

become as universally popular as Barnum's Circus, we might then entertain some hope that dawn would eventually dispel the still murky atmosphere of our artistic world. But, alas, what are impresarios to do when they find such an anomalous state of things in society as will permit the contemplation by reverend eyes of the lithe tight-rope dancer, while it bids them in holy horror close at the first sight of a ballet girl; when performing goats and gauze-dressed riders are looked upon with more leniency than the singers of the American Opera Company? I doubt whether we could find anywhere so delightfully contradictory a little community as that which exists in this city of ours. No need to ask nowadays "What's in a name?"—the whole success or failure of an enterprise. You see, the number of wealthy, intelligent, appreciative people who might be persuaded to pose as patrons of art is infinitesimally small; we cannot, therefore, dispense with one. How to make these good individuals agree in taste, and not only these, but minor powers, whose knowledge of matters artistic is equal, though their purses are lighter, seems a question well worthy consideration. Only the "chosen few" may belong to literary societies—perhaps, for that matter, only the "chosen few" care to. Then, pray, what of outsiders? Surely we have at length reached a point where the necessity is felt of something spiritual in our social life, and I doubt whether anything can more readily improve our manners and sharpen our wits than a good play well acted. Need have we, sore need, of an institution upon which even the highest amongst us shall look as the standard of right accent and pronunciation and graceful gesture. Is it quite Utopian to covet for Montreal a second Théâtre Français, where the clergy themselves would deign to witness the plays they peruse with satisfaction in their studies? If you have read Mr. David C. Murray's *High Life in France Under the Republic*, you will have seen even duchess and marquis scruple not to take hints even as to the manner of moving a chair from the great French artists, and, I have heard, not even at the College of France is the language spoken with greater precision. But enough complaints and suggestions for one letter.

September 11, 1887.

NAPLES.

ONE summer evening long ago,
As you and I were drifting slowly
Out with the waves whose placid flow
Mirrored the blue sky's tender glow,
The sailors sang with passion holy

Their vesper hymn; now soft and sweet,
Now swelling into louder measure,
The various voices seemed to meet
And blend in harmony complete,
An equal strain of prayer and pleasure.

"Santa Lucia, guard us well,
And bring us home with shallows laden
To that fair city where we dwell
In safety 'neath thy charmed spell,
Where waits for each a charming maiden."

"O dolci Napoli"—once more
I seem to hear the music stealing
Along the bay, across the shore,
With soothing sound of plashing oar,
And voices tremulous with feeling.

Westboro', Mass.

ABBIE F. JUDD.

THE NATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS.

THE public meeting of welcome to the delegates to the National Prison Congress on Saturday was attended by many warm friends to Prison Reform; and on their behalf the philanthropic visitors were addressed by several gentlemen among us well known as also taking a hearty interest in the subject. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor welcomed the members of the Association, and eulogised their work, referring incidentally to the pending Extradition Treaty; his Worship the Mayor, who acted as Chairman, spoke on the need of reform in the old prison system, and the progress that had been made; the Minister of Education dealt with the state of the prisons of Ontario, which show a gratifying amelioration; the Hon. S. H. Blake spoke on the history of Prison Reform, eulogising the United States for what they had done for the prisoner; and Prof. Goldwin Smith gave an address which, as dealing with the whole subject of Prison Reform, we give below. The Hon. Rutherford B. Hayes, ex-President of the United States, also addressed the meeting, giving an account of the origin and work of the Prison Association, and a statement of the reforms that in its judgment are still considered desirable.

Prof. Goldwin Smith said:

