

MAKING GOOD ROADS BY CONVICT LABOR

By DONALD F. BIGGS

CAMP OF CONVICT ROAD WORKERS

HERE is nothing particularly new or revolutionary about the working of convicts upon the public roads. For many years it has been the custom in most of the cities of this country to place vagrants and other minor offenders caught in the police dragnet at work upon the streets and in a number of states the inmates of the penitentiaries have been employed at various times in the construction of highways.

But the modern idea of convict road labor is new and it is only just beginning to appear in various parts of the United States. The old idea—where convict labor was employed on the roads—was merely to utilize the labor of the convicts to the best advantage to the state—to make the convict produce as large a revenue as possible, in order to repay the state for the expense of maintaining its penal institutions. Into the new idea, there has



BUILDING ROADS BY CONVICT LABOR



CONVICTS AT WORK ON COLORADO HIGHWAYS

entered an element that was unthought of formerly. This new element has to do with the reclamation of the convicts, the development of their moral senses and their ultimate return to the world as law-abiding citizens, rather than as human derelicts, made unfit, through their prison life, for any further attempt to lead an honest existence.

The new idea of convict road labor is to aid both the state and the convict; to give the state the benefit of the labor that can be utilized to greater advantage in this way than in any other, and to give the convict the benefit of the outdoor life, the freedom from the restraint of prison walls and the different character of discipline that makes it possible for him to regain his self-respect.

In working out this new idea, especially with the view to the reformation of the convicts, old ideas of prison regulations necessarily have disappeared and the whole system of discipline has been revolutionized. The honor system has taken the place of armed guards, in many instances, and the road "camp" has replaced the stockades and "bull pens" of the old days of convict road labor.

Colorado was one of the first states to adopt the new idea. New Jersey began experiments along the same line a short time later. President Woodrow Wilson, then governor of New Jersey, is given credit for the inauguration of the convict road work in that state along the new lines. Several other states have fallen in line, each working possibly in a different way, but toward the same general end.



LINCOLN HIGHWAY CROSSING UTE PASS, ABOVE COLORADO SPRINGS

MOUNTAIN ROADS AS SMOOTH AS CITY PAVEMENTS

Illinois is the latest state to make a beginning in this work. A force of nearly one hundred convicts was recently taken from the penitentiary at Joliet and placed at work on the roads. Armed guards were dispensed with and the men were placed upon their honor. The convicts pledged themselves to make no effort to escape and the authorities are relying upon their keeping this promise.

In this case a tendency soon developed on the part of the people to overdo the idea of giving the convicts greater liberty and pleasure. A plan to give the convicts an automobile ride and theater party in a nearby city was proposed to the authorities, but Governor Dunne vetoed this program and let it be understood that while it is planned to give the convicts greater freedom than they have been accustomed to within the prison walls and to aid them in getting a better view of life, the fact that they have been sentenced to pay a penalty for infraction of the state's laws must not be forgotten and the men must be made to realize that punishment awaits such violations of the statutes.

without guards—some 300 miles away from the prison—have created a national reputation for loyalty. Less than one per cent have violated their pledges by successful escape. Communities no longer fear to have our convict camps established near them. We have made manhood as well as money by this healthy, hearty outdoor labor. We have built the prisoners up both physically and morally. Men discharged from our road camps do not have the prison pallor, the physical weakness and the hesitating, hang-dog appearance of the typical discharged convict. They are bronzed, sturdy, healthy, efficient laborers and are in demand as such. About 80 per cent of those we have sent from the camps on the completion of their terms have made good. The other 20 per cent, have mostly found their way back into prison elsewhere.

Under the Colorado system, the convict is allowed ten days off his sentence for each month of labor performed on the roads. This is in addition to the usual reduction made for good behavior. There are other incentives for the convicts to so conduct themselves that they will be put at work on the roads, according to Warden Tynan. "For one thing," he says, "the man who is allowed to leave the prison for the road camp practically has seen the last of prison if he conducts himself properly. His food is better, his clothing is better. He has no constant reminder before his eyes the guns of the guards to remind him that he is a convicted criminal and has no place in society. His self-respect returns, he is taught self-reliance and sustained application, and these things enable him to take his place among other people and do a man's work when he is released from prison."

The working of convicts upon the roads in Colorado was made possible only a few years ago by act of the legislature. The system has been generally adopted throughout the state during the past two or three years, the various counties co-operating with the state in the improvement of the highways. The result is seen in many miles of splendid roads built by the convicts.

The honor system was adopted simultaneously with the placing of the convicts on the roads in Colorado. All of the convicts were not turned loose from the penitentiary without guards, but a certain percentage of the prisoners, including those having the best prison records, were taken from the penitentiary first as an experiment. As the success of the experiment seemed evident to the authorities, the number of "honor" men was increased, and more than 50 per cent of the convicts were finally removed from the prison and placed in the road camps.

