

SECOND REPORT

(for 1845)

OF THE

PRISON ASSOCIATION

OF

NEW YORK:

INCLUDING

THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS,

AND

A LIST OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS.

New York:

PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION.

STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY W. NEWELL.

NO. 11 SPRUCE STREET.

1846.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

OF THE
PRISON ASSOCIATION.

- A. DE TOCQUEVILLE, }
G. DE BEAUMONT, } *Membre de l'Académie Française, Paris.*
M. CH. LUCAS, }
M. DEMETZ, *Membre du Conseil Général du Département du Seine-et-Oise, etc., Paris.*
M. G. BLOUET, *Architecte du Gouvernement.*
M. CRAWFORD, Esq., }
REV. W. RUSSELL, } *Inspectors of Prisons of Great Britain.*
J. G. PERRY, Esq., }
MAJOR JEBB, }
— CHADWICK, Esq., *London.*
C. J. A. MITTERMAIER, *Professor of Law at Heidelberg.*
DR. N. H. JULIUS, *Berlin.*
— HITZIG, *Councillor of State of Prussia, Berlin.*
DR. VERDELL, *Member of the Great Council, Vice President of the Council of Health, at Lausanne, Switzerland.*
COUNT PETITTI DI FORETO, *Turin, Italy.*
DR. GOSSE, *Genoa, Switzerland.*
JACOB POST, Esq., *London.*
L. DWIGHT, *Secretary Boston Prison Discipline Society.*
DR. FRANCIS LIEBER, *Professor of History and Belles Lettres.*
WILLIAM P. FOULKE, *Philadelphia.*
MISS D. L. DIX, *Boston, Massachusetts.*
MRS. E. W. FARNHAM, *Mount Pleasant, New York.*

N. B.—THE PHYSICIAN AND WARDEN OR KEEPER of each Penitentiary, are ex-officio Corresponding Members of the Executive Committee.

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CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This Society shall be known as the PRISON ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK.

ART. II. Its objects shall be—

1. The amelioration of the condition of prisoners, whether detained for trial, or finally convicted, or as witnesses.
2. The improvement of Prison Discipline, and the Government of Prisons, whether for Cities, Counties, or States.
3. The support and encouragement of reformed convicts after their discharge, by affording them the means of obtaining an honest livelihood, and sustaining them in their efforts at reform.

ART. III. The officers of the Society shall be a President, four Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and the following Committees, viz.: A Finance Committee, a Committee on Detentions, a Committee on Discipline, and a Committee on Discharged Convicts.

ART. IV. The officers named in the preceding article shall constitute an Executive Committee, who shall choose one of their number to be Chairman thereof.

ART. V. The Executive Committee shall meet once in each month, and keep regular minutes of their proceedings. They shall have a general superintendence and direction of the affairs of the Society, and shall annually report to the Society all their proceedings, and such other matters as shall be likely to advance the ends of the Association.

ART. VI. The Society shall meet annually in the City of New York, at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall appoint, and at such other times as the President, or in his absence one of the Vice-Presidents, shall designate.

ART. VII. Any person contributing annually to the funds of the Association, shall, during such contribution, be a member thereof. A contribution of \$500 shall constitute a life Patron;—a contribution of \$100 an honorary member of the Executive Committee for life;—and a contribution of \$25 shall constitute a member of the Association for life. Honorary and corresponding members may from time to time be appointed by the Executive Committee.

ART. VIII. A Female Department shall be formed, consisting of such females as shall be selected by the Executive Committee, who shall have charge of the interest and welfare of prisoners of their sex, under such regulations as the Executive Committee shall adopt.

ART. IX. The officers of the Association shall be chosen annually at the annual meeting, at which time such persons may be elected honorary members as shall have rendered essential service to the cause of Prison Discipline.

ART. X. Any Society having the same objects in view may become auxiliary to this Association by contributing to its funds and co-operating with it.

ART. XI. The Executive Committee shall have power to add to any of the Standing Committee such persons as, in their opinion, may be likely to promote the objects of the Society, and shall have power to fill any vacancy which may occur in any of the offices of the Association, intermediate the annual meetings.

ART. XII. This Constitution may be amended by a vote of the majority of the Society, at any meeting thereof, provided notice of the amendment has been given at the next preceding meeting.

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BY-LAWS.

I.—There shall be a stated meeting of the Executive Committee on the Fourth Monday of each month, and a special meeting shall be held at any time, on the requisition of one of the Standing Committees, or of the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

II.—At every meeting of the Executive Committee, stated as special, the attendance of seven members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.

III.—The order of business at every stated meeting shall be as follows :

1. The reading and adoption of the minutes of the last preceding meeting.
2. Reports from the Standing Committees in the order in which they are named in the Constitution of the Society.
3. Reports from Female Department.
4. Report from Corresponding Secretary.
5. Reports from Special Committees.
6. Motions and Resolutions.

The business first in order at a special meeting, shall be the subject for the consideration of which the meeting shall have been called, and no other subject shall be brought before the meeting, except with the consent of a majority of the members present.

IV.—The Chairman shall nominate and appoint all Special Committees, and no person nominated by him shall be excused, unless upon reasons assigned by him that shall be approved by the meeting ; but a Chairman pro. tem. shall not have such power unless authorized by the meeting.

V.—The Chairman shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal, and the rules of order shall be the same, so far as they are applicable, as those of the House of Assembly in the Legislature of New York.

VI.—It shall be the duty of the Finance Committee,

1. To receive and pay over to the Treasurer of the Society, all moneys received, either as donations or for memberships.
2. To audit and direct the payment of all bills against the Society, in such manner and form as they shall direct ; but no bill shall be paid by the Treasurer, unless approved by the Committee, and countersigned by the Chairman thereof.
3. To invest and control the surplus moneys of the Society under the authority of the Executive Committee.

4. To have power under the same authority, to employ one or more agents to obtain members, and collect subscriptions to the Society; and it shall be their duty to make a report at each monthly meeting of their proceedings, and those of their agents.

5. To annually examine and report upon the Treasurer's accounts, and to audit the same.

VII.—The following shall be the duties of the Committee on Detentions.

1. To inquire into the causes of commitment of all persons detained for trial, or as witnesses in any of the Prisons of the cities of New York and Brooklyn, and to adopt proper measures for procuring the discharge of such as shall appear to be entitled thereto.

2. To visit frequently the prisons under their charge, and to endeavour to improve the condition of the prisoners:—by training them to habits of cleanliness and exercise; by securing to them comfortable accommodations, having a regard to space, light, and temperature; by procuring for them suitable employment: by providing them with books, or other means of mental occupation: by securing such a separation and classification as shall preserve the young, the innocent, and the less hardened from the contaminating intercourse of the more depraved: by obtaining for them honest and able legal advice; and generally by bringing all practical, moral, and religious influences to operate upon their minds.

VIII.—It shall be the duty of the Committee on Discharged Convicts,

1. To keep an office in the central part of the City of New York, where discharged prisoners may apply for aid and advice.

2. To keep a record of all commitments to our State Prisons, and New York and Kings County Prisons—of the crime of which each person was convicted, of the date of his commitment and discharge, and all other important information thereto appertaining.

3. To open a correspondence with the Prison Agents or Superintendents, relative to the character and trades of prisoners, and to ascertain previous to the discharge of each prisoner, his feelings, views, and capabilities, with a view to making the best arrangements for his future employment.

4. To keep a record of all persons who will employ discharged prisoners, and of their several occupations; to procure employment for prisoners, applying therefor, as seems best adapted to the capacity of each; to hold a correspondence with employers, to keep a record of the behaviour and prospects of those for whom places are obtained, that they may be sustained and encouraged with the idea, that a continual friendly interest is felt for them.

5. To endeavour to procure suitable boarding places for the discharged prisoners, where they will not be exposed to corrupting influences; taking care not to have more than one in a place when it can be avoided.

6. To see that the prisoners are provided with suitable clothing, of a kind that will not attract attention, and point them out as convicts.

IX.—The general duty of the Committee on Prison Discipline shall be the supervision of the internal organization and management of the prisons in which convicts are confined, embracing the moral and physical influences to be exerted on the prisoners during their confinement.

This duty shall be comprised under the following general heads:

Health—Under which shall be included Diet, Dress, Cleanliness, Warning of Prisons, Ventilation, Exercise, Modes of Employment, Insanity, and Medical Treatment generally.

Reformation—Including the Classification of prisoners according to age, sex, physical condition, character, and numbers; Instruction, religious and ordinary; Moral treatment, Isolation, and Intercourse; Rewards and Punishments; the Visitation of Friends, and Pardons.

Financial System—Embracing convict labour, Prison revenues and expenses.

Administration and Supervision—Comprising the mode of appointing officers, their qualifications, duties, abuse of their powers, and the internal police regulations of prisons.

Comparison of Prison Systems and Reforms—Including the collection of works and reports, correspondence with other Societies, superintendence of prisons, and persons interested in prison discipline. The collection of statistics.

Visitation—The visiting of State, County, and City Prisons, including Houses for the reformation of Juvenile Delinquents, at such periods and in such manner as the Committee may, from time to time, determine.

X.—Each Standing Committee shall have power to appoint its own Chairman and Secretary, and to divide itself into as many sub-committees as it may deem proper, and each Committee shall make a report of its proceedings at each stated meeting of the Executive Committee.

XI.—The Recording Secretary shall be the Secretary of the Executive Committee, and it shall be his duty to keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Committees, to record them in a book to be provided for that purpose, and to give due notice of all meetings of the Committee.

XII.—It shall be the duty of each Standing Committee to report to each monthly meeting of the Executive Committee, the number of meetings held, and the names of the members attending at each.

XIII.—If it shall appear from the report of any Standing Committee, that any member has not attended any one of these meetings during the preceding three months, the member so neglecting to attend shall, if no satisfactory excuse be offered, be deemed to have resigned as a member of such Committee, and the Executive Committee may proceed to appoint another in his place.

XIV.—No person shall be added as a member to any of the Standing Committees, unless the Committee to which he is to be added shall have reported his name at a preceding meeting of the Executive Committee, and shall have stated that the member so proposed has consented to serve. No person, so proposed, shall be elected as a member unless by the votes of two-thirds of all the members present; and every such election shall be made by ballot, unless by unanimous consent the ballot be dispensed with.

XV.—There shall be a Standing Committee of Ladies for the Female Department, the members of which shall be selected by the Executive Committee, and shall have charge of the interests and welfare of persons of their own sex, under such regulations as the Executive Committee may prescribe,

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or they themselves, with the approbation of the Executive Committee, may adopt. Such Committee shall have power to elect its own officers, and when organized, shall be placed in all respects on the same footing as the other Standing Committees of the Executive Committee, in relation to the increase of their numbers.

XVI. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Executive Committee, and of each of the Standing Committees when required, and shall report the same at each stated meeting of the Committee, and shall record the same in books to be procured for that purpose.

XVII.—The Chairman of the Executive Committee and the Corresponding Secretary, shall be members ex-officio of all the Standing Committees.

XVIII.—It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep safely all moneys deposited with him by the Finance Committee, to pay over the same in such manner and at such time as the Finance Committee shall direct, and to give such security for the faithful discharge of his duty as that Committee shall require.

XIX.—No alteration in these by-laws shall be made, except a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given at a previous meeting of the Executive Committee.

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OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

PRESIDENT,

VICE-CHANCELLOR WILLIAM T. M'COUN.

VICE-PRESIDENTS,

THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN, *Chancellor N. Y. University*;
ABRAHAM VAN NEST, *Merchant*;
BENJAMIN F. BUTLER, *U. S. District Attorney*;
JOHN W. EDMONDS, *Circuit Judge*.

TREASURER,

GORHAM A. WORTH, *President of the City Bank*.

RECORDING SECRETARY,

WILLIAM C. RUSSEL, *Counsellor at Law*.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY,

RENSELAEER N. HAVENS, *Merchant*.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,

ISRAEL RUSSELL, <i>Merchant, Chairman</i> ,	EDMUND L. BENZON, <i>Merchant</i> ,
PROSPER M. WETMORE, <i>Merchant</i> ,	CHARLES M. LEUPP, <i>do</i> .
ELEAZER PARMLY, <i>M. D.</i>	RICHARD J. THORN, <i>do</i> .
FREEMAN HUNT, <i>Editor</i> ,	WILLIAM W. TODD, <i>do</i> .
ROBERT B. MINTURN, <i>Merchant</i> ,	

COMMITTEE ON DETENTIONS,

CLARKSON CROLIUS, <i>Chairman</i> ,	HENRY W. HAVENS, <i>Counsellor</i>
WILLIAM C. RUSSEL, <i>Merchant</i> ,	HENRY ABELL, <i>Merchant</i> ,
THEODORE TELLKAMPF, <i>M. D.</i> ,	JOHN HOPPER, <i>Attorney</i> ,
ABNER BENEDICT, <i>Counsellor</i> ,	JOHN H. KEYSER, <i>Merchant</i> .
FREDERICK W. BURKE, <i>do</i> .	

COMMITTEE ON PRISON DISCIPLINE,

JOHN DUER, <i>Counsellor, Chairman</i> ,	JOHN D. RUSS, <i>M. D.</i> ,
CHARLES P. DALY, <i>Judge of Com. Pleas</i> ,	BENJAMIN F. BUTLER,
PROF. J. L. TELLKAMPF, <i>Col. College</i> ,	JOHN H. GRISCOM, <i>M. D.</i> ,
N. B. MORSE, <i>District Attorney, Kings co.</i> ,	JOHN REVERE, <i>M. D., Prof. Uni.</i> ,
THEODORE SEDGWICK, <i>Counsellor</i> ,	JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN, <i>Editor</i> .

