

of St. Louis; when the Masonic sign of distress was answered by musket balls, and when a bloody shadow fell over the beautiful city by the Father of Waters, that has held her in a semi-lifeless state for half a century!

#### AS TOLD BY FIGURES.

Statistics covering the work of the different denominations in the United States for the past year do not indicate encouraging progress. The Methodist Episcopal church, for instance, with a total of 2,689,000 communicants recorded only 14,384 accessions, or six-tenths of one per cent. Other large churches show similar figures, and on the whole the net gains of the year seem to be considerably smaller than those of 1896, although that was regarded as a year remarkable for small visible results in the home mission field. The tables published comprise over 150 different denominations, some of which have a very limited membership. Some religious bodies are split up in numerous factions. There are no less than thirteen Baptist organizations. The Catholics, too, appear to be considerably sub-divided. Old Catholics, Reformed Catholics, Catholic Apostolic church and Dowie Christian Catholics being so many different factions of the great Roman church.

Is not this divided state of Christendom—these divisions and sub-divisions—a sufficient explanation of the slow progress of the work of evangelization recorded from year to year? Is not this tendency to discord an evidence of a condition detrimental to the carrying out of the commission once entrusted to the standard-bearers of the Christian religion? The churches spend annually immense sums on missionary work at home and abroad; they engage the best talent obtainable; there is no lack of training, and very often the most profound sincerity is devoted to the work. When, notwithstanding all, the results are strikingly inadequate, there must be some grave reason. Why not look into the matter with a view of discovering the whole truth?

#### TO AID THE POOR.

There are two appeals for charity now before the people of Salt Lake City: one for the relief of the Cubans, whom a long, cruel civil war has brought to the verge of starvation; and another, for prompt assistance to those of our citizens whom the somewhat severe winter has thrown out of employment. The first does not appear to have met with enthusiastic response, perhaps because it is felt that the duty to relieve ought in the first place to be assumed by those chiefly responsible for the distress. The other appeal for aid is different. That cannot but meet with the generous consideration of the more fortunately situated public.

As stated in the "News" last night, Jan. 13, it is officially estimated that one thousand people in the city are out of employment and in absolute distress on that account. This is a very large per cent of the laboring class of the community. The suggestion is that a day's work, or more, be furnished by those who can afford to do so.

It is rather a reflection on the conditions under which the laboring classes are working, or perhaps on the managing ability of a majority of them, that a few days' enforced idleness means absolute distress. One would think that under ordinary circumstances the compensation for sev-

eral months' labor ought to be sufficient to carry a family a few days or weeks after the work is done. But however this may be, if it is a fact that so large a percentage of the working men are actually in want, it is no time for speculation, but for activity in the right direction. In Salt Lake City there can be no necessity for any deserv-ing poor to suffer.

It is probable that if the city could be canvassed for the purpose of ascertaining what work can be furnished to relieve the situation, the object would be accomplished satisfactorily. Many of those willing to give a day's work are not likely to send in their addresses to the commissioners. But they would gladly respond if appealed to and assured that by so doing they were rendering aid to worthy objects of benevolence.

#### A PLEASING INCIDENT.

Now and then a little friction is manifested in this State between the dominant and some other religious society, or their respective representatives, and the "News" feels called upon to expose and defend the side which, in its judgment, is in the right. But occasionally a circumstance occurs that tends to produce the opposite of friction between the elements referred to, and when such a thing happens it is chronicled in these columns with genuine pleasure.

Such an incident occurred in Beaver on Sunday, the 9th inst. A Stake conference of the Mormon Church was in progress, but the building in which it was being held was inadequate for the large attendance. For an hour before the time of opening the afternoon services, the Mormon house of worship was crowded, and it became apparent that an overflow meeting would have to be held, or else that a great number of the people would be unable to attend worship. Just across the street stands the Methodist church, whose pastor, Rev. Mr. Parker, was one of the congregation in the Mormon meeting house. Seeing the emergency, he arose and generously proffered the use of his church for an overflow meeting. His offer was accepted in the spirit in which it was made, both buildings were filled, and a profitable and enjoyable time was had.

While Mormon houses of worship have often been occupied by ministers of various religious societies, a case is not recalled in which a church building in the State, controlled by another denomination, has been tendered for the use of a Mormon congregation. The precedent made by Rev. Mr. Parker is both notable and pleasing, and it is safe to say that he has lost nothing by it in the estimation of the good people of Beaver. A more frequent display of the spirit that seems to have prompted him in this instance would be a good thing in many ways.

#### HOW TO DEAL WITH CRIME.

The question whether it is possible to stem the tide of homicides apparently sweeping over civilized countries, our own not excepted, is one of grave interest to all citizens.

To eliminate the criminal element entirely may not be within the power of human effort. Observation proves that everywhere are to be found individuals, and even whole families, who naturally take to crime, no matter what the punishment is, short of death; but close students of the subject believe in the

possibility of minimizing the effects of the existence of the criminal element by a proper method of dealing with it. Lombroso is by many regarded as an authority on this subject. He believes that one of the most effective ways of protecting society is the establishment of colonies for incorrigible criminals. This method, he maintains, has been found satisfactory wherever tried, and would have been more extensively adopted were it not for a general opposition to any change from the old judicial track laid out by the Roman code. Little progress is to be expected, however, it is pointed out, as long as the practice of giving publicity to the details of crimes prevails. It is argued that among the strongest motives for transgression are imitation and love of notoriety, and these can only be removed when sanguinary crimes are treated in a way similar to offenses against good morals.

We believe the correctness of this view is admitted by all who have given the subject any serious attention. It is a well established fact that what occupies the mind, good or evil, influences the character; but is it possible in a country where the freedom of the press justly is guarded with the most jealous care, to place the restrictions indicated around it? Lombroso suggests that the only practical way is by the formation of societies, similar to the temperance organizations, for the purpose of so influencing public opinion that the press necessarily will fall into line.

One of the most direct sources of crime is, as is well known, drunkenness. Any successful effort to lessen intemperance is a movement for a higher standard of morals. Whatever tends to draw the masses away from the bar-room and low resorts, by providing enjoyments and amusements of an ennobling character, is a means of softening the brutal instincts of which crime is the natural manifestation.

#### THE RAILROAD SITUATION.

When the announcement came over the wires a few days ago that the Vanderbilt interests had secured control of the Oregon Short Line, speculation, mingled with uneasiness, became rife in the intermountain region as to what such a move might result in, giving as it did to the Vanderbilt power the domination of nearly 13,500 miles of railway, including a complete transcontinental system extending from New York City to Portland and San Francisco.

Eager inquiries propounded to officials of the Oregon Short Line in Utah as to what results were likely to ensue have been but indefinitely answered. Repeatedly those officials have declared to reporters that they knew no more about the matter than was contained in the press dispatches, and were wholly unable to forecast the future with any degree of certainty. One of them, however, in conversation with a "News" representative yesterday, while declaring his utter lack of definite information, expressed the opinion that the ascendancy of the Vanderbilt interest did not presage any radical and immediate changes in the general railroad situation in this region. And this view, it would seem, will probably be found to be correct. He called attention to the fact that the four other systems which the Vanderbilts control, viz. the New York Central, Michigan Southern, Chicago & Northwestern, and Union Pacific, are operated separately, each having its own organization; and that the four roads constitute an alliance rather than a consolidation. He expressed the view that the Oregon