

Those who are sanguine that pensions will be granted sooner or later to the national teachers may perhaps look with coldness on this proposal; but on reflection they will see that, "pensions or no pensions," the existence of such a fund is highly desirable. It would be improvident to postpone a matter of so much importance *sine die* upon the assumption that pensions are certain to be granted at an early date; for no one can predict with even tolerable certainty that pensions will be given within the next ten years, or even at all. I would be sorry to say that it is hopeless to expect pensions; on the contrary I believe that if the national teachers will but persevere steadily in their agitation, they will ultimately secure pensions as well as every other reasonable and just right which those who are termed "civil servants," with no better claim than themselves, now enjoy as unquestioned privileges. But while conceding all this I repeat that the existence of a benevolent fund, such as I suggest, is desirable as a temporary relief, and that there is nothing in its nature or objects that can possibly bar the way to the obtaining of pensions at a future period.—*Irish Teachers' Journal*.

### Education and Crime.

An examination of the *Forty-first Annual Report of the Inspectors of the State (Pennsylvania) Penitentiary*, reveals some very curious and interesting facts. Among other things, it shows a marvellously small number of mechanics, tradesmen, or artisans among the convicts whilst a considerable number of would-be professional gentlemen make up a fair proportion of the Penitentiary population. Let us briefly review the statistics given. Since the institution was first opened, in 1829, the total number of convicts for larceny reached 3038, for burglary 590, for horse-stealing, 306, for passing counterfeit money 214, for forgery 200, for robbery 150, for burglary and larceny 134, for passing and having counterfeit money 44.

This gives alone for the crimes named, 4708. Five-sixths of all the prisoners who have been confined in this institution were convicted for crimes against property. The entire number of convicts of this class is 5484, or 83.89 per cent. The total number convicted of crimes against persons is 1053 or 16.11 per cent.—Total 6537. The majority of these unfortunate men appear to have had no positive knowledge of any *useful occupation*.

We will now turn to the educational statistics, based upon the number of schools in the school districts of each county. Of the above 6537 convicts, we find that 4151 or nearly two-thirds of them could *read and write*, (among this number are classified 32 "well instructed"); 1084 could *read only*; 1302 could neither *read nor write*.

The Report makes the following statement with regard to the education of the 621 convicts in confinement during the year 1869.

Educated in Public Schools.....	390
" " Private Schools.....	159
Never went to School.....	77
Total.....	626

This is certainly not very creditable to our Common School education. Now, if the great increase in the Common Schools has not brought about a corresponding decrease in crime, as the adherents of this system of education claim they do, it certainly shows a deficiency somewhere. Until a *free religious education* is incorporated into the Common School System, all the hopes based upon the idea that they will exert an influence for the diminution of crime in the rising generation, will prove false and delusive. A people who know not God, or who have only a vague idea of the existence of such a BEING, without understanding their duties to HIM, can never be truly virtuous. If parents will teach their children to know God, to love HIM and to serve HIM, they need never fear, whether those children be literate or illiterate, to find them in the Penitentiary.

Let us now examine the "Local Relations" of the convicts.

The figures will, no doubt, surprise a great many. It is the general impression of a large number of our fellow-citizens that the majority of the inmates of our prisons and penitentiaries are foreigners. The Report under consideration shows 4940 Americans, against 1597 *foreigners*.

It may, perhaps, be interesting to some of our readers to examine into the causes of crime. The impression that intemperance is the one great cause of crime, is not fully sustained by the Report, although it cannot be denied that it exercises its baneful influences to a very alarming extent. The habits of the total number of convicts are summed up as follows:

Abstainers, 1551; moderate drinkers, 2713; sometimes intoxicated, 1159; often intoxicated, 1114.

The Industrial Relations for the year 1869, show how poorly represented are the tradesmen and mechanics: Unapprenticed, 268; apprenticed and left, 33; apprenticed and served until 21 years of age, 8—total 309.

Of these 309 we find that the pursuits before conviction prove beyond all question the justice of our frequent calls upon parents, especially those in moderate circumstances, to give their children *good trades*. Look at the Penitentiary Report. Nearly all the *trades* that men usually engage in have from 1 to 8 representatives, whilst we find *nineteen* clerks. Again of these 309 we find 108 who have occupations, whilst 201 may be said to have no occupation, or at least no *fixed* occupation.

Only one convict in fifteen appears to have served a regular apprenticeship, whilst the majority of those convicted were illy qualified to earn their own living. Education, moral and secular, can never be too highly appreciated, and they should be always the objects of a laudable ambition; but a determination to throw the possessors of a mere ordinary education into the professional callings of life, is a mistake that cannot be too highly deprecated. The long interval which elapses between the completion of an education and the time which a professional man must necessarily wait for a barely remunerative practice, is too long for a poor young man to wait. During this time he wastes the little that his parents may have economised for him; he too often falls into idle habits, which nearly always bring with them a desire for pleasures beyond his means to gratify, and draw around him dissolute companions, who eventually follow him to the prison door and there mock at his miseries.

Until the useful and industrial pursuits of life are more patronized in our country than they are at present, reports of prisons and penitentiaries will show the same large number of inmates. The Reports prove that men engaged in mechanical pursuits are exceedingly rare in these institutions.

This clearly shows the necessity of teaching boys and young men *good trades*. If in after life their means are such as to place them above their trades, they are not compelled to work at them; they may abandon them: but if good fortune fail, and the young man is thrown upon his own resources, he has a TRADE TO FALL BACK UPON, he is not exposed to fall into habits of idleness, to seek the company of *professional* and *confidence men*, and he saves the fair name of his family from appearing upon the Convict's Roll.—*Catholic Standard*.

### Looking Forward.

(Written for The Journal of Education.)

(By MRS. LEPROHON.)

How busy those little fingers soft,—  
That within mine own are clasped so oft,  
Have been throughout this bright summer day,  
With pebbles and shells and leaves at play.  
They have sought birds' nests—they've plucked wild flower—  
Decked with mosses the garden bower—  
Built tiny boats without helm to steer,  
Yet floated them safe o'er yon lakelet clear.

Ah! a time will come, and that ere long,  
When those soft hands will grow firm and strong;