

NATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS.

*Extract from a valuable report by Rev. Robert Hall,
read at Annual Meeting of Prisoners'
Aid Association.*

THE PROBATION SYSTEM.

Hon. S. J. Barrows, of Massachusetts, advocated the necessity of securing the interest of the public, especially the Christian people, by the spreading of knowledge amongst them as to the condition of the prisoner, and the possibilities of his reformation. He emphasized the need of keeping out of prison. He referred to laws to this end existing in Belgium and in France, and said that in France a prisoner, after being convicted, is placed on probation after sentence is pronounced. In Massachusetts the sentence is withheld while the prisoner is on probation. By this method, he said, five out of one hundred fell back into criminal lives, the other ninety-five became good, law-abiding citizens, and were saved from the stigma of having been convicts.

INDETERMINATE SENTENCES.

President Garvin, of the Wardens' Association strongly advocated the indeterminate sentence, declaring it to be in his opinion for all prisoners, the only logical method of dealing with the delinquent class, having a definite deterrent influence upon criminals, and to habitual offenders it would be a danger sign showing the new risks in the commission of crime.

"It would sift reformatory prisoners from the incorrigibles, powerful motives for the abandonment of criminal practices would be created and safeguards for the protection of society would be erected." "The State might as reasonably send an insane person to an asylum for a definite period as to commit a criminal to prison

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