

The reports of the prison chaplains—Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian—which form an appendix to the annual report of the General Prisons Board in Ireland, make what will probably seem to the cynical very amusing reading. If one is to judge from these reports, there is no more God-fearing, devout, and religious body of men than the convicts who filled the Irish prisons last year. They, without exception, appear to be extraordinarily attentive to their religious duties, and particularly responsive to religious instruction. One of the chaplains says boldly: "I look upon it as a blessing for some people to be put in prison, because it is the only time they make any attempt to attend to their religious duties." Another says: "It is, I think, greatly to be desired that longer sentences were imposed by the magistrates. As matters are now, a prisoner has not time to have the drink craze eliminated from his system before his 'time is up,' and he goes out to get a new drink and incur a fresh sentence." A third chaplain says: "There is hardly another congregation so critical as convicts. Men, who whilst at liberty rarely enter a church, become quite fastidious in their taste, and profess themselves actuated with singular zeal for the beauty of God's house, when they have become by their crimes the inmates of a jail." The board in their report refer very appositely to the new Habitual Criminals Act of New South Wales, which provides that when a person has been convicted on indictment four times in respect of similar classes of offences, he may, on the occasion of the fourth conviction, be declared to be an habitual criminal, and be treated accordingly. It is satisfactory to observe that the proportion of the total daily average of prisoners in Irish prisons to 100,000 of the population fell from sixty-four in 1898 to fifty-eight in 1906.—*Law Times*.