

better known or more influential in Montreal, and their journal enjoyed in this way an unusual advantage. Mr. Brierly brings to the new management the reputation of a thoroughly successful journalist. He has carried on for a number of years the St. Thomas Journal, one of the best daily papers in Canada, outside of the large cities, and as he is still in the full vigour of life he is admirably qualified to make the new venture a success. Mr. Atkinson has been for some years a member of the staff of the Toronto Globe, and during that time he has acquired a good reputation for work with which his name has been openly associated. Both the manager and the editor are keen politicians, who will do their best *con amore* to make the Herald an influential propagandist of Liberal opinions and policy.

Retiring
a Professor

An interesting event took place recently in the University of Aberdeen. The students who had to attend the lectures of a certain professor, and found them unsatisfactory, preferred a formal complaint of inefficiency against him, and after an investigation by the University Court the charge was declared to be well founded, and the professor was asked to vacate his chair on a retiring allowance. This may look like harsh treatment, but the interests of the students and the University should, in such a case, be regarded as paramount. In the last resort only the students can say whether the lectures of a professor are worth attending or not, and if by regulation or in any other way they are compelled to spend time on what is of no value to them they may reasonably demand an inquiry. A very similar incident happened in the University of Toronto, when the chair of Philosophy was made vacant twenty-five years ago, the then new appointee being the late Prof. Young.

Mr. Grubb's
Baptism.

Quite a commotion appears to have been caused in certain circles by the announcement that Mr. Grubb, the Anglican evangelist, has joined the Baptists since his return to England. What he said by way of explanation of his action has been more disturbing than the ceremony itself, for he apparently admits that he was never truly a Christian till now. The admission throws some doubt, if not discredit, on the business of revivalism, for the public cannot be sure that some other prominent and successful evangelist will not follow his example in changing his ecclesiastical affinity and giving the same kind of reason for doing so. The tendency of such a course as Mr. Grubb has taken must be to make his converts feel uncertain if not uncomfortable. A mere change of denomination would not have mattered much, but it is quite different with what amounts to a confession that while he was converting sinners by his preaching he had not himself been really converted.

Militarist
Tendencies.

That the military system of Germany has a brutalizing effect on the national character seems to be beyond all controversy. All young Germans are subjected to service for three years, and during that period they are drawn away from civil pursuits and ideals, and demoralized by persistent cultivation of the military spirit, and constant subjection to military discipline. The other day an officer ran down and stabbed to death a civilian who had accidentally knocked up against him, and it seems likely that the murderer will escape with a nominal penalty on the ground that he acted in defence of his personal honour. Such occurrences are frequent enough to merit the careful consideration of all who are interested in Germany's real welfare. It is notorious that the Government has found it extremely difficult to suppress the barbarous practice of duelling in the army, and that the process of evolution through which German military officers pass tends to unfit them for dealing in any decent way with barbarous races in the colonies.

Prison Labour.

SIR OLIVER MOWAT, as Minister of Justice, has advised the appointment of a commission to inquire into the working of Kingston Penitentiary, and the Governor-in-Council has acted on the advice. This is, of course, no reflection on the present warden, who was appointed only a few months ago. Whether there is any reflection on the management of the past will appear when the commission reports. As we have not seen a copy of the instructions issued to the commissioners, we are left to conjecture the nature of the proposed inquiry, but it may safely be assumed that it will deal with the vexed question of prison labour. For procuring information on it the selected commissioners, Dr. E. A. Meredith and Mr. James Noxon, are exceptionally well qualified, since they are already very thoroughly acquainted not merely with the nature of the problem to be solved, but also with the results of past attempts at its solution. Sir Oliver Mowat himself, in his capacity of Premier and Attorney-General of Ontario, was forced to familiarize himself with prison management in connection with the Central Prison, the Mercer Reformatory, and the Penitentiary Reformatory.

The question of prison labour is viewed differently by different classes, who take voluntarily, or are forced to take, a deep interest in it. One class is made up of "prison reformers" who think the ideal of prison management should be to improve the convict and to do all that is possible to restore him to good citizenship. In their view the work should be reformatory, and should be calculated to enable the prisoner to make a decent living when his term expires. The prison officials constitute a second class. With them work is disciplinary. They prescribe physical labour because convicts are more easily managed when they are kept at work than they are when allowed to go idle, and their chief desire in the matter is to induce such a degree of physical fatigue as will tend to make the prisoner desire rest when his work ceases. A third class is made up of those who are responsible to the people for the administration of the public service. They want to keep down the net cost of maintenance by making the labour of the convicts as profitable as possible. The ordinary artisans constitute a fourth class. From their point of view any kind of prison labour is objectionable which brings prison-made goods into competition with those made by free labour in factories.

The past experience of our own and other countries shows that it is extremely difficult to harmonize these variant ideals in actual prison management. Many different ways of utilizing convict labour have been tried and still more have been suggested, without making it clear that a satisfactory solution of the problem is near at hand. A useful account of what has been attempted in English prisons is given in the October number of the Nineteenth Century by Sir Edmund du Cane, whose experience extended from 1851 to 1895, and ranged from the military control of transported felons in West Australia to the management of large English prisons under limitations prescribed by Parliament. The conclusion he has arrived at is thus summed up:

"However desirable industrial labour for prisoners may be from a moral point of view, it is impossible to apply it to more than a small proportion of those sentenced to imprisonment, on account of the shortness of the sentences of the large majority. It is a delusion, and a costly one, to imagine that mechanical labour, such as the tread-mill, can be made to produce the moral advantages of industrial labour by connecting it with milling machinery, or other like method. The advantage of industrial labour in local prisons, considered as enabling prisoners to find labour on discharge, is considerably over-rated, and it is only in a very limited degree that crime arises from want of employment. Prisoners under the longer sentences may with facility and advantage be employed on industrial work, providing that consumers can be found for the work they produce. The Government itself, considered as a whole, is the most appropriate consumer of such articles, and prisons should therefore be looked at as Government workshops, for the inmates of which other Government departments should, as a matter of duty and obligation, be required to find employment."