Warden Tynan and other prison authorities declare the experiment has been even more successful than they anticipated.

"During the last three years we have had more than one thousand individual prisoners in the convict camps," says the warden. "These men,

in New Jersey the convicts are handled a little differently, but the object is the same. Here the guards have not thrown away their guns, but the firearms are not in evidence and the casual visitor to the convict camp scarcely can tell which are the keepers and which convicts.

Woodrow Wilson, when he was governor of New Jersey, thought he saw a way to solve some of the problems presented by the state prisons. He outlined his idea to the state prison labor commission and turned over to that body, together with the state road commissioner, the task of working out his idea. The result of President Wilson's suggestions is "Don't Worry Camp," the first of the road convict camps to be established in New Jersey.

This is very much like any other summer camp, except that it is better equipped. One large room holds the convicts' beds, while in a projecting all there is space for five guards, whose beds are so placed that every square foot of the convicts' quarters can be seen through a glass partition. This is the only suggestion of surveillance, except for the locks that are placed on the doors at night. The convicts' room contains a shower-bath and other facilities. The ventilation is scientific and the floor, walls, ceiling and beds are spotless. Two former chefs, now convicts, preside in the kitchen and prepare the meals, which include meat twice a day and plenty of fresh vegetables.

All the buildings in the camp were constructed by the convicts themselves, without any outside help, save where expert workmanship such as could not be furnished by the convicts, was needed. After the camp was completed the convicts were put to work on the nearby roads. Asphalt roads are to be laid and culverts and bridges constructed, and in this connection is seen one of the chief benefits of the new system, so far as the convicts are concerned. The prisoners will have an opportunity to learn the mysteries of scientific road-making, a profession which is not over-crowded. Those prisoners who show an interest in the work will be promoted to responsible positions and will be in a position to secure well-paid jobs when their terms expire, the authorities believe.

While these few states have been taking the lead in the efforts to solve the problem of convict labor, other states have been studying the question of how best to direct the labor of the state's wards, both for his own interest and that of the state, and rapid progress is predicted along these lines during the next few years by those familiar with penal conditions throughout the country.

"In one of our camps," he says, "we worked 35 men not including the camp help, one month. The maintenance of each of these men cost the state exactly 25 cents per day. The total cost of all the work for the month, including salaries, care of stock feed for teams and cost of equipment, was \$518.15, or 47 1/2 cents per day per man. Had this number of men been employed at the standard wage rate of \$2 per day, the cost of wages alone would have been \$1,632.50."

England wants boxing added to the 1916 Olympic games at Berlin.

KING HAUNTED BY DEAD WIFE

Sofia.—There is a room in the Konak at Sofia of which King Ferdinand alone has the key. It contains no precious documents, no costly jewelry, no bullion chest, but only the full-length portrait of a princess long since departed. The gentle Marie Louise gazes sadly out of her gilded frame, and though Ferdinand, in moments of exaltation passes by the room with head averted, in days of stress and trouble he seeks to hide his misery in the silence of the locked and secret chamber.

During the last ten months mysterious rustlings have been heard in the National Museum and the horror-stricken palace as of some one wandering unhappily from room to room, seeking something that could never be found. On these occasions, when King Ferdinand bethought himself of leaving the chapel door open, his dead wife's shadow has been seen to pass the portals, and he has himself knelt at the altar there, his face buried in his hands, as though awaiting a supernatural visitant. No allusion to these vigils has ever passed his lips, for Ferdinand confides in no one.

Over her children the spirit of Marie Louise also broods as fondly as in her lifetime, and the people believe she visits their bedside whenever they are ill. The nurses who cared for Princess Endovia during her long illness last year attributed her almost miraculous recovery to the prayers of the dead mother, who was seen in spirit form in the chapel nightly, always kneeling in the same place slowly fingering her diamond rosary beads.



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Owes Success to Wife.

King Ferdinand, who has had an extraordinary career, owes his most solid successes to the dead lady who even now watches over him, as he believes, to restrain the impulses against which she vainly warned him when alive, and concerning which even from the other world she has given signs of sorrow and disapproval.

He was the pet son of his mother, the cleverest daughter, of the late Louis Philippe, king of the French. She never ceased to plot for the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, but in the meantime did not disdain to pick up any possible crown for her sons. Her plans were mostly foiled, as in the case of Philippe, older than Ferdinand, who married Princess Louise of Belgium in the hope of succeeding the late King Leopold. But the marriage was so ill-assorted, and Princess Louise showed such violent antipathy to her husband, that a speedy separation was the result.

With Ferdinand, Princess Clementine had no such trouble. He was the most docile and obedient of her sons, inheriting her own suble disposition and tenacity of purpose.

