

offences, and we find it vastly more encouraging than working with and for the class known as old time drunks." Incurrigibles need to be shut up away from the drink, but younger and more plastic minds and bodies may be benefited by kindness after their punishment has been borne. It may be well, therefore, to have a good word and an open hand for the representatives of the Prisoners' Aid Association.

#### BRITISHERS' IGNORANCE OF EACH OTHER.

When the more or less learned men who composed and accompanied the British Association for the Advancement of Science were in Toronto a few years ago, one of them, a man of eminence and really high attainments (except in American geography) thus exclaimed to a companion, a London professor: "Look here, —," (we do not give names, for obvious reasons) "this is somewhat of a surprise, I grant you. When we met in Montreal in 1884 we expected to see a fine place. Everyone has heard of Montreal. It is a seaport, and an old settled town. But to come three hundred miles into the interior, and to find a fine brisk town, university buildings like this, a beautiful park, and tramways, and that sort of thing—why, 'pon my life, you know, I wasn't prepared for it, not a little bit." The Toronto man who heard this colloquy was vexed at the Englishman's ignorance. But let us not blame the Old Country folk too readily, for we ourselves are equally ignorant of other portions of the Empire. An incident but a few months old illustrates this: "You know Perth, don't you?" said a visiting Australian satirically to a Canadian business man with whom he had been talking. "You know Perth, and how large it is. Now how far north from Perth is Melbourne?" The Canadian, who is an ordinarily well-informed merchant, felt his ignorance, but "made a bluff" at answering his questioner, and, remembering the vast size of the Island Continent, guessed that it was 1,000 miles. "Well," smilingly retorted the Australian, "You're not so very far out. The cities are more than 1,600 miles apart as the crow flies, but remember that Melbourne is east of Perth, not north from it." The Canadian could not but feel cheap, and resolved to pay attention enough to the map of Australia to learn the names of the principal states in the Commonwealth and to learn the populations of their chief towns.

That the average man has much to learn of countries other than his own, especially those separated by oceans, is everywhere true. Even the stay-at-home American, living in Washington or St. Louis, knows less of Canada than the ordinary Canadian knows of the United States. Still, a dweller in the Dominion feels resentment at the ignorance of his country shown by scores and hundreds of English folk otherwise well informed. On Tuesday of the present week a Toronto man gave vent to his angry astonishment that Lord Rosebery, who might be supposed to be better informed, had expressed apprehension lest the grain harvest of Canada should be seriously affected by the drought in the Ottawa Valley. And he would be still further angered could he visit England and discover how little the thousands of mechanics or farmers or possible emigrants know of Canada. A correspondent of the Toronto "News," signing "Ringwood," gives curious instances of ignorance in high circles about the Dominion, not only historically but socially and financially, ignorance which the visits of many tourists, hunters, farm or other delegates to this side seems but slowly to dissipate and which it will take Canadian Government commissioners, railway agents, lecturers or writers to the British

press a long time to remedy. For example, "Ringwood" says:

Of Canada financially the average man has no notion beyond the stock exchange quotations of the Government stocks, the C.P.R. and the Grand Trunk. I have personal friends, well up in the learned and other professions, and used to investing large sums of money, either for themselves or as trustees, who would regard money placed even on deposit at interest in the Bank of Montreal as an investment of a risky nature, nor would the name of that great institution convey anything definite to their minds, except that it must be a colonial bank, and, therefore, liable to break at any moment! Nor does anyone, outside a very small circle, know anything of the millions which Americans have recently invested in manufacturing and other industries in Canada, and scarcely anyone is aware of the influx of American farmers to the Northwest. A majority of cultivated Englishmen, I would confidently stake my life, do not know the difference between Ontario and the prairie provinces, and mix them together in their minds, so far as they think of them at all."

Manifestly, an enthusiastic officer like Mr. Preston must find it depressing to even attempt to dissipate such a mass of ignorance. Proud as we are of the Englishman, it must be confessed that he is slow to be convinced of anything he is not accustomed to, and, as the Americans express it, "dreadfully struck on himself." Little by little, however, John Bull is learning that his Island is not all the world, and that his colonies (of which he usually speaks with a tolerant contempt) are really getting to have some autonomous self-respect. As to the "colonists," a few of the inhabitants of the large English centres are beginning to learn that they are not Yankees any more than they are savages or boors. It needs a few years, however, to convince John of anything. Heaven send Chamberlain a long enough life to get him out of his rut.

#### OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

The railway troubles in the province of Victoria came to a head a fortnight ago. Ever since the Victorian Government announced that it was necessary to reduce its expenses to make ends meet, and that it proposed to reduce salaries over £125 from four per cent. on the lower grades to ten per cent. on the higher, there has been great dissatisfaction. The railway employees were especially bitter and threatened a strike, but just then public opinion had become so aroused by the cry for reform that it was deemed unwise to do so. The political influence of so large a body as the public servants was so great that the Government passed a measure through Parliament providing for the disfranchisement of the employees so far as voting for the ordinary candidates was concerned, but providing for a special representation for them of two members in the Lower House and one in the Upper. The Railway Association next affiliated with the Trades' Hall. This originally was a club and literary institute of the Trades' Unions, but has become the seat and centre of the Labor Party, a real and effective political machine. Once its members were actual working men and its representatives were of that class; but gradually schemers of all occupations or none, the publican being largely represented, have edged their way in, and not to the advantage of the party. The Government foreseeing the danger that must arise from such an association, asked the unions of its employees to withdraw from the affiliation. The drivers and firemen refused. The Government notified the executive officers that they would be dismissed from the service if they did not withdraw.

The locomotive drivers and firemen, believing that they were now thoroughly prepared and that the public had gone to sleep, sent, on the morning of the 8th a peremptory notice to the Government that if its order was not withdrawn before five o'clock that day, not a wheel would turn after midnight. The Premier had previously met the men and asked them to comply with the request of the Department and promising an enquiry into all grievances, but in vain. The Government could not submit to the State being controlled by a small body of its own employees. Parlia-