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNIVERSARY.

THE first anniversary meeting of the Association was held at the Tabernacle, on the evening of the 5th of December, 1845.

Vice-Chancellor MCCOY, the President of the Association, in the chair, assisted by B. F. BUTLER, Esq., and Judge EDMONDS, as Vice-Presidents.

The President, on taking his seat, made a few remarks.

Mr. EDMONDS, as Chairman of the Executive Committee, announced to the Association, that the Prison Discipline Society of Boston was present, by its delegate, Rev. LOUIS DWIGHT; and the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Prisons, by TOWNSEND SHARPLESS and GEORGE THOMPSON, their delegates.

He also read to the meeting a letter from the Philadelphia Society, and also a letter from the Rev. Dr. JENKS, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Boston Society; which were ordered to be published.

He then read to the Association the annual report of the Executive Committee.

On motion of Mr. BUTLER,

Resolved, That the report be accepted and published.

Gen. WETMORE, in behalf of the Finance Committee, read their annual report, and the audited account of the Treasurer; and on his motion,

Resolved, That the same be published.

ABNER BENEDICT, Esq., read the annual report of the Committee on Detentions.

On motion of W. C. RUSSELL, Esq.,

Resolved, That it be published.

Dr. JOHN D. ROSS read the annual report of the Committee on Prison Discipline.

On motion of JOHN DUER, Esq.,

Resolved, That the same be published.

ISAAC T. HOPPER read the report on Discharged Convicts, which, on his motion, was ordered to be published.

RENSSELAER N. HAVENS read the report of the Executive Committee of the Female Department, and on his motion,

Resolved, That the same be published.

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. Mr. THAYER, of Brooklyn.

Mr. EDMONDS, by direction of the Committee of Arrangements, nominated officers for the ensuing year, which were unanimously elected,

And then the meeting adjourned.

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LETTER FROM REV. DR. JENKS.

TO THE PRISON ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK.

GENTLEMEN:—At a recent meeting of Directors of the Prison Discipline Society of Massachusetts, a communication was made, by our highly esteemed Secretary, of your kind invitation to the approaching meeting of your Society, at the anniversary of its formation, on the 5th instant. The Directors, in accepting this invitation, and providing that our Society should be represented on the auspicious and interesting occasion, conferred on me the honor of an appointment to attend the celebration, in company with my friend and brother, the Rev. Mr. Dwight.

But I regret to say, that it will not be in my power, from the pressing nature of my engagements at this time, to allow the indulgence of what, in other circumstances, would be a high enjoyment—the meeting with new friends of an important religious and civil charity, and the strengthening of those bonds which unite the practical advocates of humanity and the Gospel.

I must, however, in thus apologizing for my absence, take liberty to congratulate you on the formation of your Society, and convey to you my good wishes.

New York, which, indeed, I have never yet visited, cannot but afford, of necessity, from its great foreign population, as well as its vast multitude of native inhabitants, and its extensive trade, a wide and important field in which such an Association may act. Crimes must, as the world is, and do, actually abound. The Prisons and Penitentiaries are often crowded; and their officers, perhaps, however alert and faithful, too much occupied to perform the duties which you will undertake, even were they in the highest degree well disposed.

The task, therefore, assigned you, in the providence of God, and of which, by associating thus, you acknowledge the obligation, appears calculated to call forth all the wisdom and firmness, humanity, self-denial, and active Christian sympathy which the grace of God confers on His friends, and which He would have them cherish and bring into action.

For it is not merely the giving of religious and moral instruction at stated times to the inmates, and seeing that they are furnished with Bibles and other books, that will satisfy gentlemen, the enlightened and public-spirited philanthropy which has led to the formation and support of your Society; there must also be created a general perception, a common feeling throughout the community, that shall bear favorably on the object itself. Or, if such a feeling already exist, as I cannot but believe it does, it must be directed in a salutary channel.

Of all this, no doubt, gentlemen, you are perfectly sensible, and perhaps I owe you an apology for these suggestions; but they are connected in my mind with one thing, which I fear has been too greatly overlooked—I mean the state of the public press in reference to the records of crime.

God's Word, our only infallible guide, declares, "fools make a mock at sin." How often, in recording trials, or the mere charges that produce them, is the most revolting levity manifested, and rather a disposition to jest, while representing the character, conditions, and actions of culprits, than to mourn over human depravity and guilt! Is it not an encouragement to crime? There should be more of serious earnestness, more of deep engagement in promoting reformation on the one hand, and shielding the community on the other; a wise care of establishing sound moral principles, and a clearer exhibition of high and holy compulsion of the offender, while his sin is hated. And these results may be advanced, unquestionably, by an influence, healthy and vigorous, exerted through the press—as the opposite effects are, without doubt, produced by the public exhibition, in the widely-circulating vehicles of intelligence and influence, of a lax morality, or a heedless disregard of the proprieties of civilized life.

But I am persuaded that I need not enlarge. The principles which have led to the formation of your Society must direct, in the course of its progress, to such measures as God, I trust, will approve and bless.

That His blessing may accompany your efforts, emanating from a sense of solemn obligation—which, indeed, the ability to do good that He confers on you strictly imposes—and that, under His blessing, your Society may prosper in spirit, efficiency, numbers, and public patronage, is the cordial desire and prayer of,

Gentlemen, your sincere well-wisher.

WM. JENKS,

A Vice-President of the Massachusetts
P. D. Society.

Boston, December 4th, 1845.

LETTER FROM THE PHILADELPHIA SOCIETY.

At a special meeting of the Philadelphia Society for alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, held 11th mo. 23th, 1845, the following preamble and resolution were unanimously adopted:—

Whereas, This Society feels a lively interest in all measures calculated to ameliorate the penal law, diminish crime, and improve prison discipline; and,

Whereas, In our opinion the establishment of Prison Societies will promote these desirable objects; and,

Whereas, The Prison Association of New York, will celebrate its anniversary on the 5th of the ensuing month, and has requested us to unite with them in the said celebration in such manner as may be most agreeable to the members of this Society; therefore,

Resolved, That a Committee of seven be appointed to proceed to New York, and express to the Association the best wishes of the Society for their prosperity and usefulness.

[Extracted from the Minutes.]

WM. BIDDLE, Secretary.

TO THE "PRISON ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK."

"The Philadelphia Society for alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons," have the pleasure to acknowledge the kind invitation extended to them, through Judge Edmunds, to be present by a delegation at the approaching annual meeting of your Association; and in compliance with it, they have appointed a Committee to attend on that occasion. Lest, however, in the pressure of business incident to such a meeting, your opportunity may occur for a public expression of their sympathies and views, they have availed themselves of the kind suggestion contained in Judge Edmunds' note, to have availed themselves of the kind suggestion contained in Judge Edmunds' note, to have communicated them very briefly, in this form, with the hope that it may accord with the arrangements of your Society, to spread them before the meeting.

"The Philadelphia Society for alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons" is nearly SEVENTY years old. All who were associated in its early labours, have long since been gathered to their fathers. It is obvious that in originating it, no scheme, or theory, or controverted principle of modern date, could have had any influence. The efforts of its founders were probably restricted to the design which its title indicates; and contemplated, rather the alleviation of the miseries of Prisons, than any change in the predominant principles of their discipline. When, however, at a later period it became obvious, that most of the miseries which they would fain alleviate, originated in defects of *structure and discipline*; they naturally applied themselves to some mode of supplying these defects

We need not assure you, that nothing was further from their motives, than an ambi-

tion to originate or advocate, any new or peculiar method of discipline. They looked abroad upon the vast accumulation of suffering and corruption, which the prisons of the country presented; and saw, as they thought, that the prolific cause of this suffering and corruption, as well as of the alarming increase and boldness of crime, was the *association of prisoners*. Upon this gigantic evil they fixed their attention; and as soon as the public mind was prepared, and the opportunity offered, they strenuously urged the great principle of *separation*. Association was the evil, separation the remedy; and from this position our Society has never moved.

It was apparent that employment would be indispensable, as well for the moral as the physical benefit of the prisoners; and that to construct a prison for the *individual separation and employment* of each convict, would involve more expense at the outset, than was required in the usual mode of building; but they saw at the same time, in the saving in the police force of such a prison; in the avoidance of conspiracies and insurrections, and also of severe punishment in maintaining discipline;—in the facility of adapting care and instruction to the peculiar circumstances of each convict; in the moral influence and disciplinary virtue of seclusion; and above all, in the prevention of intercourse and acquaintance by sound or sight, and the contamination and corruption which flow therefrom;—in these they saw advantages to compensate generously for any extraordinary expense or toil, which the attainment of them might involve.

Reform in prison discipline, with them, as with you, was an experiment. They had no model prison to visit; no pioneers in the march of reform, to warn them of errors or guide them to truth. Wise and benevolent men distrusted the principle. Ultra views were urged by some; and others wedded themselves inseparably to prejudice and opposition. But the Society persevered, through evil and good report, in advocating and propagating their views; and among those who had influence over, and were connected with the administration of public affairs, they were happy to find the same sentiments so far prevalent, as in due time to secure the erection of a Penitentiary on that plan.

During nearly *twenty* years the Separate System has been in use in our state; and although observation and experience have brought to light defects and oversights common to all the works and all plans of men, they have never seen reason to doubt, for a moment, either the *practicability, or the moral and physical advantages of separation*. Every year has strengthened our conviction of its entire safety to the minds of the convicts; and we may add, that we have great confidence in the *economy* of the system, as more certainly securing the reformation of convicts, as well as preventing their multiplication.

We find very gratifying proficiency is made by our prisoners in acquiring the elementary branches of learning; and that their isolation is altogether favourable, not only to the acquisition of knowledge, but to the influence of kind and truthful instruction, and to the excitement of grateful emotions towards those who seek their present and future good.

We have, moreover, great satisfaction in the rapid increase of favour which this system has enjoyed in foreign countries,—and have reason to believe that in England and France, and other European kingdoms, it is likely to become the prevailing principle in the modification of old and in the construction of new prisons. These facts suggest claims upon our gratitude to the sovereign Disposer of all good, and urge us forward to the more vigorous prosecution of our labours.

We cordially congratulate you on this (the first) anniversary of your Association. We hailed its organization, with unaffected pleasure, as the offspring of a desire to serve the cause of humanity, and the public good. Your Society, like ours, looks abroad upon the interests of the whole community, and rejoices in every plea that philanthropy utters, and in every new suggestion it makes, for "alleviating the mis-

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ries," and correcting the abuses of prisons, without subtracting from the efficiency, or the wholesome severity of their discipline.

Your location, in the capital of the Empire State and the commercial emporium of our country, imposes upon you peculiar responsibilities.

If your movements carry with them a mighty influence, that is felt far and near, there is a responsibility connected with them of corresponding weight. Though the people of your state have adopted a system differing in one of its radical principles from ours, we are happy to believe that we hold alike to the importance of preventing all contaminating intercourse between convicts, and in regarding this as the source of most of the evils and misery of prisons. It is possible that, in the infirmity of our nature, we may attribute to the peculiarities of our respective systems an unjustifiable importance. At any rate, the expenses incurred in the erection of public prisons are so great, as to make any general change an event of gradual accomplishment. Hence it is the more important, that in expressing our concurring, or opposing views, we should be careful not to mislead those who are about to introduce one system, or the other; and who seek knowledge, as to the advantages of each. To mislead such inquirers, is to prejudice, and perhaps to sacrifice the interests, which we are appointed to guard and cherish.

The cause of philanthropy gains much by the mutual confidence and respect which its supporters manifest towards each other. We are allied in seeking a great public good. No citizen, no family can say to what extent, or in what form, he or they may be interested in our success. We have noble forerunners in the path of prison reform. So far as the excitement of example is concerned, we can seek none brighter than that of JONAS HOWARD, and ELIZABETH FRY; and yet we have an infinitely brighter—a divine example in Him, whose tender sympathy was never withheld from any form of human suffering that presented itself.

[By order of the Society.]

GEORGE W. SMITH, } Secretaries.
WM. BIDDLE, }

GEORGE WILLIAMS, President.

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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

In welcoming the advent of the First Anniversary of our Association, the Executive Committee feel it to be almost their first duty to express to the public, and to the members, their lively sense of the exemplary manner in which they have been sustained in their efforts to carry into operation the objects of the Society.

New as was the movement to most of the members of this Committee, they have felt throughout the year a painful consciousness of the disadvantages under which their inexperience has caused them to labour. But as they progressed, and became more familiar with their duties, they became aware that the sphere of their usefulness was extending, and themselves daily becoming more capable of performing the trust reposed in them by the generous contributors to their Treasury.

They have not been unmindful, that the objects avowed in the organization of the Association, were more extended than those of the kindred Societies in Philadelphia and Boston; and they have sought, by a kindly intercourse with them, to profit by their experience and become wiser by their suggestions.

The Philadelphia Society was present at our organization, by its delegates, and has encouraged us in our efforts. It has established a quarterly Journal, "The Pennsylvania Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy," in which favourable notice has been taken of us, in connexion with an enlightened support of sound principles in Prison Discipline.

That Journal is worthy of the support of the members of this Association, and it is to be hoped that it will receive such encouragement, as to enable its conductors long to occupy their appropriate and well-cultivated field of usefulness.