When Prince Battenberg of Bulgaria had displeased the Russian emperor by his independent attitude, and was consequently forced to leave the country in the dead of night, with only time to throw a coat over his sleeping attire, the palace at Sofia remained vacant. As soon as Battenberg's friends recovered from the shock of his being kidnaped they set off on a tour of Europe to search for a princeling who would undertake the difficult job of governing Bulgaria.

Quietly Becomes Sovereign.

This quest came to the ears of Clementine, who, learning that a favorite hunt of these big game hunters when in Vienna was a fourth-rate restaurant, sent her son to make their acquaintance. After some friendly conversation, during which they did not suspect that he was anything but what his uniform proclaimed him to be—a simple lieutenant in an Austrian regiment—he declared himself their man. Without further preamble he took them round to his mother's palace and thus proved to them the reality of his claim to high birth and his connection with two great royal houses. There was no reason why he should not start a dynasty of his own, and the bargain was quickly concluded. In a few days the citizens of Sofia were greatly astonished to see the flag flying once more over the royal palace, and a young man with a prominent nose and a serious face driving through the town in solitary statelessness. There was no equestrian display, no acclamation, no rejoicing. People were still asking themselves, "How long will Russia allow him to stay?"

Royal Wife Finally Secured.

As soon as Ferdinand felt his throne to be a little more steady, Princess Clementine began to cast matrimonial nets on her son's behalf. But there were few aspirants. Royalties held aloof and nothing but blue blood would satisfy Ferdinand and his mother. It was by working on the strong religious sentiments of the Duke of Parma that the prize was at last secured in the person of an eldest daughter, the ill-fated Marie Louise, to whom was entrusted the mission of furthering Catholicity in schismatic Bulgaria. Thus was the gentle, fragile idealist, tender offshoot of the pious House of Parma, mated to an ambitious adventurer, of her own rank indeed, but of a temperament

and character entirely foreign to her. The personal inclinations of Marie Louise were all for the cloister, where, indeed, several of her sisters have since found a home, but in deference to her father's wishes she gave her hand to Ferdinand and set off with him to work for the advancement of Bulgaria.

Almost every educational and charitable institution in the country owes its origin to her initiative. In a short time she achieved what he had vainly attempted—the reconciliation of his subjects to a foreign ruler. Legends of her bounty and devotedness still survive among the people today. When an heir to the throne was born, nothing seemed wanting to the happy outlook. But this very child, who should have set the seal on her happiness, became the cause of discord and ultimately led to the untimely death of his mother, Russia, who had viewed with disfavor the consolidation of Bulgaria under a prince about whose election she had not even been consulted, now came forward with her inexorable demand that the future ruler of Bulgaria should belong to the orthodox creed or forfeit recognition by the powers.

Refuses to Be Apostate.

Ferdinand's mind was soon made up, but it remained to him to persuade Marie Louise. Thunderstruck at the alternative, she at once refused to consider what her conscience told her was an act of apostasy. During two whole years she succeeded in getting the baptism deferred, but as Russia grew more insistent, and Ferdinand more anxious for his crown, she was forced to face the inevitable. Resistance availed no longer, and as a last protest she left the country.

The baptism of Prince Boris, according to orthodox rites was carried out with great pomp in the presence of Russian envoys, and Ferdinand's position was henceforth secure. Strange to say, his own subjects revolted against the breach of faith which weighed so heavily on their beloved princess, and even Russia's approval did not mend matters. A wave of criticism and contempt which found expression in the Bulgarian press proved the general indignation. Many seized the opportunity to vent their private spleen against a prince whose affected superiority wounded their democratic pride.

Returns to Her Husband.

Nevertheless, Ferdinand, having accomplished his purpose of ingratiating himself with Russia, now began to put things straight with the rest of the world, and for this to succeed it was necessary that his wife should return. But Marie Louise desired nothing more than oblivion. Her maternal instinct, however, strengthened by the insistence of the Pope, and Ferdinand's exhortations and excuses, finally prevailed. She returned to her old duties, resuming her good works, but with the joy of life extinguished for ever within her. It is said that no reprover ever passed her lips and she gave no outward sign that her husband had forfeited respect. To the last she remained his faithful, devoted partner, and her careful advice saved him from many pitfalls such as those into which he since has sunk. With terror she sounded the depths of the dark soul that could instigate the assassination of his premier, Stambouloff, when he dared to oppose him. Vainly did she plead with him to bridle his ambition and devote himself to the real progress and solid development of the country rather than to his own personal aggrandizement. While she lived he made a pretense of dissociating himself from the work of the Comitadjis in Macedonia, whose outrages filled Europe with horror. "God will never bless crime," was

her constant warning. "And one day Macedonia will be lost to us through the evil deeds of our wild propagandists."

