

in optimistic dreams not having their foundation on sound logic or fact. The bald facts are—we must help where we can, or some will perish who might be rescued. There is no doubt the world in each cycle must grow better. What we do in our generation should be done on sound foundation and in a practical way to recommend it to those who follow and carry on the work of prison and social reform.

### THE RELAPSED CRIMINAL.

#### RECIDIVISM.

The great plague of society is the recidivist. He is the man or woman who has gone to prison half-a-dozen times, or it may be fifty or a hundred. In some countries a criminal who has been in prison two or three times is regarded as a recidivist without reference to the nature of his offence. Under the German system he is regarded as a recidivist only when he repeats his offence.

There are recidivists who are professional and anti-social. It is the latter, whether he be a general recidivist, committing a variety of crimes, or a special recidivist, confining his infractions to a single line, who is most dangerous. The real problem in dealing with this matter is to distinguish between the accidental or occasional, and the habitual criminal.

#### DISCHARGED PRISONERS AND RECIDIVISTS.

We cannot separate the proper treatment of paroled prisoners from the large and important question of prison administration. When a man returns to prison a second or third time it may be because when he went out of prison he was not properly educated to go back into society, or it may be because society was not properly educated or prepared to receive him. If the convict has learned a trade through the industrial agencies of the prison which lie at the basis of all improvement, it is not so difficult to place him. But, if a man comes out of prison without industrial fundamentals inculcated into his habits, it is hard to tell which is the more helpless, the prisoner who asks for work or the man who would like to befriend him by giving him employment. I have come to the conclusion that efforts of this character, to be effective and lasting, must be carried on as a supplementary agency when he leaves the prison, followed up outside by all the better influences for his rehabilitation. As a rule the paroled prisoner meets an apathetic and sometimes hostile feeling in society when he begins to breathe the atmosphere of freedom.