

of crime forbids complacent indulgence in optimistic dreams. It will not go out of existence with a wave of the hand. There are few prisons without inmates, and the gallows even does not abolish murder. It would be bordering on folly on the other hand to conclude that a criminal life is the unalterable normal condition of an appreciable percentage of the population. Heredity nowadays gets the blame of many things, but it is not answerable for all that is imputed to it. Without disputing clearly ascertained facts, or even impugning plausible theories built thereon, there is nothing compelling even a viciously inclined individual to lead a criminal life. The door of reputable citizenship stands open for all if they would only will to enter.

In all civilized countries the barbarities inflicted on defenceless criminals have become well nigh impossible, though it should not be overlooked that there are latent reactionary tendencies against which it is well to guard. One has only to think of the disposition of criminal matters in Russia to see how the relapse into barbarism is possible. Individual officials may lack the proper elements necessary to right modes of treating criminals, and occasional harshness and even cruelty may be inflicted. The tendency however is in the opposite direction. To many it seems the reverse of wisdom to make pets of criminals and lead them to suppose that they are special objects of picturesque interest to well-meaning but weak sentimentalists. It is also an economic mistake to make it appear that an individual who has been pursuing a vicious career is deserving of more attention and encouragement than the honest and industrious poor. It is possible that there are people who glow with sympathetic feeling at the contemplation of the inmates of prison cells, who have no upbraidings of conscience in patronizing traders who pay wages on which it is impossible to maintain a decent and honest existence. There may be such a course as attempting to drain the lake of criminality, while the river that feeds it is left to flow in its natural course.

Thoughtful and intelligent prison reformers, most of whom are Christian as well as humane people, understand the nature and purpose of penal discipline. They know that punishment to be salutary must cease to be vindictive. In the infliction of punishment on an offender it must be clear beyond mistake that it is just and not vengeful. Punishment there ought to be. Wrong done always produces suffering, and the wrong-doer ought to suffer and be made to understand that justice demands that he must atone for the wrong either by restitution or suffering. In the judicial infliction of punishment many things have to be taken into account, such as the nature of the crime, the training and character of the offender, and how best the interests of society are to be served. Hard and fast laws cannot always be applied in strict literality, something must be left to judicial discretion, yet that may be subject more or less to individual peculiarities. One judge may have a special horror of a particular class of crimes, and feel disposed to punish offenders prove guilty of their commission with unmitigated severity, while another might regard that particular form of criminality as comparatively venial, and suffer the guilty to escape with a nominal sentence.

Another fundamental conception in dealing with criminals is that their treatment should conduce to reformation. Prison-gate missions are admirably conceived, and in practice have been productive of incalculable good. All right-thinking people would like to see a prisoner rescued from criminal ways and encouraged to become a reputable and industrious citizen. It is cruel and unjust to regard with distrust and suspicion one who has expiated his crime, so far as the law requires. By such treatment his return to a virtuous life is made unnecessarily hard and difficult. Even the most hardened and hopeless criminals have not become such all at once. It has been by degrees that they have become the sworn foes of society, and not a few have become so by the treatment they have received at the hands of those who ought to have known better.

The meetings held in Toronto last week in the interests of prison reform show that enlightened and humane views in relation to the treatment of the criminal classes are being better understood. A number of those whose connection with penal and reformatory institutions, and whose acquaintance with social and economic questions in their moral bearing entitle their opinions to respect, took a leading part in the Conference. The extension of the industrial school system, the proper gradation of prisoners while serving terms, the formation of industrial training farms, the separation of juvenile

offenders from the society of veterans in time who glory in their shame, industrial schools for girls, the keeping of young men in a special prison, and the provision for adequate accommodation of paupers and insane in institutions other than the common prison, form a tolerably extensive list of reforms urgently needed. In reference to most of them there are but slight differences of opinion, and most people would rejoice to see practical effort made to bring them about. Apart even from the highest considerations, it would be attended with danger to be indifferent or neglectful of the criminal element to be found in all communities. The radical cure of criminality is the grace of God. Not a few of those most prominent in the work of prison reform are imbued with the Spirit of Him who regards the sigh of the prisoner and who came to open the prison doors to them; that are bound. The prophet predicts a time when the people shall be all righteous, so that the ultimate extinction of crime is not a visionary dream.

