

person suggested that as the sons and daughters of Siger are amongst the most gifted patriots in the country just now, it might be discreet to forgive them offences nearly ten centuries old. I am rejoiced to say a compromise was arrived at by which, if the learned doctor will undertake to translate some of the most characteristic of the Scandinavian sagas for the new Irish library, and make us better acquainted generally with the Norse literature, so far as it relates to Ireland, his punishment must be postponed, and perhaps altogether remitted. There is another nation with whom our quarrel was more recent, more bitter, and more prolonged, but it would be genuine wisdom to make peace with them also if they will let us. The memory of wrongs which are perpetuated and renewed cannot be forgotten; but, while no man knows better than I do how just are our complaints and how terrible the memories they evoke, I affirm that the best Irishmen are prepared *toto corde* to forget and forgive the past, if its policies and practices are never to reappear. The rules of this society forbid me to speak of later quarrels, whether international or internecine; but surely no people ever were more emphatically exhorted by the circumstances in which they stand, to close their ranks and end their feuds. Our efforts here, I trust, indirectly promote that end. If I were to express in one phrase the aim of this society and of kindred societies, and of the literary revival of which I have been speaking, it is to begin another deliberate attempt to make of our Celtic people all they are fit to become—to increase knowledge among them, and lay its foundations deep and sure; to strengthen their convictions and enlarge their horizon, and to tend the flame of National pride, which, with sincerity of purpose and fervour of soul, constitute the motive power of great enterprises. It is a difficult task, but not an impossible one, if the right men are ready to undertake it. One of the keenest intellects of the eighteenth century declared that the world is ruled by books and booklets. A single song, tradition affirms, won the English Revolution for William of Nassau; one little volume, critics assure us, routed filth and laziness out of the farmhouses of Scotland; a small collection of Benjamin Franklin's essays has given the American character its most ineradicable habits. And in our own day intellectual enterprises have not been unfruitful of results. Early in this century the philosopher Arago organised a literary propaganda in Paris, before which Louis Philippe in the end vanished like a spectre. Dr Newman and a few of his friends in Oxford attacked the Puritanism of the English Church with results with which we are all familiar. One or two Westminster reviewers and two or three Manchester manufacturers revered the commercial policy of England in less than a dozen years. Do not be deterred by the manifest difficulties of the task. The task is difficult but noble, for it is better to have the teaching of a people than the governing of them. Nor shall such a task lack its fitting reward, for labour and sacrifice in a generous cause are among the keenest enjoyments given to man.

EDUCATION AND CRIME.

(To the editor of the *Evening Star*.)

SIR,—In his paper on "Education and Crime" Mr Whetter tries to show that godless—in other words, a secular—system produces the highest morality. I say "godless" because "secular" pertains to things temporal and worldly, not spiritual or holy. No teacher has a right to give a child a moral lesson. The Education Act says the teaching must be "secular." Anyhow, I will prove that morality cannot be taught without religion. To be consistent, like France and Victoria, we ought to exclude the word "God" from our school books. That we have not done it shows that Christianity still influences us.

Mr Whetter's tables, for the comparison of crime, are unreliable. Nearly all of them are based upon "convictions" only, and include minor offences. Now, convictions are much more difficult to obtain in some countries than in others, and what may be considered a minor offence in one country may not be so in another. Hence all criminal experts take as the fairest test the number of charges respecting serious crimes that are viewed alike in all countries. The absurdity of Mr Whetter's test is evident when we think that the same person convicted (say) forty times for drunkenness—which is no crime—would count thirty-nine times more in the police records, and therefore in his tables, than one who committed murder!

No doubt the number of convictions all round have decreased, but this does not prove a relative decrease in crime and immorality. Besides, other factors have been at work:

1. Mere intellectualism makes people more cunning, and, though they may be morally guilty of all the crimes in the Decalogue, it enables them to escape the policeman's clutches.
2. Lessening the hours of labour has withdrawn thousands from vicious surroundings and thrown them more into their wives' and children's company.
3. The moral influences of Christianity, in so far as they have a hold upon the nation's conscience, are still in power for good.
4. The temperance crusade, led and sustained almost wholly by religious men and women, has decreased the number of drunkards, and therefore of convictions.

