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Transportation to Siberia.

It was in the reign of Alexis Mikhailovitch, father of Peter the Great, about the middle of the seventeenth century, that Siberia first attracted the attention of criminals, and from that time it has received a continuous stream of exiles. The penal settlements have increased largely under the late Emperor Nicholas, and from about 6,000 in the middle of the century, they rose to 18,000 or 19,000 under Alexander II., and are now said to number 25,000 under Alexander III., not counting other countries than Siberia, or the 20,000. While a portion of these convicts in Siberia are sentenced to penal servitude, others are sent much longer distances simply for the purpose of forming a population in the country at certain places. The government of Tobolsk alone receives nearly 2,000 of the convicts annually, of whom, generally, 1,000 are sent to Tomsk, about 3,000 to Irkutsk, 2,000 to Iakutsk, 2,000 to Nertchinsk, 1,000 to Amoorland, and the remainder to Transbaikal and Zabaikal, about 600. From 1870 to 1877 about three times as many left for Siberia as during the previous eight years, the number for Tobolsk alone in 1877 having been 5,000—more than the whole number formerly sent to the entire country. Of these 40,000 persons, and a little under 36,000 to Eastern Siberia.

In such a multitude, dispersed over immense spaces, and the majority on each free terms, it is not easy always to maintain discipline and prevent desertions. Hence there is often considerable discrepancy between the official returns of transportation and that of the actual body of forced colonists present. On the 1st of January, 1876, e.g., the number of members for Tobolsk were 51,000 and 54,000. In some cases a third or even a half of the registered convicts have disappeared, and those who remain the great majority have another peculiarity—a tendency to recidivism, and it is not surprising that criminality stands at such high proportions. In the government of Tobolsk alone, for instance, one crime committed annually per seventy-five convicts; in the government of Tomsk, one per sixty seven; for the two provinces there is more than one crime per 1,000 inhabitants annually. In Siberia, taken as a whole, there is one robbery by an armed person for every 31,000 inhabitants, and one homicide for less than 9,000, making security of person in Russia 4.65 only about a tenth of that in Western Europe.

The slight barrier of the Ural is easily passed by the fugitive convict, and the difficulty is not of much account to a Russian. The exiles arrest annually a large number of the deserters; more than ten per cent. of the persons sent every summer from Moscow to Siberia are fugitives sent back. Many more, however, escape altogether, and recruit the ranks of any vagabondage. It is not unusual for all that the system of transportation at present so largely established does but little more than arrange justice and others complied with the repression of crime, or among politicians concerned with colonization. Many writers, like the British Australian colonist, begins to resent the sending of the vast number "human refuse," as it might be called, which, far from enriching and fertilizing the country, poisons the air and the life of its communities, and drives away the inhabitants. The penal system in Russia is fully discussed in a recent article by M. Leroy-Beaulieu in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, to which we are indebted for the above facts.

ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.—A Frenchman named Cinbrefond has published a small work in which he carries the argument that the earliest attempt at human speech were imitations of natural sounds or the cries of animals; and he contends that the whole vocabulary, with repetitions of those sounds the names of certain natural phenomena, and of animals and other objects, originated. He finds traces of this origin in the French language.

Thinks that proofs might be found in other languages if research were made, and suggests that a number of learned men in Paris might furnish instructions to their travellers to collect from among the natives of different countries all the sounds traceable to the source indicated above. Mr. Cinbrefond's theory is based on a series of sounds, words, and expressions thus alleged recovered, and the discovery of the origin of language. Taken in connection with natural sounds, the origin of words in our own language, such as thunder, sigh, whisper—becomes evident.

Miss Mary Anne Cooke, of Syracuse, N. Y., a French lady, and the widow of an officer in the British army, has fallen heir to $1,000,000. The estate is that of Louise Rich, of Quebec, who was an uncle of Mrs. Harris. Miss Louise Rich married at the age of fourteen years. The other direct heirs are his two daughters. One of them is in London, England, the other is at Kingston, Jamaica. Her husband is Colonel De Montmorency, of the Royal Engineers. Mrs. Harris has a romantic history. Her mother was twice married. She was a French lady, but accepted as her second husband an English officer. She died when Mrs. Harris was an infant. Mrs. Harris also married an English officer in the 17th Regiment. She died suddenly thirteen years ago. She is now waiting for news from Jamaica announcing her sister's departure.

On a RECENT TRIP TO FRANCE.—Mr. Edison says, for the purpose of rendering audible the sounds produced by tuning forks they are generally mounted upon resonant boxes containing a column of air whose vibrating period is the same as that of the fork. I have devised a modification, in which the box is dispensed with, the resonant chamber being formed by the prongs themselves. To make the fork, a thick bell metal tube has been end closed, a slit is sawed through the centre of the tube nearly to the closed end. This divides the tube and gives two vibratory prongs. To bring the prongs in unison with the column of air between them the tube is put in a lathe and turned thinner until unison is attained, whereupon the sound is powerfully re enforced.

Sometime since the body of a young man named Hynes was found in an outhouse in Montreal, and a verdict of death from fright and exposure was the result of the coroner's jury. The father of the dead man called at the Depot Monday afternoon, and found that a young man whom he could produce was prepared to testify that he was not with young Hynes the night before he met his death, and had assisted in placing the dead body in the outhouse's face that it was discovered. The old man thought the body should be disinterred at once and a fresh investigation held, and left the station to seek the coroner for that purpose.

Niagara River is now enlivened by the gradually arriving flocks of its regular winter resident, the common or the common Merganser, a few scattered Goosanders, the finely plumaged Whistler and the Old Wife (*Harelda glacialis*), which may be called the Ice Duck, in conformity with its scientific name and its breeding season. They remain here all winter and return sometimes as late as the beginning of June to their high northern summer habitat, instead of Greenland.

Sunday bird-shooting is unprofitable, as a man named Jacobs here learned. "I work in earnest, while you only play at work. You need not look dignified, you know it is true. If you had no other resources but your pen, no rich relations in the background who—"

"You forget that I set myself adrift from them two years ago, when I gave up the profession they had chosen for me, and which was the direct opposite of the law into the flowery fields of literature. From their point of view I must have committed suicide; they have formally washed their hands of me."

His companion's face clouded.

"What would they say, if they knew that —that you were betrothed to a common mortal girl?" he asked, looking at him wistfully.

"Perhaps some day you will regret——"

"Georgette," he interrupted reproachfully, "have you so little faith in my love? Have you so soon forgotten all I said to you under those very trees when we plighted our troth?"

"How could I forget?"

"Then trust me, dearest, and do not fear the future. It comes to me smiling, with hope in her hands, and—"

"Ah, do not expect too much from it, Etienne."

"Well, if it only brings me bread and cheese, and you, I shall be content," he returned.

"Contented without fame or riches?" she questioned, smiling. "I thought you were ambitious?"

"So I was—once, but there is no room for ambition in a heart that is full to the brim of love. After all," he added philosophically, "what the happier should I be for riches or renown? I have not up my tent in the pleasant land of Bohemia, where there is no abomination in a shabby coat, where poverty is no disgrace and even starvation has its poetical side."

Georgette raised her eyebrows.

"It is plain that whoever first said no never felt it," she commented, dryly. Something in her tone made her companion look round at her face.

"Georgette, how you said that! One would almost fancy—"

"That I had known that painful pain myself?" she added, with a little half sad, half ironical. "Perhaps I have. You see I have only thought of you from the door, and if you will not leave off from the door, and it will not leave off from the door, and it will not leave off from the door, and it