I feel it a great honour to have been invited to take part in the pro-

motion of so good a cause, and in conjunction with men of such eminence as some of their American visitors, one of whom, Mr. Hayes, when last I saw him, was in an office which by its importance made its holder the peer of kings. To commend such a cause as Prison Reform and those who are taking an active part in it is rather like gilding gold or painting the lily white. But Prison Reform is a notable thing. Among the proofs that the world has not been growing worse, as some worshippers of the past say, but better, this, if not the most important, is about the most striking. It was a remarkable step in the progress of humanity when people began to take care of the sick and weak, and to build hospitals for them, instead of treating them as a herd does the wounded deer. But perhaps it was a still more remarkable step when people began to show care for the inmates of a gaol instead of treating them merely as enemies of the community. It is needless to say how recent comparatively the care for the inmates of gaols is. Shakespeare, in *Measure for Measure*, has given us a glimpse into the prison life of the Middle Ages. The report of a Committee of the House of Commons gave the world more than a glimpse into the prison life and the treatment of prisoners in the English gaols of the last century. The condition of the gaols in other countries at that time was fully as bad. In all the gaols was a hell. It is only in quite recent times that the idea of making the prison a reformatory as well as a place of punishment has dawned. The criminal is still a man. Sometimes he is not altogether a bad man, though one side of his character may be bad. The nomad and predatory habits which are not yet worked out of the race are sometimes strong in members of it, who nevertheless have their good qualities if they were only in the right walk of life for displaying them. Armies notable not only for courage but for discipline and strict performance of duties have been made to no small extent out of the sweepings of the gaols. Probably Marlborough's army was one of them. A tramp, who is next door to a criminal, is very often, I suspect, a soldier spoiled. The saying has been ascribed to more eminent Christians than one, on seeing a man led to the gallows. "There, but for the grace of God, go I." By the grace of God he did not mean miracle, but a good home, a good education, good companions. We need not embrace necessitarianism, or say that a man even if he is brought up in the gutter is not responsible for his actions. But it does make a great difference in responsibility whether a man has been brought up in a good home or in the gutter. The Mayor has cited the old saying, "that there are more rogues out of prison than in it." Probably, as human justice is fallible, some men are in prison who ought not to be there; while it is pretty certain that some men are not in prison who ought to be there. A man, I am afraid, may sometimes go through life doing worse things, much worse things, considering his lights and advantages, than those for which other men are shut up, and yet if he manages to keep his wealth or his power, may die in the odour of social sanctity, with obituary editorials setting forth his extraordinary virtues, and winding up by showing that they all had their source in his profound sense of religion. Honour among thieves is not altogether a romance. I read an account the other day given from personal experience of a criminal, and a very bad criminal, who when he might have saved his life by giving information about his gang, preferred death to that dishonour. They tried him on the night before his execution, in his condemned cell, with death full in his face, but he preferred death to the dishonour. Apart from justice to the criminal or his interest, there is the interest of society which wants to have the prison made a reformatory if possible, and at all events not a seed-plot for crime. A seed-plot of crime a gaol cannot fail to be when criminals of all sorts and grades are allowed to loiter through the day together in idleness and mutual corruption. I fear our own city needs to have the scorching light of this Congress turned upon its prison arrangements, but I think I can conscientiously second the Mayor in saying that the excellent governor of our city gaol does under adverse circumstances everything that is in his power. How a prison can be made a reformatory is, I suppose, the problem which this Congress has met to solve. It is not an easy one. Preaching is good, provided it does not hold up an unattainable ideal; books are good; prison visitations are good; anything which shows the prisoner that he is not cut off from humanity, and that the gates of social mercy are not shut against him, is good. But it is difficult for a man to attain virtue, or to regain it, except by action. The nature must be finer than those of most criminals are in which the mere power of reflection is sufficient to effect a lasting change. It has always seemed to me, though I hardly presume to express an opinion, that nothing could be so efficacious as labour, not wholly penal, but with some little pay or reward. Nothing else appears likely to give a man a taste for making a livelihood by honest instead of dishonest means. Labour which is merely penal can only disgust. But there is an intense jealousy upon the subject of prison labour among our working classes, and to favour it or not to promise to vote against it is almost as much as a politician's life is worth. I do not want to say anything harsh. I dare say if I were a working man I might feel the same jealousy of anything that seemed to encroach on my employments. But surely the competition cannot be very serious. A kind of convict labour which would not really injure other labourers to any appreciable extent might be devised. A man who has been convicted of crime forfeits for the time his right to freedom; but he does not forfeit all the rights of humanity, and especially he does not forfeit the right to anything necessary to his amendment. If labour is necessary to his amendment, he still has a right to it. However, I am here trenching on the work of the Congress. My only duty at present is, as one of the citizens of Toronto, a city which from its growing size and wealth has an increasing interest in all social questions, to welcome the Congress, and express the hope which we all feel that its deliberations may be instrumental in helping us to heal one of the maladies of the social frame.