

thing but inviting. The more closely we examine the details of these improvements as set forth in Mr. Langmuir's report, the more we are convinced, not only that they have not been the means of increasing crime, but that they are well calculated to diminish crime, to protect society, and to reform the criminal. One of the chief objects in view in the rebuilding and altering of gaol structures was the proper classification of the inmates. Now, the attainment of this object alone is enough to justify all the expenditure that has been incurred. As it was, all classes—both sexes, the expert and the tyro in crime, the sane and the insane, the convicted and the suspected, the guilty and the innocent—were huddled together, so that the young and comparatively innocent were corrupted by the more hardened, till in the course of time the wickedness of the worst became the common character of all. It was in the old gaols that criminals were trained, it was there that the science and art of crime were cultivated and brought to perfection, and it was there that many, who had stumbled and fallen once in their path, and under better influences would perhaps have done so no more, were hardened and bound over to a course of crime, a life of misery, and an eternity of woe. Surely the consequences would have been very serious if the 3,420 persons who were incarcerated for a longer or shorter period during last year on charges of which they were subsequently found innocent, had been permitted, nay compelled, to pass their time in the company of hardened criminals. We need not go very far away to find the old state of affairs still in vogue. In the United States there are to be found many gaols with only one corridor, where all the prisoners are herded promiscuously. In Ontario, we are glad to say, this is now a thing of the past. In every gaol in this province there are from three to twenty-four distinct and separate corridors, with the requisite number of yards for the proper classification of prisoners. If such changes as these are not improvements, why did the world ever hear of the name of Howard?

Under the present arrangements, the officials find the proper exercise of discipline and the safe keeping of prisoners a much easier task than they formerly did. This is very clearly indicated by the fact that out of a gaol population of 12,030, only nine prisoners escaped during the year, and six of these were recaptured. Another of the innovations consists in the providing of suitable accommodation, implements, and material, for the prosecution of various industrial occupations. This system has been introduced to a greater or less extent in most even of the county gaols, but it has been carried out on a larger scale and with greater strictness in the Central Prison, Toronto, than at any other institution, with the exception perhaps of the Provincial Penitentiary at Kingston. The Central Prison is found very useful as furnishing means for the removal of the more hardened offenders as soon as they are sentenced, thus relieving the county gaols of their presence. There they are kept at hard work. Those who have an occupation are, if possi-

ble, allowed to practise it, and those who have none are taught some handicraft, so that if they should ever get out into the world again and be inclined to live honestly, they may be left without excuse.

As a rule crime increases year by year. This, of course, may be simply on account of the increase in the population. It might also have been expected that a year like 1878, with its depression in trade and its scarcity of employment, would exhibit an unusually large increase in the criminal ranks. In the face of all this it is very satisfactory to find that instead of an increase, there has been an actual decrease of 1,451, only 12,030 having been committed in 1878 as against 13,481 in the previous year. It is also remarkable that this decrease pervades all the nationalities and all the religious denominations. And it is perhaps still more remarkable that although there is this large decrease in the whole number, there is an actual increase in the number of females committed. Although it has happened but once in ten years and perhaps not for a long time before that, still it is not unreasonable to look for a decrease in crime. The province is now to a great extent settled. The influx of immigrants is not so great as it once was. The missionary treads close on the heels of the settler. The pulpit and the press are doing their work. And surely we ought to expect that henceforth, as the years roll on, the country will become more thoroughly Christianized, and crime and immorality and evil of every kind be diminished.

#### FILLING THE PEWS.

EVERY little while the question crops out in our religious exchanges, whose business is it to fill the pews? Particularly is this the case at this season of the year, when all well-ordered churches hold their annual business meetings, and so many of them find the balance on the wrong side of the account. "In debt to the treasurer again! How is this?" And the easy solution of the question is, "The house don't fill up, somehow, our minister don't draw." As the "Advance" says:—

"The voluntary system of raising money to sustain public worship, after various swingings back and forth between subscriptions, pew-rents, taxation, and free-will offerings, tends ultimately to settle down on the ability of the minister to influence the people to pay him, for his salary is the chief item in home expenditure." This, it says, "is a sharp, and in some respects a not unsound test of a pastor's real usefulness." But in many cases it thinks it works injustice to the pastor. Failing to fill the pews, however else he may succeed, that wrong "balance" will be almost sure to kill him.

