

was admitted. But in such cases the opinions of experts often differ widely. The history of criminal jurisprudence shows that there is no question on which medical men disagree so much as on the real mental condition of persons in whose behalf the plea of insanity is set up; and even a preponderance of evidence, one way or the other, almost always fails to clear up the doubt to which contradictory opinions give rise. The alleged abuses in connection with lunatic asylums in Quebec are probably much exaggerated; but ground for a searching enquiry into the management of these institutions does exist, and the Government would fall short of its duty if it neglected to cause such enquiry to be made.

SINCE the publication of the encyclical in which the Pope condemns Freemasonry, the French press of Quebec has shed rivers of ink in proving that a Freemason is of all criminals the most dangerous and the most diabolic. All the writers admit the magnitude of the crime of Freemasonry, but on its prevalence in Quebec they differ widely. Two bishops admit that but few French Canadian Catholics are Freemasons. The Pope's manifesto was followed by a shower of pastoral letters from the bishops, in all of which the horrors of Freemasonry are painted in the blackest colours, and its existence deplored; but against Fenianism not a word is uttered by journalist or bishop. Yet no person of sense can doubt that, in America, Masonry is practically harmless, while Fenianism ranks with Nihilism as a real danger to civilization.

THE retirement of Judge Meredith recalls the practice, of which it is not an example, of Quebec judges retiring before the active energies of life are nearly spent. The scandal of a judge after securing his pension by retirement, going back to practice at the bar, unless voluntarily abated, will one day have to be put down by law. In Ontario, the tendency is all the other way; the judges are seldom willing to retire even when the mind has lost much of its vigour, when memory is impaired, and attention can only be kept active for an hour or two at a time. These opposite tendencies—the tendency to retire too early and the tendency to remain too late—lead to abuses which ought to be voluntarily corrected. Incentives to premature retirement would not be difficult to remove; the remedy of superannuation at a given age would work unequally and could hardly fail sometimes to deprive the public of services just when they had become of greatest value. But for both abuses a corrective needs to be found, and it is every way desirable that it should be spontaneous and not coercive. But if not voluntary, it may have to take the less agreeable form.

IN the estimation of the leading Tory journal, a plea for tolerance in the expression of political opinion is a serious crime. Mr. Ross, Minister of Education for Ontario, has brought anathema on his head by the avowal that "he would not accuse of disloyalty any man who chose to express his opinion that annexation to the United States would be best for us." This, we are told, is treason; and the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor is invited to the traitor. Sir Richard Cartwright is also arraigned on a similar charge: he, it seems, is guilty of having said that independence is a question open to discussion, and on him the Governor-General is instructed to keep a steady eye. Neither the Governor-General nor Governor Robinson is likely to respond to the invitation. It is too late to think about a censorship of opinion in this country. Thirty-five years ago, all the leading Conservatives of Montreal signed a declaration in favour of annexation. No rational being believes that Canada will always remain a colony, and the views which the people hold of the future of the country will naturally find expression. A censorship of opinion cannot be set up by official fiat, and it is not probable that the demand that it should be is seriously made.

JUST when the County of Halton decides to continue such local prohibition as is possible where distillation and importation remain under the protection of the law, the criminal statistics of Canada for the year 1882 come to hand. They do not bear out the statement so often and so confidently made, sometimes even by members of the Bench, that drunkenness and crime, as cause and effect in the great majority of cases, go together. Drinkers are, in this return, divided into two classes, one of which makes a moderate use of liquors, and the other an immoderate use. Of the thirty-five persons charged with murder, eight, or less than a quarter, are described as immoderate drinkers; among the one hundred and ninety persons charged with aggravated assault and inflicting bodily injury, the immoderate drinkers counted thirty-four, a fraction more than one-sixth; thirty-one cases of manslaughter give nine excessive drinkers, the proportion being less than one-third. The proportion of immoderate drinkers among the persons

