

members were glad to know that Mr. Fraser's health was largely restored. He hoped it would continue to improve, so that the house and the Liberal party might have the advantage of his sound wisdom and judgment for many years to come. (Applause.)

The house rose at 6 o'clock, the intention being to have an evening sitting, but, on account of the desire of many of the Conservative members to attend the annual dinner of the Young Conservative association, an adjournment was made immediately after the speaker took the chair at 7.30 o'clock.

Mr. Smith (York) has the floor, and will continue the debate on Tuesday.

#### LEGISLATION TO BE PROPOSED.

Notice of the following bills has been given:—

Mr. McMahon—Bill to amend the municipal act; also bill respecting undertaking and embalming.

Mr. Ross—Bill to amend and consolidate the acts respecting the income and property of the University of Toronto and University college.

Mr. Rayside—Bill to amend the municipal act.

#### GAOLS, PRISONS, REFORMATORIES.

There is instructive reading in the well-prepared report of the inspector of prisons and public charities upon the common gaols, prisons and reformatories of the province, and not the least satisfactory feature of it is that it indicates an appreciable diminution in crime. Inspector Chamberlain says:—

"I am pleased to be able to report that during the past year there has been a further large decrease in crime throughout the province, the number of committals being 1,412 less than last year, which also showed a wonderful decrease as compared with a number of years previous. In no year since 1873 have the committals been so low as in the past year, which may be accounted for by the energetic working of our clergy and the noble efforts of Christian organizations for the amelioration of the condition of our poor working classes. The further decrease of 873 committals for drunkenness, as against that of last year, which showed a decrease of 959 as compared with the year 1890, is a striking proof of the good work that is being done throughout the province by the efforts of organizations for the alleviation of the condition of the masses.

"The question is often asked, How can the existing evil of intemperance be remedied? It is a difficult question to answer, for, in the face of every effort in this direction by progressive legislation, the unwearied efforts of the clergy, the noble work of our women, the reduction of licenses and the imposing of high license fees, there seems to be but slow progress in abating the evil. It is true that a great reduction in the number of committals for drunkenness is shown during the past few years, still the evil abounds to such an extent as to awaken a feeling of alarm in the minds of all professing Christians, for undoubtedly drink is the cause of a large percentage of all the crime, destitution, misery and neglect that exists in our midst. I am convinced that the question of suppressing the liquor traffic depends upon the present mode of attack, as demonstrated by the decreased number of committals for drunkenness, namely, by teaching our children in the public schools and Sunday schools the evil effects of the use of intoxicating liquors; the efforts put forth by the various temperance organizations, the adoption of the more wise course of counsel and example to the young men of our land by those in social and financial positions, making the social drinking usages not only unpopular, but in reality a bar to good society; a wise and progressive legislation, to aid the people as fast as they are prepared to accept and carry out the legislation offered. These are the lines upon which I think the most good can be accomplished, and believe they will be far more effectual than any arbitrary legislation at the present time."

The number of adult males committed during the past year was 1,233 less than in 1891, and the number of adult females 145 less. The number of boys under sixteen years of age and also of girls under sixteen years shows a slight increase over those of 1891. The total number of committals for 1892 was 9,011, as compared with 10,423 in 1891. The committals of adult males for 1892 were 7,613, as compared with 8,469 in 1891. The committals of adult females for 1892 were 1,388, as compared with 1,501 in 1891. The committals of boys under sixteen years of age for 1892 were 446, as compared with 421 in 1891. The committals of girls under sixteen years of age for 1892 were 53, as

compared with 32 in 1891. As in the case of last year the decrease has been generally distributed over the whole province.

The convictions represented 65.40 per cent. of the committals, being a shade less than that of last year, which was 66.66. The following table shows the sex of the prisoners convicted and the nationalities, religious denominations, social conditions, habits and educational status of the prisoners committed:—

Sex.	1891.	1892.
Male.....	5,472	4,599
Female.....	1,010	896
	6,482	5,495
Nationalities.		
Born in Canada.....	5,516	4,898
Born in England.....	1,662	1,281
Born in Ireland.....	1,796	1,588
Born in Scotland.....	504	453
Born in the United States.....	653	547
Born in other countries.....	292	244
	10,423	9,011
Religious Denominations.		
Roman Catholic.....	3,744	3,229
Church of England.....	3,134	2,635
Presbyterian.....	1,362	1,200
Methodist.....	1,413	1,269
Other denominations.....	770	678
	10,423	9,011
Social Conditions.		
	1891.	1892.
Married.....	3,695	3,234
Unmarried.....	6,728	5,777
	10,423	9,011
Habits.		
Temperate.....	3,107	2,840
Intemperate.....	7,316	6,171
	10,423	9,011
Educational Status.		
Could read and write.....	8,436	7,155
Could neither read nor write.....	1,987	1,856
	10,423	9,011

The number of prisoners confined in the various custodial institutions of the province at the close of the past official year, and of the year preceding, is exhibited in the following summary:—

	1891.	1892.
In the common gaols.....	558	527
In the central prison, Toronto....	337	283
In the reformatory for boys, Penetanguishene.....	185	168
In the reformatory for females and refuge for girls, Toronto.....	121	110
In the Dominion penitentiary, Kingston.....	576	519
	1,777	1,607

In 1878 the gaol expenditures amounted to \$131,116 and \$135,706 in 1892. During the year 53 persons were imprisoned for debt. Mr. Chamberlain has this to say of the practice of committing old and enfeebled persons to the gaols:—

"The greatest difficulty in the proper management of our gaols and the classification of prisoners and maintaining cleanliness and discipline is caused by the judges, police magistrates and justices of the peace committing to the gaols, under the vagrancy act, old people (men and women) who are guilty of no crime, but who, on account of poverty and inability to earn for themselves a livelihood, and having no friends to undertake the responsibility of their care, have no other shelter. These people are committed from year to year, and in some cases I have found them to have been continuously in our gaols for five or six years, thus practically making our gaols serve as county poorhouses. Up to last year these helpless people were compelled to wear prison clothing and to subsist on prison diet, and to such an extent was this system pursued that it was found necessary to notify the county officials that hereafter poor people committed as vagrants should not be clothed with prison clothing and should be allowed a more liberal diet than that provided for prisoners, hoping by so doing that the county authorities would see the necessity of providing poorhouse accommodation for this class outside of the gaols. Unless such outside accommodation is provided soon I shall be compelled to require the county authorities to build additions to the gaols for the special care and comfort of these indigent people, as they cannot be allowed to occupy the cells, day rooms and corridors which are required for the criminal classes. I am pleased to be able to report that during the past year some of the counties in the west have provided industrial homes, and many other counties throughout the province are moving in that direction, and I am in hope that in the near future every county or group of counties will have provided suitable accommodation for their poor people."

In the report of the Andrew Mercer reformatory for females there is a pleasing falling off in the number of inmates. In 1891 the total number in custody was 201, while in 1892 there were only 170.