

**The Orphans' Friend.**

FRIDAY, ----- OCTOBER 5, 1883.

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHARITIES AND CORRECTION.**

This body met in Louisville, Ky., last week. Delegates were present from many of the States, and the proceedings were of the utmost interest. The body was presided over by Rev. F. H. Wines, of Springfield, Ill. Addresses of welcome were delivered by the Mayor of Louisville and the Governor of Kentucky. These were responded to in behalf of the Conference by Hon. F. B. Sanborn, of Massachusetts, and Mr. Rich'd Vaux, of Philadelphia. The object of the meeting was set forth by Mr. J. H. Mills, of North Carolina. Judge Knapp, of Florida, and Senator John S. Williams, of Louisville. The annual address of President Wines was an able and interesting paper. We would gladly lay it before our readers if we had space. We print the following extracts:

"There are political and social contrivances who deny the necessity for organized relief, or for any interference with social evils on the part of the State, and who profess to be anxious that all help extended to those who need it should be 'relegated to the domain of private relations' and be given only by individuals to individuals. On this subject a great deal of romantic gush is current on the lips of men who only partly comprehend what they are talking about.

That there is a demand for relief of some sort is undeniable, so long as human ignorance and passion and error continue to produce want and misery and crime upon earth. Help must be given sometimes, even to those who do not deserve it. It is not always a question of what we owe to others, but of what we owe to ourselves. We can not stand by and see the tide of insanity, idiosyncrasy, pauperism and crime rising, without trying to rescue from drowning those whose retreat we see to be cut off. To restrain the operation of this natural instinct would be to do violence to our common humanity, and the reaction could not be other than injurious.

The proper objects of relief, the extent of relief, the form of relief and the mode of relief are later questions, and admit of various answers. We are probably agreed that no man should receive help who does not need it; and that no more help should be given him than just so much as is requisite in order to enable him to help himself; and that the best form of aid for those able to work is employment; and that in granting relief regard should be paid to the moral effects of it upon the recipient. These are axioms in the administration of charity; the art of relief consists in their judicious application in particular cases.

Here, at this meeting, public opinion has the opportunity to express itself, where the expression will affect legislation and the policy of States. We stifle the voice of no man; we open our ears to every sound, come from what quarter it may; we allow public opinion to shape itself, only taking care that it be a well-

informed and not an uninformed opinion; then, by our publications, and by the agency of the delegates who return to their homes and make report, we disseminate and render it fruitful.

The greatest peril we have to encounter is the danger of falling into what may be termed social quackery. There are educated, as well as uneducated quacks, of course, but the essence of quackery is always the same, it is a real or pretended belief in the efficacy of nostrums to cure diseases or avert disaster. It is easy to get a view of the social system from some one point of view, to perceive clearly some one coil which afflicts mankind, to see in that one coil the root of all others, and to delude oneself into the conviction that, if resort were only had to some particular measure or favorite prescription, it might be possible to put an end to the wickedness and iniquity which infects our blood. Numerous illustrations occur to me, but I fear to name them, lest I should initiate a profitless debate. Nothing is plainer, however, to an attentive observer than the subtle connection which exists between the parts of the social organism, the logical interdependence of their relations and the immensity of the possible consequences which may follow any injudicious interference. In society, as in the case of the individual, it is often wise to trust to the *vis medicatrix nature*; or, if the emergency will not admit of this, then we ought at least not to experiment too boldly with so delicate an apparatus, lest we derange its mechanism.

We have no right to rush in where angels fear to tread. Before professing to have mastered the problem of social therapeutics, let us be sure that we know something about anatomy and physiology, to say nothing of social pathology, for I strongly suspect that a good deal is regarded by some people as an evil which is really no evil which reminds me of the fable of the hen and her brood of ducks, whom she would not allow to go into the water, lest they should drown.

A letter was read from Ex-President Hayes, who was recently elected President of the National Prison Association, expressing his sympathy with the Conference, his hearty co-operation in the work, and his regrets that he could not be in attendance. Reports were received from standing committees upon various subjects connected with charity organizations and the dispensing of public charity. These reports frequently elicited discussion. Reports were made by the delegates from the different States with regard to the status and progress of Reformatories, Asylums, etc.

Senator Z. B. Vance spoke as follows for North Carolina:

"While not prepared to give statistics in regard to the State in which he lived, he would state that when the war closed they were in great poverty and distress. They had one institution for the insane, and one for the deaf and dumb. Since then they had found means to build each of the institutions for the colored people and another splendid institution for the white persons. While their efforts were small compared with other States,

in comparison to their means, however, they ranked with any other State. When a man did wrong in North Carolina at one time they took him up and gave him the law of Moses—forty stripes, save one—and then he took the advice of Horace Greeley and went West, and frequently rose to distinction there. If a man was guilty of murder he was hung and buried at the public expense. The penitentiary system was inaugurated since the war, and was in one sense a success, as it has been full to overflowing ever since. His effort had chiefly been devoted to the punishment and reformation of the great criminals rather than the small ones."

The Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina, Mr. Scarborough, told of the charities of his State:

"At Raleigh there is a penitentiary located containing 1,100 prisoners, most of whom are blacks. They are worked on the railroads, the State never losing control of them. The management of these men, so far as he knew, was good. The county jails were poorly managed.

The insane asylums, two for white and one for blacks, were all attended to. The poor were put up to the lowest bidder, to be taken care of. This system proved to be a very poor one. He mentioned instances where even the poor-houses were put up to the lowest bidders. They were not honors to the State."

The paper read by Mr. Geo. W. Cable, of New Orleans, seems to have been the most impressive that was presented to the Conference. His subject was the system of letting out prisoners which prevails in the South. We make this extract from the *Courier-Journal's* report:

"The event of the evening session was the reading of a paper by Mr. Geo. W. Cable, of New Orleans. Mr. Cable is the ablest writer the South has had since Poe, and ranks as a novelist with Howells and James. He is a slight, dark complexioned, black beard'd young man, rather delicate-looking. He reads unusually well, and throws a fire and intensity into his reading that one would hardly think him capable of from his slender frame. His paper lasted two hours, and it is safe to say that during that time not a man but kept his eyes fixed on the speaker. His subject was the 'Lessee System.' With wit and pathos and burning invective, he denounced the whole system, at times giving page after page of unanswerable statistics, every figure weighted down with its history of woe, at times giving a glimpse of life between these figures of starving men happy only when killed by blows and bullets, of ignorant, brutal wardens and lessees of crowded, vermin-infested cells. All this was done so quietly, with so little apparent effort that one wondered that he could be so mild. Mr. Cable's paper is to be printed in one of the great reviews, and it will doubtless be as powerful for good in abolishing the horrors of the lessee system as Dickens' 'Nicholas Nickleby' was in wiping out the abuses in the Yorkshire schools. It is needless to say that the Southern author received an ovation. He was applauded time and again and at the conclusion of his reading there was a storm of hand-clapping."

John Minge, M. D., Berkeley, Va., June 25th 1884, says: "It is with pleasure that I assure you of the great benefit I have received personally from the use of Beckwith's Anti-Dyspeptic Pills; and their happy effect in my own person led me to use them in an extensive practice near Mobile, and always with decided benefit and with repeated application for more of them, particularly in all cases proceeding from indigestion." For sale by all druggists at 25 cents per box.

Caterpillars are seriously damaging Louisiana's cotton crop. Rabbi Sonneschein read a

paper on "Hebrew Charities in the middle ages." He prefaced the reading by the following statement:

"I feel proud to stand in the presence of this august body; august not because of its aristocratic bearing or princely style, but august because of eminence and intelligence; and though I belong to the race which does not bow in worship to that great martyr, the Nazarene, I still pride the moment that I stand here before this symbol" (pointing to the cross) "of the faith and hope of every Christian, and I tell you as a Jew that while we may differ in symbols we are surely one in the reality and essence of that spirit of divine thought which says charity to all and malice to none."

The session of the Conference continued several days and the interest was maintained throughout. We regret our want of space which prevents us from laying the proceedings before our readers. We are indebted to the report of the *Courier-Journal* for what we publish concerning it. The Conference was an able body, and it will have a vast influence upon the efforts of our people, to relieve the distressed and to promote reforms among the criminal classes. The next annual session will be held at St. Louis.

GENERAL ALBERT PIKE'S LONG JOURNEY.—General Albert Pike, the poet, soldier and lawyer, arrived yesterday from an extended tour to the Pacific coast. Gen. Pike holds the distinguished position of grand commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Masons. He left Washington on the first day of April and will get back within two days of six months from the time he started. He went from New Orleans via the Southern Pacific route, and returned by the new Northern Pacific route, having ridden ninety miles in a buggy, as the railroad was not yet linked together. On his trip out he made a Lodge of Perfection at El Paso and one at Tucson, Arizona. He took a side trip into old Mexico, visiting the masonic bodies in Chihuahua, of which he was made master for life. He started a German lodge in San Francisco. He went up the sound, visiting the British possessions, Portland, Oregon and other points on the coast.

THE GRAND COMMANDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR.—The third annual convocation of the Grand Commandery of the Knights Templar for the State of North Carolina will meet in Charlotte, Tuesday, October 6th. Delegates and representatives will be present from Wilmington, Raleigh, Durham and Asheville, and it is expected that they will be the guests of Charlotte Comma dery of that order. Grand Master Hon. Robert E. Withers, ex-United States Senator from Virginia, the highest official of the order in the United States, has accepted an invitation from Grand Master Munson to be present.

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**FALL and WINTER**

1883.

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