At the anniversary of the Boston Prison Discipline Society in May last, a delegation from our Association, consisting of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, and the Corresponding

—the precise amount of which, the Association has not yet been able to learn,—it has been ascertained, that from 20 to 25 convicts are discharged every month from the State Prison at Sing Sing, who, with hardly an exception, come directly to this city. More than half of this number having been originally sent up from this city and Brooklyn, return to those places as their only home; and very many of the residue, having no other home, remain here. To prevent those persons from continuing their depredations upon this community, it is intended that a strict scrutiny shall be had into their characters and their conduct while in prison; and as to those who afford no hopes of reformation, to report their names to the officers of justice, so that they shall be closely watched. As to the others, to aid them in their efforts at reformation, by procuring employment for them, and encouraging them to lead honest lives and sin no more.

Very many of this class are frequently driven to return to a course of crime by sheer want, and their inability to procure employment. To guard against this result, is very evidently a matter of interest to all of our citizens. To accomplish this end, it is proposed mainly, to find work for the discharged convict; but not to advance him money, unless it be for the purchase of tools or the necessities of life. That to be done rather by advancing articles in kind than money. And in all cases, the sums thus advanced to be regarded as loans, to be repaid to the Association, out of the proceeds of his labour,—thus not only encouraging in him habits of economy and industry, but inciting him to increased exertions, by the reflection, that by every dollar he returns he is contributing his aid to others in like condition, by enabling the Association to use the same sums many times.

To carry out these objects, funds will be required, for which the Executive Committee now appeal to their fellow-citizens.

Subscription Books are in the hands of each of the members of the Committee, and by them contributions will be received, and a report of all sums received and expended will be periodically made public.

By order of the Executive Committee,

WILLIAM C. RUSSEL, *Secretary pro tem.* J. W. EDMONDS, *Chairman.*
New York, December 17, 1844.

The Executive Committee have kept these several objects continually in view, and subordinate Committees were raised, to whose charge these subjects were respectively committed. Their reports are hereto annexed.

DETENTIONS.

The business of this Committee was necessarily confined to the prisons in this city and in Brooklyn; embracing constantly the cases of at least 1,000 prisoners. Circumscribed in the performance of their task, by the pressing nature of their private avocations, they have yet been able to be the instruments of much good; the most prominent instance of which is to be found in the fact, that during the year they have given their attention to the cases of 80 boys, who have been arrested, and have restored 48 of them to their parents or friends.

The repeated visits of the members of the Committee to those prisons, have made them familiarly acquainted with the condition and government of them. Their material construction, and ar-

range, are particularly described in the report of that Committee; but their moral condition and influence deserve a more extended notice in this place.

We have been inexpressibly shocked at the view of the grievous wrong which these institutions are daily inflicting upon the community. And, while on the one hand, we feel the want of language adequately to express our disapprobation, we are, on the other hand, apprehensive, so revolting is the truth, that our statements may be regarded as exaggerations, or as prompted by some personal feeling of ill will.

Without pausing, however, to indulge in any protestations as to the singleness of purpose with which we entered upon the duty, we will simply point attention to one of the primary objects involved in our Association, namely, the reformation of prisons, and the improvement of prison discipline. To this purpose, the Executive Committee were solemnly and deliberately pledged at their election; and however painful or unpleasant the duty may be, we cannot hesitate in its performance, without slighting the responsibility we have assumed, and disregarding the trust reposed in us. And the call of this duty is the more imperative, because the evil has continued so many years, and has, of late, increased with appalling velocity.

Though we shall speak mainly of the present condition of these prisons, it must by no means be inferred, that the past is exempt from its share of the censure. The present is but a faithful reflection of the past. To prevent its throwing its gloomy shadows upon the future is our present object.

At the outset of our investigations, we are startled by the consideration of the increase of crime in this city within a few years; a consideration the more interesting, because in such marked contrast with the rest of the state and the Union.

The inmates of our city prisons may with propriety be regarded as constituting three classes.

First. Those who are arrested and detained on a charge of having committed some crime or offence.

Second. Those who are convicted of some crime or offence either in the United States Courts, the Oyer and Terminer, or General or Special Sessions.

Third. Those who are committed on summary convictions as vagrants or disorderly persons.

Of the *First Class*, the nearest approach we can make to a satisfactory statement is the following

TABLE—Showing the number of Inmates in the City Prison for Ten years

1835 Total number (Returns for six weeks wanting).....	1962
Average per week.....	43
1836 Total number for this year.....	5103
Average per week.....	94
1837 Total number for this year.....	6116
Average per week.....	117
1838 Total number for this year.....	5711
Average per week.....	109
1839 Total number for this year.....	8102
Average per week.....	156
1840 Total number for this year.....	9110
Average per week.....	175
1841 Total number for this year.....	7348
Average per week.....	141
1842 Total number for this year.....	7965
Average per week.....	163
1843 Total number for this year.....	7269
Average per week.....	139
1844 Total number for this year.....	8008
Average per week.....	154

It is evident that this table exhibits very imperfectly the condition of the City Prison, from the fact, which is stated to us by officers who have opportunities of knowing, that a much larger number of persons are yearly committed to the City Prison,* and from the well-known fact, that very many are brought in and committed temporarily, whose names are never entered on the books of the prison.

Of the *Second Class*, the following account is furnished by the very intelligent and faithful Clerk of the Sessions.

Commitments to the City Prison and the Penitentiary for Ten years, on convictions in the Oyer and Terminer, General and Special Sessions.

YEAR.	TO THE PENITENTIARY.		TO THE CITY PRISON.		TOTAL.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	
1835	420	—	4	—	424
1836	318	53	4	2	377
1837	460	75	8	—	533
1838	396	69	50	20	425
1839	278	71	53	27	429
1840	374	96	107	40	607
1841	441	122	154	47	763
1842	503	107	153	53	816
1843	580	134	274	59	1047
1844	681	119	277	72	1149

* A recent message from the Mayor to the Common Council, showing forth the workings of the New Police, states the number arrested during a period of three months and a half, to have been over 11,000, or more than 40,000 a year.

† Male and female are not separated in the returns this year.

Of the *Third Class*, the following table of summary convictions, gives the nearest approximation to the truth that, we have been able to obtain. These accounts have been obtained with great difficulty, and it is to us cause of great surprise, that, in a matter involving so great an expenditure of money and the liberty and characters of so many people, specific and definite returns should not be made and preserved, in such a manner, as to enable some one person at least, if not the public at large, to know in what manner and to what extent so important a duty is performed.

Summary Convictions, including the Commitments to the Penitentiary, of disorderly persons and vagrants.

1840 Total amount for the year.....	1204
Average per month.....	100
1841 Total amount for the year.....	1699
Average per month.....	141
1842 Total amount for the year.....	1996
Average per month.....	166
1843 Total amount for the year.....	2059
Average per month.....	171
1844 Total amount for the year.....	2008
Average per month.....	166

In 1845, the total amount to 9th December is 2,237, and an average of 186 per month, or *six each day!*

These tables are not to be received as containing the whole truth. They are only an approximation to it, and the nearest approach the Committee have been able to make, after diligent inquiry in every imaginable direction, where it was probable that positive and reliable information could be obtained.

So, too, is it difficult to ascertain the expense of our Penitentiary and Police establishments. No separate account is kept; but the following items have been gathered from different parts of the Comptroller's report, and indicate nearly the cost for the past year.

Expenses by the Commissioner of the Alms House for City

Prison and Penitentiary, - - -	\$65,357 70
Extra services of Police Officers, - - -	21,207 40
Salaries of Officers in this Department, - - -	56,069 87

\$142,574 97

This is exclusive of the cost of the Coroner's office, rewards for prisoners, pay of Aldermen and officers attending court, printing, repairs, and other contingent charges. These items must swell the total cost to the city of this department alone, to over \$150,000 a year.

From these statements, imperfect as they are, and from the fact that there are from seventeen to twenty prisoners in this city—including station-houses and Police Offices—at which at least 30,000 of our people are confined each year, at an annual expense to the honest portion of the community of over \$150,000, some idea may be formed of the importance of the subject.

The first consideration that would strike any one, attempting to investigate the subject, is the entire want of order, system, and organization, which pervades the whole department. It is nominally under the control and supervision of the Commissioner of the Alms House; but his other duties are so onerous, that it is impossible for him to do more than to give casual and occasional glances only at the prisons.

Hence, there is no attempt to introduce any thing like a system of prison discipline; no efforts at economy, unless occasional feeble and spasmodic attempts at curtailment may be so dignified: no common head to control; no one to inspect or supervise; no one to detect and remove abuses.

It is not, therefore, matter of surprise that evils should exist, or that they should be of an alarming and serious character. The enumeration of some of the most glaring among them will aid the object we have in view, namely, that of giving a general idea only of the state and condition of our City Prisons.

The average number of persons continually in the two principal prisons during the past year, is about 1,200. And the expense of keeping, governing, and controlling them, which was last year drawn from the City Treasury, was \$84,959 08.

During the same period, the average number of persons in our State Prisons at Auburn and Sing Sing, was about 1,700, and the amount drawn from the State Treasury for the same purposes, was \$24,803 80.

So that the state prisoners have cost \$14 59 each, the year; while our city prisoners have cost \$70 79 each, or about five times as much.

But the moral influences of our prisons are of much greater importance.

It is of frequent occurrence, that persons are arrested and detained in some of our houses of detention—sometimes for two or three days, of whom no account is rendered anywhere. And it is manifest, from the present defective organization in this respect, that the liberty of the friendless and unprotected portion of our

population, must be very much at the mercy of our police officers; and that without a more perfect system of inspection and returns, there is great room for bad men to abuse the power with which they may be trusted.

Persons are frequently detained in prison after the expiration of their terms of imprisonment; sometimes because they are forgotten, sometimes because the prisoners desire to remain, and sometimes because the officers think it for the interest of the Corporation that they should be detained. It is indeed a general practice at the Penitentiary, never to let a prisoner out until he asks to be discharged; so that, if he chooses to remain and be supported at the public expense, his object can be easily attained.

Hence it is, that there are persons at that prison who make that their home, and who have spent there the most of their time for years.

Very many are confined at the Penitentiary, not because they have committed any crime or offence, but avowedly only because they are destitute, or diseased. This includes a class of persons who go to the Police Office and "give themselves up," as they term it, because they want a place of refuge; a large number of diseased prostitutes, who go there as to a hospital; and many strangers and foreigners, who, in their ignorance of our institutions, apply for relief to the Police Office, and are *relieved* by being sent to the Penitentiary.

The crowning evil, however, arises out of the manner in which the prisoners are confined together. So unrestrained is the intercourse among them, especially at the Penitentiary, that we are presented with all the revolting features of the very worst prisons of the Old World. There is absolutely nothing to prevent the contamination which always springs from "evil communications;" nothing to check the growth of corruption, but much to foster it, as in a hot-bed of vice, into rapid and vigorous strength.

The result is, that instead of being a terror to evil-doers, our prisons are fled to as a desirable refuge—instead of being a house of reform, where resolutions of amendment may be cherished and encouraged, our Penitentiary is a school of vice, where the novice in crime is compelled, in the name of the law, to serve a regular apprenticeship in vice; until perfected in his trade by the lessons taught by the hardened offenders with whom he is obliged to affiliate, he goes forth into the world to prey upon society, to swell the catalogue of crime, and finally to "atone" on the gallows or in

the State Prison, for practising the lessons which he has thus been compelled, by the ministers of justice, to learn.

The sentence which bound the dead to the living body, was mercy, to that refinement of cruelty which thus chains the quick and living soul in the embrace of festering corruption. That was not an enduring imprisonment. That was not an everlasting chain.

This is no fancy sketch. It is the sad reality that is in our very midst. If any one doubts the fidelity of the picture, let him, if he can so long endure the profanity and obscenity which will offend his sight and hearing, spend but half an hour on the first floor of the female apartments in the City Prison, or in the "Luny House," as it is termed, on Blackwell's Island, and he will be ready to acknowledge that language is inadequate to do justice to the subject.

It will be to him, as it has been to us, matter of especial wonder, that in this state, which first set an example of prison reform that has been admired and imitated throughout the civilized world, and in this city, where there are so many noble charities admirably conducted, prisons should be permitted to exist so wretchedly organized; and above all, that a prison, the largest on the continent, almost in the world, should be kept up, continued, supported, and conducted, in a manner that would reflect disgrace upon the most barbarous nation of the darkest age.

When these evils will be corrected it is difficult to divine. It might be supposed that the success which has attended the efforts of the state in prison government, would have had some influence. But that example seems to be lost; and equally vain is the lesson taught by the cities of Boston and Philadelphia, where their Penitentiaries not only reflect credit upon them, but actually diminish crime. It seems to be equally vain that our Grand Juries, over and over again, make their complaints. Their presentments are either "laid upon the table," or "referred to a Committee," and receive no more attention.

So long as these admonitions are thus wasted, and so long as these evils are allowed to exist and to grow daily in strength, let no one wonder that crime increases at a fearful rate, and the burdens of the community are correspondingly augmented. And above all, let no man complain that this Society, in strict fidelity to the purposes for which it was established, speaks the truth of these things in soberness and in sorrow.

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

The Committee charged with this department, were particularly enjoined to inspect State Prisons, and Prisons generally.

The members of this Committee also had, all of them, private duties, which consumed the most of their time, and therefore have not been able to make as extended an inspection as they desired.

Their report includes the prisons in eight counties only, in this state, and exposes defects of a glaring character; and gives much reason to believe that others exist, which can be detected only by a thorough examination, by persons having authority to compel disclosures from the officers and inmates of the prisons.

To meet this exigency, the Committee made an application to the Legislature at its last session, for an act of incorporation, with power to examine, and thoroughly inspect state and county prisons. The House of Assembly, with great unanimity, passed the necessary bill; but the Senate, either jealous of our interference in state Institutions, or uninformed as to our objects, refused their assent, and the bill was rejected.