charged with the following crimes was: shooting, stabbing and wounding, sixty-six to one hundred and forty-seven; assault and obstructing peace officers, less than one in ten; assault and battery, less than one in five; robbery and demanding with menaces, about one in seven; horse, sheep and cattle stealing, less than one-fifth; larceny and receiving, less than one in eight; arson, less than one in six; counterfeiting, forgery, and uttering, less than one in seven; felonies and misdemeanours not classified, less than one in eight; carrying unlawful weapons, less than one in three; breaches of the Municipal Act and By-laws, about one in ten; disorderly breaches of the peace, about one in three; miscellaneous and minor offences, about one in five. Drunkenness is often charged with the percentage of nine-tenths of all the crime committed, and the statement is sometimes carelessly echoed by people who have under their own observation the means of correcting the error. That drunkenness breeds crime is only too certain; but there are crimes which require a clear head and a steady hand for their execution. Of all who were charged with embezzlement and false pretences, not two per cent.—the actual proportion is one in sixty-five—were classed as immoderate drinkers; among house-breakers there are probably many boys; and less than three per cent. of those charged with house and shop breaking are classed as excessive drinkers. Burglars and persons with burglar's tools in their possession show a much larger proportion, something less than one-fifth. This would seem to show that the house-breaker degenerates more and more when he develops into the burglar. Abduction and kidnapping need to be planned with secrecy and executed with care: only one in sixteen of the persons charged with these crimes used spirituous liquors immoderately. The occasional excesses of moderate drinkers must have tended to swell the list of criminals. But still the common notion undoubtedly makes the proportion of crimes for the paternity of which drink is responsible higher than the official returns show. There is nothing to be gained by exaggeration, and much misconception must result from the habit of attributing crimes to other than the true causes.

IN a recent number of THE WEEK, "Canadian" defended colonial knighthoods on the analogy of University degrees and professional diplomas. With submission to "Canadian's" judgment the analogy will not hold. University degrees and professional diplomas have nothing aristocratic about them; they have no tendency, like knighthoods, to create a titled class. Nor do they, as objects of ambition, divide a Canadian citizen's affections and turn his thoughts to a fountain of honour outside the public opinion of his own country. They are necessary, as certificates of competence, educational and professional, while there is no necessity whatever for social titles. They may of course be misbestowed, as examiners are not infallible, but the examiner has no motive for misbestowing them, while party leaders unfortunately have often strong motives for misbestowing the recommendations in compliance with which knighthood is conferred. If "Canadian" doubts this last proposition, he has only to recall to his mind the Pacific Railway scandal, and some other unpleasant episodes in our history both political and commercial. That the titles thrown to colonists, often after a painful process of solicitation, are mere crumbs from the table of aristocracy, perhaps concerns the recipients more than any one else. It has just been announced that Her Majesty is about to confer the honour of knighthood upon her apothecary in the Isle of Wight. That worthy practitioner would have been deemed a strange brother in arms by the chivalry of former days, though possibly he may be considered to have slain with his gallipots as many as Sir Galahad slew with his sword. Let us have titles of public honour by all means, but let them be genuine, and such as can really inspire reverence. Let us have ceremony in its proper place; nobody wants a Democracy with its heels upon the table; but let the ceremony too be genuine and truly symbolical of something that reason can revere. The modicum of state which still surrounds our judges is salutary, and it is to be hoped will never be abolished. One bad consequence of clinging to the obsolete is that it is apt to discredit that of which we have present need; as in politics our retention of Conservative forms which have lost all force prevents us from recognizing the necessity of providing the constitution with safeguards suited to our own time.

AN Anglo-Indian correspondent, referring to a note in THE WEEK on the appointment of Lord Dufferin to the Vice-Royalty of India, says: "I see you have noticed the *Times* correspondent's quotations (or translations) from the Indian press. I attach little importance to them, or to anything the *Times* correspondent says reflecting on the people of India. Depend upon it they are more sinned against than sinning. I know something about the native press, and (tell it not in Gath!) it is less scurrilous