

being unsuccessful, the right of appeal to Her Majesty's Privy Council will, we trust, be restored in time to allow it to be carried up to the highest judicial tribunal in the Empire.

THE PREVALENCE OF CRIME.

The alarming increase of crime in its most shocking forms is one of the most startling signs of the times. We have had occasion to call attention to this subject before, and we hoped that the series of atrocities which startled the public mind a few months ago was the result of an altogether exceptional ebullition of the evil element which exists among us—a kind of criminal epidemic which had swept over our country—and that when it had exhausted itself things would revert back to what we had been accustomed to look upon as their normal condition; but so far from this being the case, things appear to be growing worse rather than better, and lawlessness is increasing rather than diminishing. If the almost superhuman efforts which have been put forth by both the Dominion Government and our Provincial Executive to promote emigration, have not brought a very large increase to our population of the more desirable classes, we are evidently getting our full share of the criminal and dangerous class. The time was when both life and property, both in town and country, were so nearly absolutely safe, so far as the agency of evil-disposed men was concerned, that Canadians generally scarcely thought of danger; and we looked with pity, if with no worse feeling, upon those communities in which the same degree of security was not enjoyed. Unhappily, this state of things can scarcely be said to exist among us any more. The country is full of tramps, and our towns and cities are full of burglars and thieves. The clever tricks of expert and audacious sharpers which find such frequent record in our daily newspapers show that crime has been deliberately adopted by a part of the community as a profession. In the presence of these experts in villany, means of security which formerly were amply sufficient, at the present time are absolutely useless; and the means of escape are so ample, and are so thoroughly understood by these trained criminals, that except the house-breaker or highway-man is caught in the very act, detection is next to impossible. And what is true of crime against property is also true of crime against person. The number of shocking murders committed of late is really appalling; and the outrages committed upon females, many of them mere children, strikingly illustrates the depth of debasement to which a part of the community has sunk.

The complete investigation of the causes which have produced this startling state of things, is something which few have either the ability or the leisure to attempt; and the treatment of such a subject would require volumes rather than the space allotted to a brief notice of this kind. Doubtless much of the evil which exists among us is the result of causes which have been in operation elsewhere. There is a surplus population of criminals as well as of other classes in the older communities of the world; and though our own countrymen have shown aptitude enough in learning to be adepts in crime, we may well suppose that the most skillful and audacious of our criminals have received their education elsewhere. But we must not close our eyes to the fact that we have a thoroughly criminal class growing up among ourselves. Even in our own country, with all its advantages, with its opportunities for earning an honest livelihood, and with all the means of intellectual and moral improvement which it brings within the reach of even