The great object of that application was to secure, as far as possible, an effective inspection of our County Prisons; and we were disposed to bring that about at our own charge, and by our own labor, without any expense to the state.

We were aware that our statutes had provided for such an inspection, by making it the duty of the First Judge of the county courts, and the Superintendents of the county poor, to make periodical examinations, and report to the Circuit Judge, twice at least a year in each county. But we were also aware, that in some counties this duty was never performed, and in many counties very imperfectly; and that even when most efficiently performed, the Circuit Judges were not in the habit of taking much notice of, or any action upon, such reports; and that from various causes, the object of the statute,—that of inspection of County Prisons, and of the removal of defects in them,—was in a great measure defeated; and the Committee were fully persuaded, that it was only necessary to have those defects pointed out to an intelligent public, to have an efficient remedy applied.

These defects are more glaring, and more injurious, than is generally conceived.

Frequently, in the same prison are confined females, arrested for crimes or convicted of disorderly conduct, and males detained

for debt, for contempt of court, on conviction of petty crimes, or arrested on suspicion of crimes of more serious character. The law requires that these prisoners shall be classified, and kept separate from each other; and in its wisdom and humanity, provides, in detailing the jailor's duty, for this entire separation. Yet it is frequently the case, that the jails are so imperfectly constructed that it is impossible for the jailor to perform his duty; and on the other hand, he is compelled either to let his prisoners go at large, or confine them together, in open and palpable violation of the law.*

Hence it is that our County Prisons, instead of being houses of reformation, are schools of crime, in which the young beginner is perfected in his criminal education, by a too free association with the hardened, the adroit, and the confirmed rogue; and hence it is, that many of our convicts in our State Prisons attribute, and no doubt justly, their ultimate fall, to the lessons in depravity which they learned in the County Prisons, when confined there, perhaps for some petty delinquency, involving no moral tuptude.

Some idea of the evil alluded to may be formed from the fact, that in the prison described in the following presentment, there were confined at one time, three females, one of them an infant, one man for murder, two for debt, several convicted of crime, and several arrested and held for trial, on suspicion of crime; and they confined in what were virtually two rooms only!

The Grand Jury of the August Circuit and Court of Oyer and Terminer, having been charged by his Honor, JUDGE EDMONDS, to make an examination of the County Prison, make the following presentment:

* They have examined the said Jail, and find that there are two rooms in said Jail, for the confinement of prisoners, and ten cells. That in the lower room, 11 by 24 feet, they find seven prisoners confined, awaiting trial, charged with the high crimes of murder and arson, down to the lower grades, and differing in years, from the man of gray hairs to the mere youth. Five cells open from this room on the north side, separated from it only by an open grating, while the only ventilation of this room and cells, is from two grated windows on the south side of the room.

In the upper room and cells, which are constructed precisely as on the lower floor, we find six persons confined, to wit: in the large room, one convicted criminal and two debtors, all males; and in one of the cells, three females, two awaiting trial, one on a criminal charge, the other an infant child of one of the prisoners. The cells are four and a half feet wide, by eight and a half feet long.

* Here we find four distinctly recognized classes of prisoners, who by law are,

* We are informed, that during the past year, the Keeper of the City Prison, New York, discharged about 50 prisoners at one time, by direction of one of the Police Magistrates, because the prison was so full!

as classes, to be kept in distinct and separate rooms; and, as individuals, are, as far as possible, to be kept from conversation with each other, confined in what, to all intents and purposes, so far as the law is concerned, are but two rooms.

This construction of the Jail renders it utterly impossible for the Jailor to comply with the wholesome regulations of the statute. The prisoners here detained for trial, cannot be kept separate from those under sentence. The intercourse between them is free and unrestrained. Persons charged with murder and arson, are confined with those arrested for lesser crimes. Here the contaminating influence of hardened offenders, is brought to bear upon the less guilty. The associations are for evil and evil only. They move in an atmosphere of guilt; and under such unfavorable circumstances, that confinement cannot be productive of good, or rather must engender evil. The wholesome provisions of law require, that the persons charged with crime shall be kept separate from those under sentence; and as the Jail is so constructed that it cannot be done, the Grand Jury present the Jail of Chenango county, to the County Judges and the Board of Supervisors, as a matter requiring their official action.

In the State Prison of this state it has been found exceedingly beneficial to keep the prisoner at labour. Employment fills their vacant hours, and in connexion with separate confinement, entirely precludes the possibility of contaminating associations; the prisoner is left to sober reflection, to the remembrance of those crimes by which he has outraged community and deprived himself of the privilege of free intercourse with man; and, if in these moments the heart is not made better, and resolutions of amendment are not formed, they are at least free from imbibing corruption from the more guilty, and from becoming worse by their confinement. The Grand Jury therefore suggest the erection of a work-house, to be attached to the Jail of Chenango county, that shall, while it lessens the burden of the prisoners, shed upon them a healing moral influence. In connexion with this subject, it is proper to say that the Jailor is not culpable for the condition of the prisoners in the Jail of Chenango county.

SAMUEL PLUMB, Foreman.

How melancholy must have been the spectacle of the numerous inmates of this prison, not taking warning by each other's misfortunes, but engaged in a mad career of boasting which could be most reckless of consequences, or which had been, or could be, most expert in crime!

This is no solitary instance. Many such prisons are to be found in this state, and will continue to be, until public attention shall be so aroused to their condition, that the local authorities shall be compelled to proper action in regard to them.

To apply the corrective to these evils, to hunt out, and expose, and as far as possible correct them, is a duty as imperative as it should be interesting to the members of this Association, and on no account to be lost sight of.

It therefore becomes us to renew our application to the Legislature, in the hope that when our purposes shall be rightly understood, the requisite powers will be conferred upon us; or if not, that some other measures will be adopted by the supreme authority of the state, to insure that thorough inspection of our County Prisons, which our existing statutes have aimed at in vain.

England was far behind this country, in the initiatory steps towards reform in prison discipline; but by an enlightened legislation, she is far outstripping us in the race. She has not only profited by, and introduced into her prisons for convicts, all the American improvements in prison discipline, but she has wisely and well provided for an inspection of her County Prisons, and her local houses of detention; and not for an inspection only,—though that conducted by fearless and intelligent men, would do much good,—but also for an effectual remedy for many of the evils complained of.

The annual reports of her Inspectors of Prisons, are among the most valuable of the ponderous volumes to which her Parliamentary proceedings are continually giving birth; and they afford abundant evidence of the salutary reformations which have been introduced into her prisons within the last ten years, by means of these inspections.

It becomes, therefore, to the members of this Association, a matter of deep interest, as well as of solemn duty, to persevere in their efforts, until a system of complete inspection and entire reformation in our County Prisons shall be adopted.

The task is not without its difficulties and its labours, and demands from us that we should not be discouraged by one, or even numerous defeats, in our appeals to the Legislature; for without legislative aid we cannot hope ultimately and fully to succeed.

Some of the defects and difficulties are already apparent.

One, is the mode of appointment of the officers of our prisons. This is uniformly mingled with the party politics of the day, and the incumbents are dependant upon the fluctuations of local and general parties for the tenures of their offices, and naturally, if not inevitably, look rather to the success of political manoeuvres than to the faithful discharge of the duties of their offices, for their continuance in office.

And their selection, in the first instance, is frequently governed by other considerations than their adaptation for the task;—yet there is no business where so much depends upon the peculiar qualifications of the persons charged with it. It is a duty not to be learned in a day, and its faithful performance involves a union of rare qualities—firmness, benevolence, knowledge of human nature, and experience.

In the interior counties, the jailors are appointed by the Sheriffs, and in the city by the Common Council; and every change of

parties, or of Sheriff, involves a change in the government and management of prisons. Thus, the steadiness and uniformity so essential to success, are utterly unattainable. This is particularly true of our County Prisons, where a change of keeper is a matter of course every three years, with the change of Sheriff, and though not true to the same extent in our State Prisons, yet far too much so, to allow us to hope for success in perfecting our system of prison discipline.

The course pursued in Pennsylvania is different, and has been attended with the happiest results. The Governors of her State Prisons are appointed by the Judiciary, and thus has been secured a permanency and uniformity which has made her Penitentiary system a just cause of state pride, and enabled her citizens to mature and perfect their plan. And while under such a course, her progress has been steadily onward, ours, in this state, has been at least stationary; and the prisons of other states are appealed to as the models of the plan which originated with us, but which we have failed to mature and perfect.

Another evil in our County Prison system is, its dependance upon the County Supervisors, for the means necessary to remedy the defects which may be pointed out.

Very many of the Supervisors are in the habit of looking upon the prisons merely as places of detention, where the whole duty is performed by providing walls and barriers, high and strong enough to hold the inmates safely, until their guilt or innocence can be established on trial; or they regard them as places of punishment, where the duty is to inflict personal suffering. They overlook the fact, that very many innocent persons are compelled, by this system, to suffer equally with the guilty. That the debtor, whose misfortune involves no moral turpitude, is made to share the same fate with the most hardened criminal; that the novice in crime is subjected to all the contamination of unrestrained intercourse with the thoroughly corrupted; and that the unvarying idleness to which all are condemned, while it adds to the burdens of the honest part of the people, drives the wretched inmates of these prisons to every miserable device to while away their time. They overlook these things, simply because there is no one to call their attention to them, and a mere casual glance at a prison would not generally make them manifest.

An enlightened and thorough inspection would remedy these evils, or would, at least, expose them; and if such exposure should

fail to extort from the Boards of Supervisors the necessary corrective, an appeal might be made to the Legislature with reasonable hopes of success. But now the Supervisors may individually listen to the suggestions of a false economy, and without any hazard of exposure, refuse to expend any more money in their prisons than just enough to make them pens in which their inmates may be kept securely locked up.

Why should not the able-bodied inmate of a prison, who can, with ease, earn his seventy-five cents or a dollar a day outside, as easily earn inside the thirty or forty cents that it costs to support him there? Why should not he be saved from the unbroken idleness to which he is so mercilessly condemned? And why, above all, should he be so thoughtlessly subjected to the contamination which is now so inevitable and so ruinous?

These are the evils which once existed in our State Prisons, and which have been corrected. The corrective then grew out of the fact, that public attention was called to the subject. The same remedy can be made to produce the same results in our County Prisons: not immediately, perhaps, nor upon once or twice asking, but ultimately, just as certain as that there is virtue and intelligence in the great mass of the people.

This is shown by the fact, that when the Revised Statutes were enacted, the Legislature was easily aroused to action, and attempted to apply the remedy; and it is only necessary that the failure of that remedy should be demonstrated, to call again into action the powers of the Legislature. And that demonstration will be sure to flow from a searching inspection of our County Prisons.

This Association is not pledged or committed to either of the systems of prison discipline, which have originated in this country, been adopted abroad, and found admirers and advocates here and in other countries; but is disposed rather to advocate a plan combined of both, avoiding the evils of each, adopting their respective advantages, and attempting to mould from them a system which shall receive the sanction of all humane persons, and be emphatically national in its character.

The comparative merits of the two systems have long been a subject of discussion, among persons interested in the subject of penitentiaries and prison government; and very many have arrayed themselves on one side or the other of the controversy, and naturally sometimes been led into extremes.

The discussion, however, has been profitable and interesting; for while the strife has been which can most benefit the human race, the agitation of the subject, and the lessons of experience, have marched together in correcting evils and enhancing advantages, until the two systems have gradually approached each other, and, it is to be hoped, will ultimately unite on one common platform.

The glaring wrong of the old plans of prisons, and prison government, consisted in the confinement in common of persons of all ages, and of all grades in the scale of crime; thus insuring, not reformation, but continuance and perfection in the career of vice.

To correct this evil, one which had pervaded the prisons of the Old World for hundreds of years, has been alike the object of both the plans adopted in this country, now well known here and elsewhere, as the "Separate System" and the "Silent System."

The former plan contemplated the attainment of its object, by the solitary confinement of each prisoner in a separate cell, so constructed, as by means of its walls, its bolts and bars, to render it impracticable for the inmates to have any intercourse with, or even to behold, each other.

Thus two great benefits were proposed to be obtained; one, the arresting the process of mutual corruption, and the other, the exemption of the prisoners from mutual recognition in the world; thus materially aiding them in their efforts at reform.

It has, however, been long and strenuously objected to this plan, that it was incompatible with the sanity of its subjects; that the human mind was so constituted as to render a long continuance of compulsory solitude beyond endurance, especially with those whose previous lives had been perpetual scenes of tumult and excitement; and experience seemed to demonstrate the force of the objection, when the confinement was too rigid and too long continued.

Hence has arisen an important modification of the plan as proposed in the beginning. The idea of entire and enduring solitude has been abandoned; and such measures have been adopted, that the prisoners are allowed to have intercourse with their fellow creatures under regulations, which, while the preservation of the balance of the mind may be attained, guard against the corrupting influences of contamination.

It was not to be expected, nor indeed desired, that so great an alteration in the system should be suddenly made, or with any more rapidity than an enlightened experience should dictate; and it is manifest that the end of those modifications is not yet.

The other, or the "Silent System," aimed at the same object by different means. Those means were separate confinement at night and labour by day, in common, under a *surveillance* so strict and so rigorously enforced, as to insure non-intercourse among the prisoners.