THE McALL MISSION.

IT is not without significance that the McAll Mission should have been commenced and maintained with uninterrupted effort in Paris and in many parts of France. That mission is a very striking testimony to the power of the Gospel in our own time. The well-worn cry that the creeds of Christendom and the influence of the Churches are waning forces finds distinct refutation in the work that has been accomplished by this earnest but unpretentious mission in France. The inception of the mission was providential. Mr. McAll, a highly-esteemed Congregational minister in Manchester, took his customary holiday in Paris, not long after the horrors and privations of the siege of the gay capital, and the still more awful horrors of the Commune had spread their desolation over the city. He had provided himself with a supply of Gospel tracts and visited the least likely and uninviting quarters of the French metropolis, where he found an unexpected willingness to receive the simple missives and to listen to the kindly and sympathetic words he spoke to the people he met. Here was a great opportunity, and he was not slow to embrace it. He found the people who had been dazzled and lured by the splendid mockery of the Second Empire, and wearied and heart-sick with the wild ravings of anarchic leaders ready to listen with attentive ear to the good news which the Gospel brings to the weary and heavy laden. Mr. McAll faltered not, but was obedient to the heavenly vision. He resigned his comfortable and encouraging English charge and made his home among the people it was henceforth his mission to benefit. From that time to the present he has pursued with unwearied fidelity the task he then undertook. His methods were wisely adapted to the circumstances of the people, and from the beginning there has been steady and expanding progress. The little one has become a thousand. The outlook is more encouraging and promising than ever, and great things are hoped for from the McAll Mission in France.

The work is pushed forward to the utmost limit the resources placed at his disposal at present warrant, and were the liberality of Christian people commensurate with the present opportunities of the expansion of the mission, a mighty work could be done. There are now about one hundred and forty mission stations, and new forms of activity have been adopted in the providing of a mission boat and a floating chapel. One who for a number of years was connected with the McAll Mission says of it: "The time will come when the converts of the McAll Mission will be numerous enough to make a real impression not merely on the Christian Churches of France, but on the general public, yea, even on the world itself. There is, perhaps, no country where denominational feeling has given place to missionary enterprise so completely as in France, through the McAll work." Some may be disposed to think that this is too sanguine an estimate of the prospective power and influence of this evangelical agency. Others who have followed its record carefully will accept the statement as fully warranted by the experiences of the past. There are several Canadian auxiliaries, but these might be greatly multiplied and still greater things would result. The venerable founder of the Mission says: "Had I five hundred workers and \$500,000, I could effectively place every worker and judiciously expend every dollar within six months." The McAll Mission can be safely trusted with all that generous contributors can offer.

Books and Magazines.

THE *Illustrated News of the World*, in every number, in addition to interesting contributions by eminent literary men, presents many admirable illustrations. Last week's issue presents a large, finely engraved separate portrait of Lord Dufferin, formerly Governor-General of Canada. There is also the first instalment of Mark Twain's new work, "The Tramp Abroad Again."

MISS MAMIE DICKENS, who was always known as the favourite daughter of Charles Dickens, has written, for the Christmas number of *The Little Home Journal*, her first story. It is a semi-ghost tale of the romance of an old English manor. Miss Dickens' only piece of literary work previous to this story was the editing of her father's letters for publication. She is said to possess true literary talent.

AMONG the varied features of the Double Thanksgiving Number of *The Youth's Companion*, just at hand, we notice the following good stories: "Chip and Wag," by Katherine Lee Bates; "Fifteen's Thanksgiving," by Mrs. H. G. Rowe; "Delia's Notion," "The Belligerent Turkey," "John Macbride," by Edward W. Thomson, formerly of Toronto. Other articles are: "A Hotel-Kitchen," illustrated; "On the North Sea Banks," by James Runciman; "Holiday Recreations"; and a stirring poem by Ezekiah Butterworth, "The Flag that the Emigrants Cheered." The Children's Page has a Thanksgiving Menu for little folks.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. (Boston: Littell & Co.)—This standard periodical, founded in 1844, has nearly reached its jubilee. Its success is as remarkable as its age. A weekly magazine, it gives over three and a quarter thousand large and well-filled pages of reading matter—forming four large volumes—every year. Its frequent issue and ample space enable it to present with freshness and completeness the ablest essays, reviews and criticisms, the choicest stories, the most interesting sketches of travel and discovery, the best poetry, and the most valuable biographical, historical, scientific, and political information from the entire body of foreign periodical literature, and from the pens of the most eminent living writers. As the only satisfactorily complete compilation of the best current literature, it is invaluable in these busy times. It easily enables its readers to keep abreast with the literary and scientific progress of the age and with the work of the foremost writers of the time.