Saw Impending Disaster.

She was probably the only person who knew whither Ferdinand's secret hopes tended, and she foretold that disaster would come at the moment when his star seemed most in the ascendant. When in the recent war luck turned against him, the soldiers murmured among themselves: "Surely this is what our princess foretold. Every sin demands its punishment."

After her death, King Ferdinand, desirous of restoring the great state functions which were a vital feature of his court, looked around for a hostess who would share the throne, which from being princely had now been raised to the status of royalty. But it was not easy for him to find a mate. No Catholic princess would give her hand; he made several overtures at the Russian court, but there was no Grand Duchess forthcoming. Finally, however, a Protestant princess of the House of Reuss consented to abandon her spinsterhood and occupy the place left vacant nine years ago by Marie Louise.

Though unpossessed of her predecessor's winning charm, she has nevertheless done great and good work for her devotion to the wounded war orphan, but it is well known that her married life is by no means happy, her relations with her husband being markedly strained.

Ferdinand himself has never concealed the fact that, in spite of their differences, his heart and allegiance are with the princess, whose shades hovers round him, admonishing and shielding. Confident of her never-failing assistance, he alone is not afraid to confront the stately specter who trails her diaphanous draperies along the corridors of the palace that witnessed the tragic disillusionment of her hopes.

Man No Doubt Had Often Been Unfavorably Compared With Dead Man He Described.

It was a contested will case, and one of the witnesses, in the course of giving his evidence, described the testator minutely.

"Now, sir," said counsel for the defense, "I suppose we may take it from the flattering description you have given of the testator, his good points, and his personal appearance generally, that you were intimately acquainted with him?"

"I'm sure," exclaimed the witness, "he was no acquaintance of mine!"

"Indeed! Well, then, you must have observed him very carefully whenever you saw him?" pursued counsel.

"I never saw him in my life," was the reply.

This prevarication, as counsel thought it, was too much, and he said:

"Now, now, don't trifle with the court, please! How, I ask you, could you, in the name of goodness, describe him so minutely if you never saw him or never knew him?"

"Well," replied the witness, and the smile which overspread his features extended to the faces of those in court, "you see, I married his widow."

Learned His Good Points.

George, you must go right away and ask papa for my hand."

"That's all right, little one. I asked him first."

"What! You didn't wait to ask me!"

"Nixy, Mabel. I'm a busy little man, girlie, and I waste no time on chances."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Use for That Old Bedstead.

If You Have It Stored in the Attic Here is a Way Profitably to Utilize It.

When metal beds came into use, you stored an old-fashioned hardwood bedstead—useless lumber, but too good to be thrown away—in the attic. Meanwhile you've been trying hard to save money to buy a bookcase, and without a suspicion that the discarded bedstead could easily be home-

made over into precisely the piece of modern furniture that is needed for the living-room. The carved or bevel-finished high pillow end—denuded of its legs—makes the back of the case and its narrow string pieces furnish the uprights which first must be grooved on their inner sides to support the shelves for which extra boards must be provided. That this shelving material is of another and cheaper wood, matters not, as the entire case must finally be painted. Usually paint harmonizing with the in-

ish of the living-room is employed, so that the case shall look as though it had been built-in, but on some of the hard woods a very good imitation of ebony may be produced with black enamel pigment and when the brightly covered books are in place the effect is not somber.

Views.

Friend—Would you say that Pinhead's play is immoral?

Manager—I might, but the box of Rice would dispute it.

BRIDAL ATTIRE COSTLY

Brides all over the world like to make the best display possible on their wedding day, and the bridal attire of the various countries is invariably both costly and beautiful. For sheer gorgeousness, however, says the Wide World Magazine, it would be hard to rival the wedding dress of the belles of the island of Samatra. The dress is woven entire-

ly of gold thread, and its weight is so great that the wearer can hardly move; even standing up requires a distinct effort. Apart from this shimmering golden garment, the bride is loaded down with gold ornaments, rings, bangles, earrings, pendants, girdles and necklaces, and sundry ornamental purses of the same metal. The huge ornaments hanging on

Arrested the Ambassador.

Sir Arthur Hardinge, who has been appointed British ambassador at Madrid, can tell of not a few strange experiences that seldom fall to the lot of the diplomat. While on duty in Portugal last year he was arrested by a policeman who believed him to be a conspirator.

It was only after much telephoning, telegraphing and explaining that Sir Arthur was able to prove his identity and then, of course, apologies were proffered.

chains around her neck are hollow, but all the smaller charms are of solid native gold, most massively wrought. One might almost think that the natives, having heard something about a good wife being "worth her weight in gold," had set out to prove the fact by loading their quaint little brides with the actual equivalent of their weight in the precious metal.

England wants boxing added to the 1916 Olympic games at Berlin.