This plan seemed to conflict at once with a law of our nature and a dictate of our religion. The prisoners, while at labour, being placed side by side, are directly subjected to the influence of the strongest propensity of our nature, the desire for intercourse with our fellows. They are thus led into temptation, and visited with the evils that are sure to flow from yielding to it. It is true, that they may thus be taught the lesson of self-control; many of them perhaps for the first time in their lives; and the lesson might be of infinite value to them, if taught in such a way as to produce lasting effects, or to awaken in their hearts right feelings. In some of the prisons on this plan, we are fain to believe that such a course is pursued; but in very many of them, the end has been attained only by a physical means—by force and personal violence. Hence has arisen an objection to the system in many benevolent minds, that it could be carried on only by a resort to cruelty of a revolting character; and while the comparative cheapness of construction has commended this plan, in instances where such considerations were paramount; in other instances, where the expense was justly held to be subordinate to the great moral end in view, the prevalence of this cruelty, and the supposed necessity of its continuance, have been insuperable objections to its adoption.

When the attention of the British public was aroused to this subject, the government sent over to this country Commissioners to investigate the state of our prisons, and the improvements we had adopted in their management. Other nations have sent their officers here for the same purpose.—The visits of those sent by the French and Prussian governments must be fresh in the recollection of many.

With all these visitors, the objection has been strong, with some of them insurmountable, arising from the harshness, the rigour, the cruelty with which the system seemed necessarily to be carried on.

The error consists in the belief that any such necessity exists—the existence of the cruelty being but too palpable.

This arises, not from the demands of the system, but from the characters, qualifications, and unfitness of the persons selected for

the government of the prisons. Many of those persons know no other mode of controlling men than by force. Of the all-powerful influence of kindness, as a means of government, they are utterly ignorant. Fear of the vicious and turbulent spirits that surround them, begets naturally a rule of severity, and convenience steps in and completes the tale; for it takes much less time and trouble to whip a prisoner into immediate subjection, than it does to talk or reason him into it. Hence most of the prisons, in this country on the "Silent System," are governed and kept in order mainly by the use of the whip; which is resorted to with more or less severity, according to the temper of the officers in whose hands it is placed. The destructive influence of this course, both upon keepers and convicts, cannot be hidden from any one at all conversant with prisons. In both, it fosters into active growth and full vigour the very worst passions of the human heart; and while in the prisoners it effectually blasts all hopes of reformation, in the officers, it fearfully adds to the perils of constant contact with the vicious and depraved.*

Since such are the results which must inevitably flow from such a mode of prison government, it might, indeed, well be questioned, whether such a system ought to be encouraged?

Fortunately, experience demonstrates that this evil is not inherent in the system—is not the fault of the plan, but of the persons who are selected to carry it out. Some of the prisons of that denomination, in this country, have been conducted on more wise and humane principles, and with the happiest results.

The House of Correction, at Boston, has been under the government of one man since January 19, 1833. For the twelve

* Dr. Charles Caldwell, in an admirable essay on "Penitentiary Discipline and Moral Education and Reform," advances the following sentiment, which all experience proves to be just.

"But from the practice of habitually inflicting on criminals the punishment of the lash, there arises another evil, not much less to be deprecated. It is the deteriorating effect which it necessarily produces on those who consent to engage in it, and become its ministers;—its inhumanizing influence on all who enlist themselves as punishers by profession. If we are not greatly mistaken, it tends to the extinguishment of all high, amiable, and honourable feelings in the hirelings who pursue it, almost as inevitably as in the convicts who are the subjects of it. To morality, virtue, or any praiseworthy sentiment or feeling, it has no affinity. Being exclusively the offspring of animal propensity, its unavoidable effect is, to brutalize those who are daily concerned in it. In direct proportion as it makes them more of animals, it makes them less of men. It is a foe to benevolence, and therefore obliterates those fine sympathies and charities of human nature, which are among the most valuable safeguards of virtue."

years that have elapsed since his appointment, and up to May, 1845, 7,686 persons have been received into the prison. During that whole time, and amid that large number of vicious and depraved criminals, not a blow has been struck! The cat-and-nine-tails does not hang there upon their walls, as the disgusting badge of authority—no swords, or guns, or instruments of death are paraded there to the spectator's eye. The prison has the appearance of a large and well-ordered workshop, and is in fact one of the best governed in the nation, reflecting equal honour upon its principal, and upon the local authorities who have selected, and thus long sustained him.

In the State Prison at Sing Sing, an attempt has been made, within the last two years, to introduce a similar mode of government; in the prison for males, with slow, and cautious, and timid steps, and of course with only partial success; but in the prison for females, with bolder and more rapid strides, and with the happiest results.

A little more than two years ago, in the prison for males, nearly three thousand lashes a month were inflicted, while in October last only two hundred and fifty-three;—an important amelioration, holding out great hopes for the future, because all admit that the prison is as well governed as it ever was.

It is, however, in the female prison, that the most encouragement is afforded. The nature and character of the government which has been there introduced, and the effect of it, can be best stated in the language of the officers of the prison.

Extract from the Annual Report of the Inspectors the Sing Sing Prison, made in January, 1844.

The leading and characteristic feature of our penitentiary system, solitary confinement by night, and labour in silence by day, is almost entirely wanting in our female prison.

The number of convicts being larger than the number of separate cells, renders it unavoidable that many of them should be confined in company. And the building is so constructed, that those who do occupy separate cells, can, without difficulty, converse with each other through the vent-holes or the bars of the doors.

The consequence is, that when locked in their cells, unless they are asleep, the convicts are continually conversing.

In the day time, the intercourse between them is still more unrestrained, and a continual hum of conversation is heard, varied with occasional outbreaks of violence and passion.

It is at all times difficult to induce courts and juries to convict a female of a crime involving punishment in the State Prison; and the consequence is, as a general rule, that none but the most depraved and abandoned of the sex find

their way within our walls. They are mostly persons whose whole lives have been spent in the unrestrained indulgence of their passions, and they struggle long, and violently, and too often successfully, against every effort to teach them the lesson of self-control. Many of them are blacks, from the stews and brothels of our large cities, lost to all sense of shame, and impervious to all good impressions. Violent battles are frequent in the prison, and knives have been known to be drawn among them.

This prison, like that for the males, is constructed upon the plan of no other punishment for misconduct but the lash; and as the law forbids that mode of punishing females, the convicts are in a great measure lawless. The only punishment that is resorted to, is confinement to their cells; and as that involves an exemption from labour, it is more frequently welcomed with singing and laughter, than productive of repentance or reformation. This punishment, being necessarily inflicted in the presence of all the convicts, the subjects of it are proud to show—for vice has its pride—with what fortitude they can bear it, and with what ease they can set it at defiance.

They are thus rendered more obdurate and hardened. The evil-minded bear the sway, and those who are well disposed are compelled, by their associates, to transgress, and instead of opportunities for repentance and reformation, find it infinitely more difficult to behave well in the prison than out of it. This is a sad, but a true picture of this prison.

The Board, for causes which it is unnecessary here to detail, deemed it proper to remove the matrons whom they found in charge of the prison. The convicts, who had apparently had easy times, took offence at the change, and broke out into open rebellion. They refused to work; they assaulted the keeper, threatened the lives of the matrons, tore off their clothing, disarmed a guard, and set all regulation and order at defiance. Several weeks elapsed before these outbreaks were subdued; and though none of so general a nature have lately occurred, personal rencouces between themselves, and violence towards their matrons, are yet far too frequent.

In some instances, some of the most disorderly have been worked upon until they have formed resolutions of amendment, and persevered for some time in their better course. But as there were no means of preventing a constant communication between them and the others, who still gloried in their bad behaviour; they have soon been tempted or compelled to return to their former evil practices, and have behaved worse than ever, in order to restore themselves to their former standing among their associates; and the Board have thus been doomed, once and again, to see their efforts thwarted by the superior influence of those upon whom they could make no impression.

A few instances will illustrate the evils complained of.

A young girl was sent to the prison from one of the interior counties. She had been a street beggar, and her transgression had been in appropriating other people's property to her own use. She had scarcely entered the prison, before the process of corruption began; and the veteran convicts there, amused themselves by pointing to her young imagination, in alluring colours, the abominable lives they had led. The Board hastened her removal to the House of Refuge, that she might, if possible, be saved from the course of her contamination.

Four convicts were discharged in one day; three of them young. There was reason to believe that they had concerted a plan of returning together, under the guidance of the elder among them, to their former evil lives. Every effort in the power of the officers of the prison was made to prevent that consummation; but there is no doubt that they went direct from the prison to the brothel, and plunged immediately into the course of life which had once already led them to the commission of crime.

One of the females, who had been convicted of murder, and her sentence commuted to imprisonment for life, died of consumption. Before her death, she confessed the crime, and gave every evidence of sincere repentance. She

complained that her efforts at repentance were thwarted, and her dying moments disturbed by the violence of her fellow prisoners.

One of these wretched creatures, who had been noted for her turbulent conduct, was very much affected by a death which occurred among them, and the funeral services. For several days she manifested a sincere repentance, and a fervid desire to behave well. But from her daily association with those upon whom no such impression had been made, she soon fell off again, and returned with increased vigour to her evil practices; and when threatened with punishment, boasted that she had but four months to stay, and could stand bread and water as long as that.

Not long since, four of them took an oath upon the Bible, in due form, solemnly devoting themselves to the devil, as his children, and to obey his commands!

Thirty-four of them are blacks; many of them cannot read, and they are superstitious as well as ignorant. One evening, one of them saw the ghost of her mother; she could not be reasoned nor persuaded out of the notion, and for two nights she made the prison resound with her shrieks and cries, mingled with the curses and laughter of her associates.

Extracts from the Annual Report of the Matron of Mt. Pleasant State Prison for Females, made in 1844.

TO THE BOARD OF INSPECTORS:

It is known to you, gentlemen, that at the time I assumed the duties of Matron, the prison was in a deplorable condition. Scenes of violence between the convicts, or attempts on their part against their officers, seem to have been of frequent occurrence. Misrule and disorder were the prevailing characteristics of the Institution. Your last Report set forth a painful and forbidding state of affairs, which was amply confirmed by the statements of the officers then in charge.

The duties to which I was appointed, were undertaken with the hope and intention of reforming this condition of things, and reducing the convicts to a sound state of discipline—obviously the first necessity in all institutions of the kind. I believed not only that this could be done, but that it could be effected by means which had not hitherto been tried, viz. by substituting kindness for force, and other restraints, imposed through the mental constitutions of the prisoners, for those founded on fear of suffering, or growing out of physical inability to be disobedient and refractory.

The proposed reformation was entered upon immediately after the 1st of April. The first step taken in it, viz. the systematizing of details, in which there was great tact, together with the dread entertained by some of the more powerful among the refractory convicts, that their reign would terminate with the introduction of order and discipline, led to an early and frightful outbreak against the new state of things.

This was promptly quelled, and followed by the infliction on the offenders of our longest terms of solitary confinement. Order was thus restored, and no approach to any thing of a like kind has ever been witnessed since. Firmness and kindness were the agents principally used thereafter, in advancing and perfecting the discipline.

For some time, however, the lawless habits and free intercourse to which the convicts had been accustomed, were serious obstacles to the enforcement of new rules; but in few cases, out of the whole, did these resist the unwavering exhibition of a determination to preserve authority tempered with kindness, and a just regard for the rights of the governed. The table of offences and punishments found in your report, will show how steadily the number of the former, and consequently the necessity of the latter, have decreased under this kind of government.

This change has been the subject of much congratulation and hope for the unfortunate class to which our prisoners belong, inasmuch as it has been produced by a relaxation of severity, and the substitution thereof of kindness on the part of the officers, of self-respect in the convicts, and of their desire to enjoy such privileges and comforts as good conduct in the well behaved never fails to procure.

In all my government and intercourse with those under my charge, it has been my aim to impress them with the importance of self-government. I have continually reminded them, that whether confined in a prison, or abroad in society, their unlawful desires must be restrained, if they would enjoy any thing of the confidence or respect of their fellow beings; that while here, they must be governed, if not by their own better sense, then by bolts and bars; but that the former will elevate and prepare them to enjoy their liberty, while the latter will degrade them, and still farther unfit them for freedom of action.

I have also laboured to impress upon them the fact, that habits of self-government would be more easily formed here, where they are to a great extent removed from temptation, than when restored to society, and surrounded by those who have participated in their former recklessness and crime; and that, once formed, they would be a surer safeguard than legions of friends, or the most favourable circumstances in which they could possibly be placed.

As soon after the commencement of our duties as circumstances permitted, I took measures to offer daily to the minds of my charge, some subjects on which they might be employed, as, I hoped, to the exclusion of past scenes of depravity and crime, and to the strengthening of those better faculties which had hitherto lain dormant. Through the kind efforts of some excellent and distinguished ladies in New York, a small library of well-selected books was procured early in the summer.

To the private perusal of these was added the daily public reading in the chapel, for half or three-quarters of an hour, of some volume chosen to instruct, and rendered plain by verbal explanation of whatever was difficult or obscure. Occasionally, oral instruction on some of the most striking and interesting facts in natural history and science, or familiar illustrations of important moral truths, adapted as well as might be, to their comprehension and condition in life, were substituted for reading.

It is to be regretted, that time and opportunity have not yet permitted the farther extension of this kind of instruction. Well conducted, by an enlightened and liberal mind, it would, I am persuaded, be much more efficient than the reading of books. Besides the advantage accruing to the convicts in the knowledge thus imparted, this mode of instruction would establish between the officer and convict a twofold relation; that of teacher as well as keeper. In the former capacity, he would have an opportunity of gaining a personal influence over every individual of his charge, which he could never acquire in any other way. Voluntary as it is, however, I have been obliged to forego its aid to a much greater extent than I could wish. For this, the short time that has elapsed, the total want of facilities for instruction of any kind, and the innumerable necessities that have pressed themselves upon attention, demanding immediate effort, must be my apology.

