

was due to circumstances over which neither they nor I had control, and to which further reference, here, were unnecessary and inopportune.

The subject of prison discipline, administration and reform, is occupying much attention among the thoughtful and philanthropic throughout the civilized world. Conventions and Congresses have been held, whereat delegates from different countries have compared opinions and told their experience. This has been done at the instance of earnest and benevolent men, at the expenditure of much time, labour and money. The object sought is the improvement of existing systems by the introduction of such reforms and amendments as may commend themselves to the representatives of the various countries as worthy of being engrafted upon their own plan.

In the Congress held, in London, in 1872, twenty distinct nationalities were officially represented. Moreover, as the very able report of Dr. Wines says:—
 “Numerous delegates were present with commissions from national committees, prison societies, managing boards of penitentiary and reformatory establishments, societies of jurists, criminal law departments of universities, and last, though not least, the Institute of France, the most illustrious body of *savans* in the world. Between official and non-official members—that is, delegates commissioned by Government, and delegates commissioned by such organizations as those named in the preceding sentence—the Congress must have numbered not much, if any, less than four hundred members.”

It is to be regretted that Canada was conspicuous at this Congress by the absence of any accredited representative of the Government, and of a delegate in any capacity. Whether from motives of economy, indifference, or a belief that our penal system needed no improvement, the Government allowed an opportunity to pass, in 1872, from which, by the attendance of one or more qualified delegates, the country could have, doubtless, derived very beneficial results. When so much interest has been taken, not alone by the leading countries of Europe, and by the Governments of many of the States of the neighbouring Union, but also by the German States, along with the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, and even Mexico; in a matter of so much importance, the non-representation of Canada at the London Congress, must be attributed to oversight, or if the matter were at all considered, to a policy of false economy.

I refer to the subject, at this late date, to indicate the wisdom of following the example set by other countries. They afford opportunities to the proper officers connected with their penal systems, to add to their knowledge and experience. Why not Canada do likewise?

Another Congress will be soon held at Stockholm. I think our Penitentiary system—although of comparatively recent growth—has been sufficiently progressive and successful in its results to warrant the expectation that the Government would desire to secure for it the means necessary to improve and perfect it still more. To this end I think much could be accomplished, were Canada represented in the forthcoming International Congress, and in all such assemblies, by a delegate, whose practical experience in affairs relating to Penitentiaries would readily enable him to master whatever would be profitable to adopt to our system. Few men of the age are more competent to express an opinion upon the advantages to be derived from those periodic meetings for the discussion of reform in prison discipline and administration than Dr. E. C. Wines. I do not know of any one who devotes more time, attention, or study to the great and benevolent work that he does. He was the United States' Commissioner to the London Congress, and it was mainly to his exertions the holding of that International assembly and its ultimate success were due. Dr. Wines felt much disappointment and regret that Canada was not represented in 1872. Writing to me a short time since, he expressed a strong hope that so great a mistake would not again occur.

I trust, sir, that you, who take such an earnest interest in all that relates to Penitentiaries, will not consider these remarks amiss. Indeed, I feel confident you will give my suggestions practical effect if you think any good would result from