one of the darkest blots upon the civilization of the nineteenth century.

George Kennan.