"There is no end to the faults which idle, busy, discontented brains will find. He is pious, dignified, earnest, at times even eloquent. He loves the aged and the little children, and they love him. He edifies thoughtful minds in the pulpit, and wins respect and affection by social intercourse. But some of the pews are not rented. The treasury does not fill itself. A debt is growing. He must go."

Now, this is all very well if "filling the pews" is one of the New Testament qualifications or requirements of a 'bishop,' or if the said pastor undertook, on his settlement, to fill them, with good paying subscribers. In that case, the contract is broken, and the church should be free. It undertook nothing, and kept its word! How is it to blame? But we never saw any such stipulation in the settlement of a minister. On the contrary, we have often heard it insisted on that the church had as much to do with filling the pews as the minister. It has, at least, been generally understood that the people were to do the inviting and welcoming to the house of God, to pay attention to strangers, and to live so that the name of Christ should not suffer reproach through their ungodliness or neglect. Undoubtedly, the obligations are mutual. The pew and the pulpit must both work, and work harmoniously, in order to successful church-building. But to expect the pastor to fill the house, and replenish the treasury, when perhaps there is not another Congregational family in the place to draw thither,—or "resign"—is, well, expecting a good deal! We do not very much whether Spurgeon, or Newman Hall, without the influence of their great name, would "fill the bill."

#### SARNIA WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY.

The second annual meeting of the Sarnia Auxillary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian church in Canada was held on the 12th of February 1879, in the parlour of the Young Men's Christian Association, the Rev. John Thompson in the chair.

There was a large number of ladies present. A letter was read from Miss Fairweather, and the latest missionary intelligence given.

The annual report was read as follows.

The treasurer reported that the receipts of the Society have been \$53.81 of which \$5.55, were required for necessary expenses, and the balance of \$48.26 forwarded to the central society.

The chairman gave an interesting account of the various missions of our Church, after which the former committee of management were re-elected for the present year. President, Mrs. Vidal, Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Scott; Secretary, Miss Cameron, Treasurer, Miss King, Committee, Mrs. Brebner, Mrs. D. Mackenzie, Mrs. Symington, Mrs. G. S. McLean, Mrs. C. Mackenzie, Mrs. W. B. Clark, Mrs. Nisbet, Miss McGregor.

#### REPORT.

The committee of management in presenting their second annual report, desire to express their thankfulness that as a society and as individuals, we have been preserved from the calamities which in other places have made the past year memorable.

Our interest in mission work has been deepened and extended by several exceptional incidents. Miss Nisbet kindly permitted us to examine a number of photographs of natives of Indore, types of all classes from the Mahajah to the juggler; and specimen numbers of portions of Scripture in the native language, printed at the press which was sent from Canada to Indore; we have also seen a photograph of one of our missionaries, Mr. Junor and his family, and some of our number had the privilege of seeing them and the Chinese nurse, at Point Edward, as they passed on their way to Formosa.

We have to thank Miss Topp for her helpful words of encouragement, and for the punctuality with which she sends the delightful letters from Indore and Formosa which add so much to the interest of our meetings.

Missionary intelligence from France, from South Africa, and other places have engaged our attention from time to time and the ladies who are present usually appear greatly interested in the information and are glad of the opportunity to attend this little social gathering of those in sympathy with this great work—even the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Our only regret is that so few feel this desire, or so few manifest it in this way; month by month the invitation is publicly given to all, but eleven is the average number who attend, and the number of members is only twenty-four. The amount contributed is \$53.81.

We trust that the year on which we now enter may be marked by an increased membership, a larger attendance and warmer zeal.—C. C. CAMERON, Secretary.