The human mind is governed by similar laws in all natural conditions. Hence if contact with, and the example of elevated and enlightened minds are profitable to those who have never fallen into crime, how much more essential to those who have all their lives been abandoned to it? If books, and other means of mental culture are requisite to the advancement of the well disposed, how much more to the reformation of those who have not only been reared in ignorance, but under the dominion of the basest propensities?

Believing thus, I have sought every possible means of presenting to those under my charge the fact, that they are endowed with other qualities, capable of affording them enjoyment, besides the passions, whose abuse have wrought their degradation. This is a new truth to most of them, and to the better class,

one of deep interest. The newly awakened action of these higher powers, becomes at once a source of positive pleasure to them. Indeed, I have been surprised at the avidity with which some of the more stupid, even, have seized upon the food that was presented to them.

Interesting events in history, rendered familiar by the manner in which they are communicated, facts in natural history, explanations of the causes of the common phenomena of life; all possess a high power to interest the commonest minds. The extent to which they employ the individual, while sitting in silence, through the long hours of her labour, is manifest from the frequent question, and the expressed wish to be corrected if she have not understood or remembered aright. Change in the action of the mind, must be the basis of all reform; and whatever is done to enlighten the intellect or stimulate the better affections, is so much gained towards the great end which every philanthropist must have in view for this unfortunate class.

Let the cultivated or the unacquainted, who have been accustomed to regard these unfortunate persons as totally lost, and unworthy of effort, sneer at the supposition that they have susceptibilities such as move other hearts. The little ray of humanity is not all quenched. By judicious, patient, and trusting effort, it may, perchance, even within the walls of a prison, be kindled into brighter and clearer light than ever before shone in the benighted bosoms of those whose lots have been cast here.

It should be observed in reference to this class of efforts, that the state makes almost no provision for the instruction of convicts in this prison. Even the books we have now in use, are the fruit of private liberality; the only officer provided by law, from whom any thing but gratuitous effort at instruction or moral suasion can be expected, is the Chaplain; and his time is so arduously and incessantly employed with the male convicts, that his visits to us are confined almost exclusively to the hours of public service, on the Sabbath.

Under these circumstances, and with the numerous duties which devolve upon myself and assistants, as mere keepers and superintendents of general economy, the amount of instruction is necessarily quite limited. Yet its good effects are most cheerfully demonstrated in the readiness with which it is received, and in the fact, that although from half to three-fourths of an hour are daily taken from the time of all for the morning readings; and in addition to this, the same length of time twice or thrice during the week for the teaching of some twenty who are wholly uneducated; yet more labour is actually performed both individually and in the aggregate, than before any portion of time was thus devoted.

Still it must be matter of regret to every humane person, that some provision is not made, by legislative enactment, that would be more thorough and efficient than these feeble efforts can be. And if I might presume to add any thing to the liberal opinions which I am assured will be advanced in your Report, it would be an earnest petition, that a function of this description might be added to those already constituting the official duties of the prison.

But besides the task of instructing the mind, much of the reformer's work here is to be done, by appealing to, and maintaining, the self-respect of the unfortunate subject; by awakening trust and hope in the better classes of her fellow beings when she shall return to them, and by pressing home the truth that they have still the responsibilities and relations of human and social beings to discharge.

Nothing is more common, particularly among the younger convicts, than the feeling that they are utterly lost; that no effort so their part can redeem them from degradation; and that, hence, it were as well to abandon all attempts at reform. Such a feeling, it will be obvious, must be a serious impediment to all efforts which aim at the elevation of its misguided possessor; and the overcoming of it often forms no inconsiderable item in the labours of those who attempt it. It has to be combated, in frequent conversations, and steadily rejected by the daily treatment which the individual receives at your hands.

An unwavering recognition in her of the feelings which you most wish to

strengthen, and the exhibition of a steady respect for her rights, are the best refutations of her fatal error. These have to be continually offered, and they must arise from enlightened principle in her governors—not from mere kindly impulses, which suddenly awakened, are liable to be quenched at any moment. The abiding presence of such influences will, in time, raise the most depressed, and inspire them with a degree of faith and courage, to undertake the great work which lies before them.

To these requisites for giving our prison a reformatory character, already enumerated, must be added that of a construction, which would admit of classifying the convicts. The total want of any arrangement, which would admit of adopting this plan, is, perhaps, more deeply to be regretted than any deficiency I have yet named.

In a system like ours, complete non-intercourse is out of the question. All the acuteness, art, and stratagem possessed, are put in requisition to evade so unnatural a law, as that of perfect silence, when the individual is surrounded with her fellows, often her associates in the most exciting scenes of her past life. And, despite the utmost vigilance, thought and feeling will find utterance. A sign among persons so situated, tells a whole story—a few, a volume. Nor do I consider it desirable to suppress, altogether, the exhibition of the feelings that prompt these attempts.

Believing that a sound state of discipline can be maintained, without reducing those under it to automata, I have no desire to carry the law of non-intercourse farther, than to prevent evil communications.

If, with such views, the prison were so constructed as to admit of classifying its inmates, the evil-disposed might be placed under so vigilant a police, as to carry the law of non-intercourse to its utmost limits, and thus the restraint be made to sit more securely upon them than now; while toward the better class, this law might, at certain periods, be relaxed so as to admit of conversation, under limits and conditions to be defined, at the discretion of the officer. This would be a privilege, to which the less-deserving might be pointed, as a reward for a like conduct in themselves, when they should exhibit it.

There is a considerable number of convicts, now in this prison, whom I should not hesitate to place in the first class, with entire confidence that the privilege so conferred, would only result in stimulating them to perseverance in well-doing.

The institution of classes in a prison, where long terms are to be served, would, I am convinced, be highly beneficial in every way. The degradation which would attach to the lower, would not be of that kind which outrages and renders more desperate; while the corresponding treatment, viz. deprivation of the comforts and privileges extended to the higher, would constitute, in many minds, the strongest inducement to good conduct.

The higher classes, on the other hand, protected against temptation and the corrupting influences of their depraved companions, might be kept on a steady course of advancement. The good resolutions, which they now have to disengage, or to say the least, to weaken by its communication of some stolen moment, might then go steadily forward, deriving strength from their uninterrupted exercise, under the comparatively propitious influences around, and from the efforts of those whose duty it is to aid them.

On our present plan, it is in the power of one thoroughly vicious person to thwart, to a great extent, the most faithful and unremitted labours on the part of officers, and often to arrest, or perhaps wholly destroy, the most promising endeavours at reformation. Considering the great advantage that would grow out of such adaptation of our prisons, to the ends which ought always to be kept in view, its importance cannot be too earnestly pressed upon the attention of those having authority in the matter.

But with all the disadvantage under which the reformation, commenced in April last, has been thus far carried forward, such manifest improvement is confessed on all hands, that those who have laboured in producing it are encour-

aged to persevere, despite the many obstructions met at every step of the way. One circumstance which affords us much encouragement, is, that the new comers, who are received directly into the improved condition of things, offer no resistance whatever to the enforcement of the new rules. Since the 1st of April, we have received two convicts. Of these, six are, or rather were, unable to read; and the same number are among the most degraded, and hopeless inmates of our prison. Yet, in but one single instance, has any penalty, and that a very slight one, been inflicted on any of these.

They are admonished, before being conducted to the places assigned them, as to what will be required, and the consequences of refusing or complying. This, with the prevalence of order among their fellow prisoners, and the influences which we, from the first, endeavour to throw around them, has so far been sufficient to restrain persons, who have, all their previous lives, been abandoned to the full indulgence of every passion, which can degrade or brutalize. It is becoming, therefore, a matter of much certainty, that those who commenced their prison life and habits under the present regulations, will not, as long as they are maintained, offer much resistance to them. Hence, we argue a more easy enforcement of them, as time shall increase the proportion of new convicts, and lessen the number of those who bear the recollection and influence of a different state of things.

Not only this, but the demeanour of the most violent and refractory, among the old convicts, has become subdued and gentle. Imperatives are very rarely issued, the mere expression of a wish, being sufficient to produce ready and cheerful obedience. Not a single instance of personal violence between the prisoners, or towards their officers, has occurred during the six months. And all this change has been effected by the mildest form of government, consistent with the preservation of authority.

Except in quelling the first outbreak before alluded to, and in the case of two other convicts, who for some time exhibited the most incorrigible tendency to disobedience, no severe punishments have ever been inflicted; and even these last have now, after solitary confinement for several weeks, subsided into a quiet and well-ordered deportment, which there is hope to believe, may be maintained by careful and judicious management on the part of those who have them in charge.

In the result of our labours, therefore, arduous and uncongenial though they be, we find much cause of congratulation and hope. To be able to redeem one of these unfortunate beings from the ruin to which, without such effort, they seem inevitably destined, would be a reward for labours even more exacting than ours.

Nor in looking at these results, can I suffer to pass unimproved this opportunity of expressing to my assistants the gratitude I feel, for the zealous and hearty co-operation with which they have aided me in bringing them about. To their enlightened and liberal comprehension of the plans proposed, and their faithfulness and assiduity in executing them, the public, in a great measure, is indebted for whatever good has been effected here.

With the earnest hope that it may be permanent, and that this example of cultivated and refined females withdrawing from society, and devoting themselves to the reformation of the vicious, and the elevation of the fallen of their own sex, may not stand alone, I subscribe myself,

Respectfully,

E. W. FARNHAM, *Principal Matron.*

FEMALE PRISON, MT. PLEASANT, Oct. 10, 1844.

Extract from the Report of the Inspectors of the Sing Sing Prison, made in January, 1845.

The hope of reward is a more powerful, as well as more beneficial incentive to good conduct, than the fear of punishment; and as far as was practicable,

this principle has governed us. It would, however, be most effectual, if the prisons were so constructed as to allow of a classification of the inmates. They could then elevate themselves by good conduct, step by step, until they could effectually, in the prison, learn the lesson so important to them outside, that virtue is sure of its reward. So, too, by bad behaviour, they could sink themselves from grade to grade, until, by the severity of the sufferings they should bring on themselves, they should also learn the equally important lesson, that vice is as sure of its punishment.

In the female prison, where this principle of classification has been carried to a greater extent than is at present feasible among the males, the experiment has been very satisfactory.

Of equal importance with classification, would be the opportunity of affording instruction to the prisoners of conversation to their minds daily some new and useful thoughts, which shall take the place of those which refer only to the evil of the past, and the gloom of the future.

Limited as the Inspectors are by the law, to the expenditure of a small sum for such purposes, it has not been practicable for them to carry out their views in this regard as far as they desired.

Among the males, services in the chapel once every Sunday, the funeral service performed in cases of death, and the distribution of the books of a tolerable library, are all that has yet been done in this matter. Among the females, however, the experiment has been more fully tried. In addition to the chapel and funeral services, and the library, they have the advantage of a Sunday school, and daily instruction by the matrons.

The benefits of the government introduced into that prison do not stop here. By producing in the minds of the convicts an impression that their welfare is cared for, that they are not helplessly lost, and that their efforts at reformation will be met by a kindly and an encouraging spirit, new aspirations after goodness are produced in them, new thoughts awakened, and new and better lives aimed at.

These improvements have, however, been adopted and carried on under very discouraging difficulties. The straitened circumstances of our finances forbid any large expenditure for books, and but for the untiring exertions of a benevolent lady, Miss Robbins, the prison would in a measure have been deprived of the great benefits they have derived from the use of them. And it is clearly demonstrated to us, that to the introduction of these books we owe much of the good order and cheerful industry which prevail.

This, however, in the opinion of the Inspectors, only the beginning of a work which ought to be completed; and they earnestly recommend that they be authorized to employ some competent teacher, whose whole time should be devoted to the task. If any inference can justly be drawn from experience in the female prison, it would be, in the increased order and industry of the prisoners, in a financial point merely, the most profitable investment that could be made of the money; while in the moral condition of the convicts, and the prospect of their future usefulness in life, it would be of incalculable advantage.

There is nothing novel in these suggestions, nor ought there to be found in them any thing to startle the most fastidious. It is only applying to the prisoners the same principles of government which we apply to the management of our families and the state.

In society the good are separated from the bad, not more by their conduct than by their fate, and the elevation which attends the former is not more inevitable or more just than the degradation which pursues the latter; and while it is in vain to expect to find good citizens among the ignorant, so it is equally vain to look for a cheerful obedience to the laws of the prison from those whose minds are uncultivated fields, filled only with rank and noxious weeds; whose present is a blank, whose past is the recollection of a life mispent, and whose future is a dread of the evil consequences flowing from it. And it will always be found to be a difficult task, indeed, to make good, honest, and intelligent

*Females
only*

members of society of those whose early life has been without instruction, and whose mature age shall be spent in a prison, where the only incentive to action is the exemption from punishment, and where the whole object of the rulers shall be to convert the subjects of their power into mere machines from whom the greatest possible amount of labour can be most easily extracted.

Although in a financial point of view the picture is thus dark, yet we are most happy to say, that where all was disorder and anarchy a year ago, all now is order, quiet, and good government. Great praise is due to the matron and assistant matrons of this prison, for the accomplishment of a work, which the undersigned, one year ago, deemed impossible.

To this must be added the gratifying fact, that while there were thirty-seven crimes or offences against discipline perpetrated during the first month of Mrs. F.'s administration, the whole number during the last twelve months was only forty.

