

to which I refer, contained less than an aggregate number of 200 certified cells, whereas at the present time there are more than 8000 which have received the legal sanction to be used in the same form of discipline. In indicating this change as evidence of the growing conviction of the advantages which have attended the adoption of separate confinement, it should be mentioned that more than nine-tenths of the cells so certified are contained in prisons expressly built for the exercise of this discipline, and the remainder have been obtained by alterations of existing cells, of so expensive a character that they would not have been undertaken without a strong conviction of the superiority of the form of discipline to be carried out in them."

The Inspector adds that the number of commitments to the prisons thus altered, rapidly decreased, and that in many gaols it was reduced to one-half what it had been ten years before.

The provisions of the Imperial statute just referred to, respecting the separate confinement of prisoners, leave the matter to the discretion of the local authorities. But the committee of the House of Lords, in their report, recommend "that legislative measures be taken as speedily as possible to render the adoption of separation obligatory upon all gaols and houses of correction in England and Wales, and that the payment of the proportion of the charge, now issued from the public revenues in aid of the county and borough prisons be made contingent, in each case, on the adoption of the separate system."

If the adoption of the "separate system" be necessary in England, where every gaol possesses in its chaplain, its schoolmaster—its system of hard labor—so many agencies to check or counteract the evil effects of the association of the prisoners, how much more necessary is such a system in Canada, where our gaols are without chaplains, without school-masters, without any means of providing labor for our prisoners, and where, consequently, the system of association of prisoners is left wholly unchecked to produce its sad and bitter fruits.

In conclusion, I would observe that the subject which I have ventured to bring under your notice this evening, is one of no ordinary practical importance to society. It belongs, however, to a class of