

which are advanced in the present paper, that they are in the main identical with those so powerfully enforced by that great social reformer.

The picture given by Sydney Smith, though intended for the gaols of England alone, was unhappily applicable to the gaols of nearly all countries at that time. Certainly it contains a most truthful representation of the condition of the gaols of this Canada of ours a few years back. The first important step taken in Canada, towards reforming our prison system, was by the establishment, in 1859, of a Board of Inspectors of Asylums and Prisons. As a member of that Board since its first establishment, I certainly am not inclined to undervalue its labours in the matter of prison reform, and during the course of the remarks which follow I shall have occasion to notice some of the improvements which have been effected in our prison system through the instrumentality of the Board. But the powers of the inspectors reach but a short way, while the evils to be remedied were of long growth, widely spread, and deeply rooted. Though much, therefore, has already been done, much, very much, remains to be done before we can rest satisfied with our work, before we can pretend that our prisons and prison discipline in Canada are at all what they ought to be in a civilized and Christian land.

We have said that Sydney Smith's picture of the county gaols of England forty years ago was a faithful representation of all our gaols in Canada, a very few years back. Is it possible that it is a faithful picture of any of our prisons at the present day? Can it be true that any of our gaols now are nurseries of crime, schools where our criminals are trained in vice and educated for the penitentiary and the gallows? Can it be possible that we still have gaols where we are systematically *manufacturing* criminals instead of *reforming* them? Those who are best acquainted with our common gaols, particularly those of our larger cities, Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, will be least likely to answer these questions in the negative.

"Pudet hac opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse et non potuisse repelli."

If, then, it must be admitted, as with shame it must, that there are many gaols in the country which are obnoxious to the charge of being schools of vice and crime, it becomes us to consider whe-