These beneficial results have been produced by removing from these prisons the harsh features of the "Silent System," and substituting, in their stead, the milder measures and the moral appliances of the "Separate System." In both these prisons, within the last two years erections have been made, whereby solitary confinement is provided for as a means of punishment for offences in the prison. That this has been attended with happy effects, is evident from the following letter from the keeper at Sing Sing.

STATE PRISON, MOUST PLEASANT, Nov. 29th, 1845.

HON. JOHN W. EDMONDS:

Dear Sir:—Agreeably to your request, I proceed to inform you that since your official connexion with this institution has ceased, we have exerted our best efforts to carry out the same system of discipline that was introduced by yourself and colleagues nearly two years ago.

In the course of the last year, I have taken much pains in making myself acquainted with the peculiar character and dispositions of many of our inmates; and I have invariably found, where there is sufficient mind and principle to operate upon, kindness and gentleness, combined with a proper spirit of firmness, will do more to secure a cheerful obedience on the part of the convicts, than the infliction of the severest punishments.

I have been exceedingly interested in these interviews, and without them I am satisfied a prison cannot be properly and successfully governed. These conversations have been attended, I know, with the most beneficial results. It gives the convicts confidence and strength of mind, and is an incentive to a higher and a better state of feeling, which is almost sure to follow.

We have had a less number of violent outbreaks in prison within the last six months, than in the same length of time previously; and a majority of the convicts concerned in those violations, have been punished with solitary confinement, instead of using the lash; and I am constrained to believe that it is the most salutary mode of punishment that can be adopted on a majority of this depraved, and worst class of convicts.

There has been much sickness in our prison during the months of July, August, and September. The hot and dry weather, with bad and an insufficient supply of water, has had a tendency no doubt to increase the number of cases of disease, and to render those of an ordinary character more obstinate and difficult to cure. The health of the men at this time, is very good, having only about the usual number of men confined in the hospital. We hope to have the Croton water introduced into the prison by the 1st of June next; being now engaged in making the necessary excavations for that purpose, and believing that it will contribute very largely to the health of the institution.

Our convicts appear cheerful, perform their labours with assiduity, and I think I never saw their general conduct better than at the present time.

If it is possible for me to leave home on the 5th, I shall attend your anniversary meeting.

I am very respectfully yours,

HARMEN ELDRIDGE.

Thus, while others have been disputing about the relative merits of the two systems, the functionaries charged with their management have been gradually approaching each other, and laying the foundation for a system, which shall be national in its character; which shall possess the advantages of both, and be exempt from the evils of each; which shall ultimately deprive our prisons of their odious character of being places of torment, where it is to be at once a duty, as well as a pleasure, to inflict retributive pain directly upon their subjects; and invest them instead with that—so much more grateful to the wise and benevolent mind—of being green spots, where good will to man shall reign predominant, and come with healing on its wings, to lead repentant and erring man back to the paths of wisdom and virtue.

DISCHARGED CONVICTS.

In this department, the Executive Committee have been more successful, both as to the extent and the result of their efforts.

The great object was to prevent, as far as practicable, discharged prisoners from relapsing into crime, by securing them from the temptations of want, and affording them the means of obtaining an honest livelihood.

IN THE MALE DEPARTMENT, an office was obtained, in December last, at No. 13 Pine street, in order that a place might be provided where discharged prisoners could apply for aid, for succour, and for advice; and where they might be assured of receiving that assistance and cheering encouragement, which is so essential to their permanent reformation. To that end an agent was selected, whose business it was constantly to attend there, represent the Society in its beneficent purposes, and execute its intentions of affording discharged convicts the means of obtaining employment.

In June last, a place of resort for liberated FEMALE PRISONERS was established, denominated "The Home;" two matrons selected to take care of, and manage it, and a Committee of benevolent ladies organized to superintend and control its operations.

In these two establishments, 229 discharged prisoners have been relieved:—Males, 122, Females, 107.

This department has been the source of the greatest amount of the expenditures of the Association.

They have been as follows :

Rent of office for discharged convict Committee, -	\$70 00
Rent of "Home" for discharged females, - - -	125 00
Salary of Agent for males, - - - - -	273 00
Salaries of two Matrons for females, - - -	125 00
Clothing, furniture, and support of females at "The Home," - - - - -	1040 50
Advanced to and for males in providing for them board, or clothing, or tools, or otherwise assisting them to obtain employment, - - - - -	309 77
Total amount expended for discharged convicts, -	\$1943 27

Many of those who have come to us for aid, have been sustained by us for a while, until by their own efforts, encouraged by the kindly sympathy of our agent, they have been able to procure employment for themselves. For others, employment has been obtained through our instrumentality, and by the aid of tools which we have provided.

The whole number thus provided by us with places, has been,	
Of males, - - - - -	58
Of females, - - - - -	25
Total, - - - - -	83

So far as it is practicable, we make it our duty to keep run of these persons, and obtain from them and their employers accounts of their progress in the work of regeneration. We have thus certain and reliable reports of the continued good conduct of seventy of that number; a proportion beyond our expectations, and exceedingly encouraging to future efforts.

Aside from the temptations to which these poor creatures are subjected, by the evil associations into which they are frequently compelled, and the dangers they often incur from necessity and want; they suffer, beyond conception, the blighting effects of a feeling of despair, and the destroying influences of a conviction, in their own minds, that no man trusts them.

No one, unless he has witnessed the operation of this feeling, can form an adequate idea of its force and its influence; nor can any one, except from actual experience, justly conceive the extent of the benefits resulting from a display on the part of our officers, of a generous confidence in the sincerity of their repentance, and a cordial encouragement of their efforts at reformation.

We have thus ascertained that much good can be done, without much expenditure of time or money, the main draft being upon the kindly sympathies of our nature—a spring from which there ought to be a constant flow of living waters.

The greater part of the world, at least the unthinking part of it, are apt to look upon all convicted criminals in the same light, as utterly depraved—as hopelessly fallen. This is a sad mistake, as is demonstrated by the well-ascertained fact, that more than half the convicts discharged from our State Prisons, go and sin no more;—repent of the crimes they have committed, and, in despite of all obstacles, persevere in leading honest lives.

At this moment, of the 790 convicts in the State Prison at Sing Sing, there have been

Convicted for the first time, - - -	676
" " " second time, - - -	90
" " " third time, - - -	23
" " " fourth time, - - -	1

or only about one-seventh of the whole number who have been in prison before.

Those who unreflectingly take this view of the case, overlook the fact, that innocent persons are sometimes convicted and suffer the fate of the criminal, while they are deeply imbued with a greater abhorrence of the crime, even than of its consequences. They overlook, too, the important fact, that very many owe their fall to the overpowering influence of sudden temptation, against which, the degradation they suffer will, in all time to come, be an adequate protection; that others sink by reason of mental imbecility, which renders them powerless to resist the control of the stronger minds with which they come in contact; while there are some who tenant our prisons, who are more properly objects of compassion, by reason of the insanity, both mental and moral, with which they are afflicted.

Most of these may be reclaimed, and be led back into the paths of rectitude by proper treatment, by kind and judicious encouragement; or they may, by a harsh and unrelenting world, be plunged irremediably into the stream of crime.

It would be swelling this paper beyond all reasonable bounds, to detail here all the cases of this character which fall under our observation. A few instances will enable all to know what sort of minds may sometimes be found enduring a felon's doom, and

what capacities for good may be lifted out of the despair and degradation into which they have sunk.

G—N— lost his father early in life, and finding himself a burden upon his widowed mother and elder sister, he came to this city, from Boston, in the expectation of procuring employment. Not succeeding very well, he fell into bad company, and being of a yielding temper, he was led on, step by step, until he sank into the abyss of crime, and at the early age of twenty became known throughout our city as Boston Frank, one of the most gentlemanly and adroit of pickpockets.

During the first part of his absence from home, his letters to his mother and sister were frequent and affectionate. But they soon fell off, and finally ceased altogether. For several years his family heard nothing of him. At first they thought he had gone to sea, but finally mourned over him as dead, until his sister received a hint, which induced her to think that a worse fate had befallen him. She came on to this city, and, after a long search, found him in the State Prison, under a feigned name. She was indefatigable in her exertions until she effected his release, and procured employment for him. He has now been eighteen months out of prison, conducts himself well, and bids fair to make an honest citizen. The following letters from the sister tell the story.

Dec. 6, 1844.

DEAR SIR:

I must apologise for not having written to you sooner; according to my promise, I should have done so, but I have been very much occupied in fitting out my poor brother for his re-entrance into the world, and besides, I have been quite sick a great part of the time since I saw you. I brought him with me to —, where he remained with me a month. At the end of that time, his health and mind were very much improved. My kind friend, Rev. Mr. —, procured him a situation with a very worthy man, a Mr. —, who has a Woolen Manufactory in —. He has constant employment, and if he evinces any mechanical genius, he will have an opportunity of learning a good trade. I have heard from him twice since he went there, and received very encouraging accounts. My younger brother came on to — to see him, and the meeting between the two brothers was affecting in the extreme. I trust it was a lesson to them both. G— showed great affection for his brother, and also manifested very strong susceptibility of religious impressions, caused from you, and from the grateful acknowledgments for the kindness I have rendered you the most grateful and invaluable services you have rendered me. My mother particularly desires to send her warmest and most heartfelt thanks. She constantly blesses your name with grateful thanksgiving to the Almighty, and will ever remember you in her prayers. I hope I may at some future time, again have the happiness of meeting you and your amiable family. You will please remember me kindly to them all, and believe me, dear sir, to remain most respectfully and affectionately,

Your obliged friend,
MARY ANN N—.

1845
1845]

—, July 28, 1845.

HONOURABLE DEAR SIR:

When I returned home after an absence of some weeks, my mother informed me that you had called on the very day that I left Boston with my brother. I cannot sufficiently express to you my thanks for your kindness in calling, nor my regret at not having seen you. I would have written sooner to acknowledge your goodness, but have been prevented by indisposition of body, as well as incessant care of mind and occupation. I regretted, exceedingly, that we should have missed seeing you; I am sure you would have been both astonished and pleased at the very great improvement which has taken place in my brother's appearance since you saw him. He is very much changed indeed. He is doing very well in —, and his employer likes him very well. I think he still betrays some imbecility of mind, caused, I think, from his long and painful confinement, and I sometimes fear that he will never regain his mental faculties; but his situation is rendered so comfortable, and my mind comparatively so happy, that I constantly return grateful thanks to my heavenly Father, and fervent prayer for you, dear sir, by whose benevolent exertions this favourable change has been brought about. I should have written to Ex-Governor Bouck, but I did not know his address since he left Albany. Will you, dear sir, if you have an opportunity, inform me how to address him?

It is possible that business may call me to New York, in the course of a few weeks; if so, I shall afford myself the very great gratification of calling to see them. With the most heartfelt gratitude, and highest respect I remain, dear honourable sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

MARY A. N—.

J— F— M—, was a man of a good deal of intellect, and energy of mind. He had been sent to State Prison for horse stealing, and was the leader of mischief, wherever he chanced to be. Overcome by the persevering kindness of the officers of the prison, he at length made up his mind to reform. He changed the whole course of his conduct in prison, and on his release, came to our Agent with the strongest recommendations. He was aided to get into business, by money, which was freely advanced to him. He soon from his earnings returned the money so loaned him, and at the last accounts, was continuing his course of honest living.

It was worth while to see how happy he was, when he returned the money he had received from our Agent.

G— W—, had been a sailor and a pirate, and for the three first years of his imprisonment, had gloried in his capacity to set all authority at defiance, and to endure, without yielding, any punishment which could be inflicted upon him. During that whole period, he was in a continual state of war upon his overseer. An entire change in the manner of treating him was adopted. He was reasoned with and dealt kindly by, and as complete a change came over him. For the remaining eighteen months of his confinement, he was a pattern of good order and obedience. At the

end of his sentence, a place was obtained, and money advanced to assist him in his outfit. He has returned part of the advance, out of his earnings, and it is believed he will continue in his efforts at obtaining an honest livelihood; because it is evident that he has at length, and for the first time in his life, learned the lesson of self-control.

— was educated to the ministry, and admitted to orders. He was an accomplished scholar, had a family, and was advantageously settled. In an evil hour he yielded to temptation and sinned. He was sentenced to the State Prison for a long period, but through the intercession of his wife was pardoned. Ten years have now elapsed since his release, during the whole of which period his conduct has been above reproach.

After the organization of our Society he called on the chairman of the Executive Committee, and made his case known; in order, as he said, to encourage our efforts, and to afford us in his example living evidence, that all the inmates of the State Prisons were not hopelessly and irretrievably fallen.

Charles F. Mitchell's case is too well known to render the suppression of his name necessary, or to require from us any explanation, beyond what he himself gives in his letters.

