

Crime is a distinct element and exists in about the same proportion everywhere. It is no more prevalent in British Columbia than in any other Province of the Dominion, the credit for which is in a measure due to the strict administration of justice as dispensed by His Lordship the Chief Justice, and an efficient police force under the superintendence of Mr. Hussey. I have lived in every large city in Canada, the United States, and many of the large cities of Europe and Africa. I have in each devoted considerable attention to criminal statistics, and I am convinced that this Province is as free from crime, considering its peculiar location, as any place in the world.

Before leaving this subject there is another criminal element in the community to which I would direct attention and to which no reference is made in the superintendent of police's report, and that is fallen women. Every now and again it is stated that through the efforts of some good Christian woman, a brand has been plucked from the burning. I have no desire to throw cold water on the well-intentioned works of any person; but I do say, and the assertion is backed up with the experience of the greatest workers in the cause of reform to-day, that scarcely one in 5,000 immoral women can be induced to lead a moral life. If they try it, the old, ever-haunting memory of their sin and degradation unites with other causes in holding them down. If the money and labor spent alleviating and endeavoring to reform the outcasts were expended in preventing them from falling or helping destitute women and girls, whom necessity and poverty would otherwise force upon the streets, then indeed would there be some compensatory results. But permitting them to fall first, and, after passing through the frightful sewer of vice, to pick them up and try to make them pure and whole, is not only a thankless and barren task but is utterly illogical and against experience.

The greatest and most frequent agency in producing female criminals is that young women are compelled to work for wages often insufficient to keep body and soul together. How can a poor girl, working from daylight to dark for \$2 up to \$4 a week and often made to believe that she is not human, be expected to entertain the same ideas of morality as her more favored sisters, especially when so many inducements are held out to her by fiends whose prey is innocence?

To the members of the W.C.T.U. and like organizations, I would say, get at the sources of the evil. You may top off the branches, beat them down and break them with a policeman's club, but as long as the cause remains, there will be an ever-growing crop. It is like trying to dry up a floor with a cloth, while you allow the bursted water-pipe to continue the deluge. A great work would be the establishment of homes for young women who have no homes of their own and have to work for a living. But let these homes be managed in a liberal spirit, and not turned into

semi-prisons by stringent laws and regulations. Let working young women be accommodated at barely paying rates, or even a little less; and, when girls are sick or out of work, let there be a fund to aid them, and, most important of all, bring every possible influence to bear upon the employers of female labor to pay remunerative wages. Reform in this direction would do far more to make women virtuous than double the amount of prayers—which no doubt, are a good thing, in their way—that nightly ascend on high for the overthrow of vice.

Of all the nuisances in this city, and the most patriotic of us will admit that there are a few, I cannot conceive of one which more deserves special mention than the "Day at Home." Everyone in society, and few who would like to be in society, have set apart a special day to receive their friends, and are not at home any other day of the week, even to their creditors. Once upon a time, when we were all poor, we used to drop into one another's houses without ceremony; now, it is different. A Victoria lady, who has more than once in the past amused and delighted THE HOME JOURNAL readers with her clever pen, shoots an arrow at this custom, which now prevails to such an alarming extent. Under the caption of "A Day at Home," she writes:

As "the history of THE HOME JOURNAL, from its infancy to the present time" * * * is one long series of battles fought in the interests of the people," I trust this gallant champion of the Right will allow a reader to "couch a lance"—this time in the cause of tormented womankind, and against the present crying evil of the "Day at Home." Men seldom pay formal visits to their friends, so that in the ordinary round of visits it is their wives and sisters who have to face the folly, discomfort and tawdry aping of grandeur of the almost universal fashion in Victoria of the "Day at Home."

Let any one look over their visiting list, and what do they find? Some friends with their weekly day at home, others with the first and third Mondays, others with the second and fourth Mondays, and so on through all the days of the week, until, horror of horrors! we find two or three dear friends who are at home every Tuesday—except the first Tuesday in the month! This bewildering and complicated set of dates and days one would think enough to inflict on female brains, but another "turn of the screw" is given, when we find that some of those friends who choose the first and third Mondays, live in the same locality, and sometimes in the same street as those who choose the second and fourth Mondays, so one has to make two weary pilgrimages in order to accomplish what could so easily have been done in one day. Then, again, it is rather too trying, when after perhaps great inconvenience to oneself, one goes on the particularly specified day only to find your friend "not at home." The excuse is afterwards made "Oh! I had to take dear Freddie to the dentist," or "I had to go to dear Maud's wedding," as if the mere statement of these facts at once turned inexcusable rudeness into the truest courtesy. Another point of view from which the gruesome "Day at Home" as-

sumes a lurid light is that if you honestly like the friend you do go to see, it is simply heartbreaking to come away after a ten minutes' visit with the depressed feeling that except for the few smiling words of welcome and a kindly if inane remark about the weather or one's health, you have literally not had a chance to two consecutive sentences with your friend, as she has been utterly swamped with numbers of other callers coming in.

Another drawback to the fixed day is that when it comes it turns out to be either raining or snowing, and you have to put the call off until the next specified day; then you find yourself desperately ill, and cannot possibly go; and, so on it may be for months, and on the off days when you could go, you do not venture to show your face near your friend's house, as you have in fact, been really "warned off the premises," except on the "Day at Home." Then again, it is surely ridiculous for people with a drawing-room, about the size of a pocket handkerchief, to set up a "Day at Home." If your callers arrive at once, the tiny room is overcrowded, and when the fifth appears one or two of the others have to take their leave, even if they have only been in the house three minutes. Surely kindly and friendly feelings are not greatly encouraged by this senseless form of calling! The economy of a fire in the drawing-room, and the tea and cake ready, and only one day in the week, may be a cogent reason in some houses for keeping up this form, but not in every household; and, I think most people would prefer a pleasant comfortable chat, even without the tea and cake.

I possess one friend whom I always call "Mrs. Rara Avis," as she stoutly declines to have a "Day at Home." She has often told me how her friends have tried to thrust every day in the week down her throat, as her "Day at Home," and has laughingly said, that if suddenly a day were added to the week, that eighth day would be at once ticketed by these friends as "Mrs. Rara Avis's day at home." Victorians, taken all round, are very ordinary people, and have sprung from a just as ordinary people. Few of us, I think, can boast of having very much "blue blood" in our veins; so why should we assume these silly imitations of "high life" customs, in our little plodding lives, when so few of us are descended from ducal houses? Will not some of the fashionable and sensible ladies of Victoria once again re-assume the simple, kindly, hospitable and courteous manners of their fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, and be always glad to welcome their friends on any and every day in the week they themselves are at home, and the friends happen to call? Let the "Day at Home" be altogether left to the Government House, where alone such a function is in place.

JAM.

The convention of fruit growers of British Columbia, Oregon, Washington and Idaho, recently held at Spokane, was attended by 2,500 people. The report of the committee on organization recommended that the association formed be known as the Northwest Fruit Growers