

Russia is advancing towards a milder civilization. An imperial ukase recently abolished almost entirely the punishment of exile to Siberia. The lot of home criminals has also been ameliorated. Till now a sentence of imprisonment was tantamount in its civil effects to a sentence of death. The condemned man's property went to his heirs, and his wife was free to marry again. Henceforth the convict loses his freedom for the term of his sentence and no more. When he comes out of prison he will resume the ordinary relations of life.

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Vessels of 2,000 tons' burden can now sail up to Brussels in the very heart of Belgium. Previous to this improvement, says *Current History*, ships could ascend the Scheldt to its junction with the Ruppel at Willebroeck, from which point there was navigation by canal to Brussels only for vessels of 300 tons, burden. The cost of widening and deepening the nineteen miles of canal was \$7,000,000. Did anybody say that Catholic countries are unprogressive? Ireland under Home Rule would be another Belgium in point of prosperity.

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There are ten Universities in the Russian Empire including one at Tomsk in Asiatic Russia. On the 1st Jan. 1895 the number of students in these Universities was 14,817 of whom 1,803 were Roman Catholics.