But all the best criminal specialists contradict Mr Whetter, and say that crime and immorality are increasing. For instance, Havelock Ellis, in "The Criminal" (p. 295) says: "The level of criminality, it is well known, is rising throughout the civilised world." William Douglas Morrison (of H. M. Prison, Wandsworth), in his book "Crime and its causes" (p. 135), says that Mr Boland F. Faulkner demonstrated before the American Statistical Association that the native-born Americans committed more crime than the poor and more uneducated foreign-born population in America, which does not say much for the more cultivated "brain matter" of the former. And what about the more cultivated people of France, where a rabid system of secular education exists? On page 13 of the same book M. Henri Jolly "estimates that crime has increased 183 per cent., and that it is steadily rising." Really, France had better make peace with the Jesuits again. And look at the exceedingly refined "plastic nerve matter tendencies" of the better educated portion of our Victorian cousins, who were responsible for the seething mass of political and commercial rascality there. And in the United States Messrs A. D. Wells and Howard Wines, eminent criminal specialists, say in "Recent Economic Changes" (p. 345), that "crime is increasing faster than the growth of population." And Dr Mischler, of Vienna, and Professor Von List, of Marburg, say that "fifteen million of persons have been convicted by the German criminal courts within the last ten years, and the outlook for the future is sombre in the last degree" (pp. 12 and 13, "Crime and its Causes.")

America is a striking contradiction of the assertion that as religion gets divorced from education crime decreases. Alex Wiater, F.S.S., in "The Elmira Reformatory," shows (p. 6) an enormous increase of criminals and offenders against the law in the United States, thus:

Proportion of prisoners per 1,000,00 inhabitants.			
In 1850	...	...	290 prisoners
In 1860	...	...	607 "
In 1870	...	...	853 "
In 1880	...	...	1,169 "

or an increase of 400 per cent. in thirty years! "But the United States is the dumping ground for the riff-raff of Europe." Not so. I have already shown that the native-born Americans commit the most crime. Besides, it is generally the best conducted and most energetic and adventurous spirits that come from Europe with a laudable desire to better their prospects.

I will now show that there are more crime and immorality in Australasia than at Home, notwithstanding Mr Whetter's inference that the average "nerve matter" of colonials is more sensitive to 'consequences' than the race from which we sprang. But as Mr Whetter's tables are all at sea, let us take the serious crimes dealt with by superior Courts from the 'Tasmanian Official Record' for 1892 (p. 408), a most reliable publication, to be seen in our Athenæum:—

Proportion of serious crimes dealt with by superior courts—average for last five years. Committed for trial per 10,000 persons.			
Western Australia	...	...	24.9
Queensland	...	...	14.8
New South Wales	...	...	14.8
New Zealand	...	...	9.1
Victoria	...	...	8.8
South Australia	...	...	7.4
Tasmania	...	...	6.9
Scotland	...	...	5.9
Ireland	...	...	5.0
England and Wales	...	...	4.6

This table shows that the "keenest memory for consequences" exists where denominationalism and religious teaching and not where secularism exists. If a "man's moral character depends largely upon the physical condition of his thinking machinery—the brain," how is it that our more highly educated colonials do not show better results? But let me fortify my facts. I take the following from Hayter's 'Victorian Year Book,' 1810-91 (p. 401):—

Deaths from violence of all kinds during a series of years.  
Proportion per 100,000 living.

Queensland	...	...	163.8
Western Australia	...	...	161.7
New South Wales	...	...	111.7
New Zealand	...	...	95.7
Victoria	...	...	94.6
England and Wales	...	...	75.7
Tasmania	...	...	74.5
South Australia	...	...	74.2
Scotland	...	...	72.0
Ireland	...	...	39.1

Here again the balance is largely against Australasia. Then take the deaths from suicide on the same page:—

Proportion per 100,000 living of deaths from suicide during a series of years.

Queensland	...	...	13.5
Victoria	...	...	11.0
Western Australia	...	...	9.2
New South Wales	...	...	9.3
New Zealand	...	...	9.0
South Australia	...	...	8.9