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# The Daily Record

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## PRISON REFORM IN ENGLAND.

Last week an important measure dealing with the treatment of criminals was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Gladstone. The subject is one that has long called for action. The law relating to crime has, for many centuries, been haphazard both in conception and in application; and even today there are anomalies, springing from the Anglo-Saxon or the Norman codes of justice, which it is impossible to defend on any ground of expediency or logic. It must be admitted that during the last hundred years great advances have been made in the theory of criminal law. A vast mass of technicalities has been swept away; the absurdly dogmatic distinctions of the common law between felony and misdemeanour, which led, on the one hand, to the unjust conviction of slight offenders and, on the other, to benevolent mendacity on the part of juries, have been largely done away with or supplemented by statutory enactments. Today it is less likely than in Blackstone's time that the law should look like legalized injustice. Nevertheless, England is still backward in the treatment of criminals. It is not many years since the psychology of crime began to aspire beyond such general terms as the *mens rea*, evil intent, the extent of malice, the probable provocation. In point of fact, such elements of crime as heredity, environment, or sheer ignorance are not yet recognized in the law courts, although they are beginning to be recognized in the execution of the law. Mr. Gladstone's Bill, if it passes through Parliament, as it doubtless will, substantially unchanged, will regularize the practice of the Courts in the exercise of punitive and preventive authority, and will carry forward at a single step the whole process of humanizing the law. Mr. Gladstone's Bill falls under two heads. It deals, under the first head, with youthful offenders, who should still be subject to some corrective treatment; and, under the second, with apparently incorrigible rogues, whose liberty is a menace to society. In the first case the Borstal system, which has already been successfully applied in England in a modified form, is to be introduced. A reformatory course of not less than a year's duration is to be gone through in each instance. If, however, the offender is habitually a criminal, that is to say, if he has already been convicted previously on three charges, he comes within the second category. Such an offender will not only have to serve his sentence, but at the end of it he will be detained for a further reformatory period, during which every effort will be made to shew him a better course of life and every opportunity will be given him for reform. He will be well treated, and, if it is considered sufficiently safe, he will be released after a short detention. Otherwise, his detention may be longer, and even of considerable length, although it does not appear that it will be for life.

From such a course there is everything to hope. In America, although the conditions of environment where crime is most prevalent are somewhat different and the type of criminal, therefore, peculiar to the conditions, the application of modern research to crime is proving increasingly successful. In England, too, the reformatory system has been making great strides, and has received fresh encouragement under the Criminal Appeal Act which came into force last April. All these things are healthy symptoms, but if crime is to be thoroughly combated it must be attacked at its roots. It remains to be seen what can be done in the way of regulating the pernicious hereditary taint that clings to whole classes of the community, in educat-

ing the children of the squalid poor, in bettering the housing conditions of the slums, in raising the morals without crushing the vitality of thousands of hopeless and helpless people. Charity is not enough, legislation is not enough. Those who have lived and worked among the poor of London often pause discouraged by the vastness of the evil they are trying to overcome. So low are many sunk that even the punishments of the law have ceased to inspire terror. Side by side, however, with the insuperable vices of the born criminal there has been much to stimulate earnest workers to fresh efforts; and it is largely because of the promise lying in persistent, rational education that Mr. Gladstone's Bill is so welcome.

## GENERAL NEWS.

### NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

#### ANOTHER IMPERIAL GERMAN VISIT?

According to reports current in Court circles it is now practically settled (says the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent in Berlin) that the German Emperor will, in the late autumn, spend another holiday on the South Coast of England. It is said that agents of the Court Marshal have already been searching for a suitable country mansion, as it is uncertain whether Highcliffe could again be placed at His Majesty's disposal.

The Emperor's sojourn in England, it is declared, would be primarily dictated by considerations of health, but it would almost certainly be associated with another visit to Windsor, at the invitation of King Edward, who is further said to contemplate arranging a meeting on British soil between the German Sovereign and the Czar.