WITH the December number of the *Presbyterian Record* our esteemed friend, James Croil, who has so ably and conscientiously edited that most useful monthly for the last sixteen years, in a manner of deep feeling says his farewell words and lays down his editorial pen. There is no suspicion of flattery in saying that Mr. Croil has filled the important and responsible position of editor of the denominational monthly in such a manner as to gain the confidence and esteem of his wide circle of readers, and of all who are interested in the welfare of the Church. He has been heart and soul in sympathy with its best work. The Rev. E. Scott, who succeeds him, is no novice in the work on which he now enters. He brings with him a number of excellent qualifications, and it may be confidently anticipated that under his guiding hand the *Record* will maintain its position of usefulness unimpaired. Several improvements are in contemplation. We extend cordial greetings and well-wishes for the success of the new editor of the *Record*.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) The second part of Mr. James' "Chaperon" opens the *Atlantic Monthly* for December. This is followed by a paper (to be the first of a series of such articles) on "Joseph Severn and His Correspondents." The most interesting letter of the series is from John Ruskin, giving his first impressions of Venice. Miss Harriet Watts Preston and Miss Louise Dodge have a paper on "A Torch Bearer." There is a short story of Italian life by Harriet Lewis Bradley; Professor A. V. G. Allen writes of "The Transition of New England Theology," a paper which is based on the teachings of Dr. Hopkins; and Mr. Lafcadio Hearn continues his Japanese sketches in a paper on "The Most Ancient Shrine of Japan." Miss Repplier has a paper on "The Trauses of War." There is a paper by Professor Charles H. Moore, of Cambridge, on "The Modern Art of Painting in France," and a most valuable essay on "Richard Third," by the late James Russell Lowell, an essay which has never before been printed. "American Characters in German Fiction," "Recent Dante Literature," three sonnets on London and Oxford, and the Reviews close the number. The editor announces for the January number the beginning of a serial entitled "Don Orsino," by F. Marion Crawford, and an article by Henry James on "Lowell's London Life."

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls; Toronto: 36 Bay Street.)—With the December number, the twenty-second volume of the *Homiletic Review* comes to its close. Its leading article is the second of Professor Wilkinson's paper on Bersier, and is devoted to the illustration of his peculiar power as a sermonizer. Dr. C. B. Hulbert follows with a careful application of Biblical texts to recent claims, especially treating of the Christian consciousness and the extent of the concessions that may be made to the demands of modern theologians concerning it. Professor T. W. Hunt, of Princeton, treats of the character of William Caxton, the famous old English printer and translator. Professor Charles E. Knox, D.D., contributes the third of his papers on "Biblical Homiletics," answering the question, "To What Extent Can the Scriptures be Used?" and laying emphasis upon the two principles of Development and Adaptation as demanded in the preacher's use of them. Dr. E. G. Robinson, ex-President of Brown University, closes the Review Section with a paper on the practical subject of "Training Men to Preach." The Sermonic Section is unusually rich in material. Dr. McLaren's sermon on "Elijah's Translation and Elisha's Death-Bed," is wonderfully suggestive. Among other prominent contributors are Drs. Morgan Dix, Canon O'Meara, Michael Burnham and J. M. Ludlow. In the Miscellaneous Section, Rev. Peter Robertson, of Cincinnati, has a timely and helpful article on "The Gap Between the Poor and the Churches—Can it be Closed?" The other departments have their customary attractiveness. Dr. Stuckenberg, in the European Department, is interesting as ever. "Living Issues" discusses the subject of "The Cossetting of Criminals," presenting some statistics and facts worthy of serious consideration.