The report that King Edward would have a meeting with the German Emperor at Homburg, although officially contradicted, has, nevertheless, been revived in a somewhat more positive form.

So far in advance it is practically impossible to obtain anything like official confirmation of such rumours. The answer invariably returned to the inquirer is that it is not usual for the Court arrangements to be announced so long before the period to which they refer, but that, in view of the Emperor's well-known liking for England, the English people, and the English life, the chance of his repeating the visit of last November may always be reckoned among the possibilities of the near future.

#### THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

At the sitting on Monday it was definitely settled that the question of the forthcoming meeting of King Edward with the Czar of Russia at Reval should be raised and discussed today during the debate on the vote for the Foreign Office.

Replying to a question with regard to the sinking of the British steamer "Knight Commander" by the Russians during the Russo-Japanese war, Sir Edward Grey said that the Russian Government had declined the proposal of His Majesty's Government that the matter should be referred to a Court of arbitration. The further steps that might be necessary in the affair were under consideration.

Captain Faber (*Cons.*, Hampshire) asked, with reference to the meeting lately held in Berlin for founding an international Society for the investigation of cancer, whether the Government would promise its support to the movement.

The Prime Minister said he was not at this moment in a position to give the promise asked for

by Captain Faber. The administrators of the Fund supported by the Government for the investigation of cancer, were doing all they could to further an exchange of knowledge on the subject among all countries.

The Finance Bill passed the second reading after two days' debate. The Opposition speakers based their criticisms of the measure chiefly on the fact that no provision was made for the Old Age Pensions and building of ships next year. The Prime Minister drew attention to the extraordinary diminution of the public debt, and said that free trade had given England financial firmness of which she might be proud. In the course of the debate the speakers of all parties constantly pointed to the German system of finance and taxation in support of their arguments.

#### THE MILITARY POWER OF ENGLAND.

The Roman journal *Memento* publishes an interview with a military attaché, whose name is not given, in regard to the Anglo-French *entente cordiale*. The attaché said it is an absolute fallacy to regard England as unable to extend military assistance to France. She does not possess so formidable or so well organised an army as either France or Germany, it is true, but she can always mobilise several hundred thousand men. She possesses excellent artillery, very good cavalry, and an absolutely perfect commissariat and supply service. For the rest, she at present possesses the only generals in Europe who have actually given proof on the field of battle of good military abilities.

#### EARL'S BROTHER KILLED IN EGYPT.

Capt. the Hon. Reginald Forbes, brother of the Earl of Granard, who has lost his life in the Soudan through a gun accident, says a Cairo despatch, went out alone on the morning of May 28 near Illiri. As he did not return a search was made, and his body was found near Tungara. It is thought probable that the officers' pony shied, unseating him, and that he was thrown against his rifle, causing it to go off. Death appears to have been instantaneous. The deceased was buried on May 29 at Illiri.

#### YOUTHFUL PRODIGY AT ETON.

Mr. E. Millington Drake, Captain of the Boats at Eton, is to appear as Chrysale in Molière's "Les Femmes Savantes," in the Fourth of June celebrations at the school. Those who have seen him say that there has never been such an actor at Eton or any other public school. He has been studying the part under one of the most famous actors in Paris. Canon Lyttelton, headmaster of Eton, stated on Saturday that Mr. Millington Drake was far and away the greatest boy actor he had seen. In the part in which he will appear today the head considered him perfect. His acting was splendid, and his Parisian accent wonderfully good. As Captain of the Boats, Mr. Millington Drake is the leading boy in the school. He is of splendid physique, and is one of the best all-round boys Eton has ever turned out.

#### NEWS FROM AMERICA.

##### STEEL PRICES REDUCED.

The reduction in the price of bar-steel by four dollars per ton came into force on Tuesday, says a New York cable.

(Continued on page 2.)