— O., Dec. 17, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR:

I had intended writing you some time since, but concluded to defer it until the close of our Autumn business, when I could speak more definitely of my operations, prospects, &c. Seeing your name, however, connected with the proceedings of a public meeting recently held in your great city for the reform of prisoners and prisons, I could not feel easy without saying to you a few words; though I must defer much that I would like to communicate, to the opportunity I hope soon to have, of a personal interview. I feel that it will be unnecessary for me to assure you how deeply interested I feel in the movement you have made for the welfare of prisoners, and you may rely upon my humble aid to the full extent of my means, which are not great, to be sure, at present, in furthering the object of your Association. Certainly, no higher—more noble—more truly Christian or benevolent enterprise, could engage the attention of either the philanthropist, or the Christian, than the one you have embarked in. It is not a mere abstraction your Association is in pursuit of, but an immediate, practicable, and tangible good—one they can reach, and one that will be felt by thousands of most unfortunate human beings. But few think of the poor prisoner; still fewer have any sympathy for his wretched fate, any regard for his sufferings, or heed what befalls him. A mark is fixed upon them which they feel can never be wiped out. From the moment they pass the terrible threshold, their fate is fixed. The ties of friendship, the world's esteem, and even hope itself, are no more his—for ever wretched is the prisoner's lot. They feel keenly all this, for they cannot take a step but they are reminded of it by the world. Is it then at all to be wondered that so few, so very few, of those once imprisoned, ever rise to usefulness? A person that can rise, with such a weight, must possess a good deal more than an ordinary mind, and a

double share of that kind of philosophy which enables a man to meet unmoved the world's disdain; to possess within his own bosom the elements of true greatness, unheeded of the "proud man's contumely." I am aware that no man ever had less to encounter in this way than myself, but still I am often placed in situations which require all my fortitude to meet. But then my case is an exception; I have at once succeeded in establishing myself in a large, honourable, and lucrative business. I have a thorough business education, and withal, possess a great deal of industry, and have many steadfast friends who believe me to have been largely dealt by, more sinned against than sinning, while none believe me to have ever committed deliberate wrong. Then, too, my previous reputation and standing come to my aid. But how is it with the thousands otherwise sinned? They have no education to fall back upon, no friends to cheer them or to aid them, but on the contrary, every face is set against them; they are unseen objects of suspicion; no one respects them, and they very soon cease to respect themselves! Now, if any thing can be done to help this class of persons, it is worthy of every good man's attention. The great point is to impress upon the prisoner's mind the idea, that he can rise if he only makes up his mind to act wisely, to inspire him with feelings of sanguine hope. This is the great point, for I know, from my own observation, that they all believe themselves to be for ever proscribed. Very many, I know, nothing can be done for; but the great object is, when there is good material, to return them to their true vigour. Care should always be observed, if possible, to preserve to the prisoners a proper self-respect; they should always be treated as if they were men; be made to feel that a real interest was taken in their fate, that there was hope for them. I could wish that some other equally effective mode of punishment could be devised than *whipping*. I am very certain that it has an evil tendency. The person who is once whipped, publicly stripped and lashed, feels that he is degraded past all recovery; that he is treated only as the beast of the field. I am aware of the difficulty in finding any thing so effective in keeping the disorderly under proper subjection. But I would suggest, whether, for all the minor infractions of the discipline, some plan could not be devised that would answer. How would a system of classification answer? See Class No. 1, to be entitled to such privileges, and so on to the lowest grade.

The plan of giving to persons when discharged, but \$2, not enough to take them home, is horrible. What can they do? They should be provided with sufficient to carry them to their friends, if they have any, and if not, to such point as they desire to go to. And they should be urged to go away from the larger towns—or from their former haunts of vice and crime—to remote but associations. But when I see you, I will have much to say. I expect to visit Boston, on business, and I will do myself the great pleasure to call upon you. My business is good, large, and lucrative. I am surrounded with every blessing. My credit and means are ample for conducting my business efficiently, and I enjoy the unlimited confidence of all with whom my position has brought me in contact. I give steady employment to about twelve hands, at good wages, and have disbursed daily, for the last three months, an average of \$3.50. My hopes were never stronger, my prospects never brighter, my means of happiness never more secure;—thanks to my friends, of whom you are the first. My dear mother is with me, and we are all in good health. She desires to present her love to you, and to your wife. I shall be in your city, probably, about the 1st of February; in the meantime I hope to hear from you. Remember me to friends at Sing Sing.

Yours, truly,
C. F. MITCHELL.

HONORA SHEPARD, is another case of equal notoriety. Her husband was in the State Prison, in New Jersey. His mother, and two of his brothers, were in the same prison with her, and

a great part of her life had been spent among rogues. So that it seemed as if her doom was a felon's life, and a felon's death. But the intelligent and enlightened matrons at the prison, thought they saw in her the dawn of a reformation. They procured her release, encouraged her in her desire to avoid for ever the society in which her early life had been spent, and assisted her in removing far away from her past associates.

The following letter from the excellent lady under whose care she left this part of the country, shows, not only the excellence of her present conduct, but also affords the most encouraging hope in regard to her efforts at reformation.

— September 8th.

"MY DEAR SIR: Pardon me for not having ere this fulfilled my promise, of keeping you personally acquainted with the welfare of Honora and myself. As it is, you are already aware of all that has transpired in regard to us, since we left New York, through our various friends, and will kindly attribute to the unexpected obstacles we met with this seeming want of courtesy. All the writing I have done since my arrival here has been in answer to letters received, and that with considerable reluctance. Two weeks since I wrote to Gov. Wright for the first time, and have no doubt he will feel assured by my statements as to Honora, and his own wisdom in pardoning her. She is now at ———, working at dress-making, though most of her time here has been given to assisting in the household department of the friends she stayed with. Now, however, I believe she can have steady work, which is very desirable; but one cannot obtain firm footing in a strange place immediately. She commands the respect and interest of all with whom she is connected, especially because there is no *fritillity* about her. I hear from her continually, and have by me quite a pile of her letters. If you could see some of them you would certainly be convinced of her good intentions, and return to her *native* simplicity of character. If she does not hear from me at the rate of once a week, then comes such a pitiful lamentation, signifying that unless I send words of cheer, the loneliness of life in a strange country will prove too oppressive. Be assured, sir, by one who knows Honora intimately, that she is a good, industrious, improving woman, and that with her there is no looking back. She speaks of yourself and family with earnest gratitude and respect. As she has the greatest horror of meeting any of her old associates, it is desirable on this account, as well as others, that her location remain unknown.

Yours very truly,

GEORGIANA BRUCE.

S — G. H. —, after serving three years in the State Prison, came to our agent with the warmest recommendations from the chaplain and keeper. He is evidently a young man of superior

attainments, and his case is mentioned in order to introduce in this connexion a letter from him, which may in truth be denominated the "*convict's own appeal.*"

NEW YORK, 11th month 19th, 1845.

RESPECTED SIR:—Amid the arduous duties which your judicial calling devolve upon you, you may probably deem it presumptuous in me to trespass upon your time and attention; but the kind manner in which you received me a few evenings ago, when you favoured me with a brief interview, encourages me to leave a few lines for your perusal, together with the recommendatory letters which I brought from Mt. Pleasant, and which you at that time directed me to bring to you. You will also find a letter from my brother, by which you will learn I am in expectation of funds; but, notwithstanding that, I am anxious to meet with employment, if it be only for a few weeks, as it is painful for me to reflect that I am dependant upon the Prison Association for my present subsistence; and if you could be instrumental in procuring me work of the most menial kind, I should feel obliged, and use every endeavour to prove myself a worthy object of your attention. Were it only for a few weeks, I should be glad, as I intend going into business for myself when I receive my remittance; and while thus obliging me, you would, I trust, be adding a gem to that crown of rejoicing which is promised to those who succeed the destitute, and seek to lead, in the silken bonds of love, the poor wanderer to his heavenly Father's home. O, sir, if there be a creature that has more claim than another upon the sympathies of humanity; if there is a being who feels more keenly than another the contumely of an uncharitable world, it must be he who, after having strayed from the paths of integrity and virtue;—who, after having suffered with calm resignation the punishment due to his crimes; and who, after having penitently mourned over them in secret,—is ushered out into society to contend with temptation and difficulty, imagining that every eye he meets detects his disgrace, and that every person he converses with is ready to triumph over him in the language of execration, or to envince a want of confidence in those laudable resolutions he may have formed. 'Tis vain, I know, to dwell with regret upon the past; the present is painful, and were it not for a transient ray of hope that throws a brightness over the future, I should frequently be led to lament my departure from that asylum where so many opportunities of mental improvement were afforded me, and where I believe I can say I have passed some of the most peaceful and happy hours of my existence. Already I owe you a debt of gratitude—I have been morally and physically benefited by your labours of love in that place; and it was from your lips that I caught an expression which first induced me to substitute a calm and solid deliberation, for that fitful and inefficacious remorse, which too many of the inmates of that prison are accustomed to foster; and I hope yet to have an opportunity of proving to the world, that if the unfortunate captive has a *green spot upon his heart that can be cultivated*—if he has a mind stamped with the energies of the Deity, and formed for immortality, that he has there an opportunity of forming virtuous habits and principles, of refining the moral sensibilities, and of improving his intellectual capacities to a greater extent than the majority of the reflecting part of community are accustomed to imagine.

Herewith I have enclosed two or three of some hundred poems which I composed at my work-bench, or in the retirement of my cell, when nothing was heard but the muffled step of the sentinel, broken at intervals perchance impetuous, when no philosophy can humanize, no religion reclaim, and no charity soften."

When I first entered the State Penitentiary, my mind, destitute of reflection, like a pile without inhabitant, was running to ruin; the streams of gospel privileges, by which, from my childhood, I had been conducted, had lost their sweetness; the counsels of a righteous father were almost forgotten, and the had lost their influence. But ere long I had been a tenant of the felon's home,

* In order to show what minds may be found in the prison-house of the two of the pieces composed by this person, while in confinement, are inserted here:—

THE CONVICT TO HIS BIBLE.

Heaven's best and dearest treasure,
Record of the great I Am,
Source of comfort, source of pleasure,
Ever flowing, healing balm.

Are you in affliction cradled?
Thou canst make the litter sweet,
And by thy support enabled,
Human ills we calmly meet.

Thou the sin-sick soul can lighten
When the clouds of darkness lower;
And with cheerful smiles can brighten
Death—cold death's approaching hour.

Atheists may mock and jeer thee,
But the time will surely come
When thine enemies shall hear thee
Read the sentence of their doom.

TO MY SISTER ON HER BIRTH DAY.

Thy birth day, with the opening year,
Again is come, my sister dear;
But oh! it comes not as of old,
With smiling friends, and bliss untold,
To smooth life's rugged way;
It comes to tell of pleasures fled,
Of happy faces long since dead;
Of kind companions, loved, adored,
Who gathered round our fragrant board,
To cheer the passing day.

It comes to tell of seasons bright,
Which have not been improved aright;
Of fancied griefs, which, if compared,
Were joys, with those I've lately shared,
For such but few have felt:
I hear it speak of hopes decayed,
Of man, confiding man betrayed,
By one who murmured at the breast
When they thy own young lips were preat,
And at the same lap knelt.

Beacon light of man's salvation
Guardian of domestic bands!
Prest fortress of our nation—
Rock on which our freedom stands!

Went thou banished from our border,
In our homes no longer read,
Rapine, last, and foul disorder
D'er Columbia's vales would spread.

Home would lose its sweet communion,
Fireside altars be o'erturned,
All that elevates our union
With contemptuous coldness spurned.

Intellectual flowers would languish,
Poisoned be the springs of peace,
And, unmoved by human anguish,
True benevolence would cease.

In one lone thought a joy I find,
Which tends to soothe my troubled mind,
Which triumphs o'er all minor grief,
And in its store affords relief,
Has balm for wounds like mine:
Though changed to "in all things else appear,
One heart there is that's still sincere;
And beats as fondly as in hours
When home was strewn with childhood's
Flowers:

That heart—that heart is thine.

One faithful friend! her worth I feel;
One soul devoted to my weal,
One voice that never gave me pain,
Except when weeping o'er my chain
Forged by a single wrong:
But hark those agonizing cries,
And wipe those tearful from thine eyes;
Forget the past, and bear in mind,
The present is for good designed,
And such will prove ere long.

and felt those painful pangs which vicissitude inflicted upon me, my sins were brought to my remembrance; and with them the realizing conviction that God required what was past. Reason chased from its throne the grosser passions; my meditations pointed to the memory of better days; like a death-knell in my startled ear, a parent's slighted warnings rang; and out of the mazy portals of the tomb that shields a mother's sacred dust, would open afresh, and from its gloomy shades, in midnight dreams, her injured soul would rise and chide me for my bygone crimes; until the sealed up fountains of the heart proclaimed, in streams of copious tears, that mighty change, o'er which the high intelligences of brighter worlds rejoice, and sweep their golden harps in pure, ecstatic strains. My incarceration has been a painful, but I hope my future life will prove it a salutary, affliction; privation has learned me how to appreciate the blessings

Where am I now? How changed the scene! The star of hope begins to rise,
Among the meanest of the mean, (And eild the long o'erclouded sky can know
Mixed with the scum of every isle, (With brighter beams than those they know
Whose ardent soul and treacherous smile (Who have not felt a kinder woe,
Would fain their like beget: (And wore the captive's link:
Yes, some are fends, who'd build their creed (Before the year has run its race
On human skulls, nor shrink to feed (I'll hasten to thy fond embrace,
Their cravings at the crimson tide (And in a long—long hallowed kiss,
Fresh flowing from a brother's side— (My full reality of bliss
With such I'm now beate. (Again, as erst, I drank.

THE CONVICT SON TO HIS MOTHER.

O weep not for me, though ashamed and degraded,
O shed not a tear that is pregnant with pain;
Though health's rose hue from my cheeks may have faded,
Reveal not a wish to unrivet my chain;
Although from the sire who was wont to caress me,
And far from thyself for a season I'm torn,
Yet spare thine emotions, and do not distress me
By thinking the son of thy bosom forlorn.

Though keen the affliction, methinks we have reason
To own as a blessing the chastening rod;
The dark hour of grief has to me been the season
Of faith in the promised forgiveness of God:
A refuge I've found at the feet of that Saviour
Thou often besought me in youth to adore;
And cheered by his smile, and made glad by his favour,
The gloom, once oppressive, remains so no more.

That volume, whose truths I was ever assailing,
Whose precepts I mocked at when out of thy sight,
I've found it a fountain of joy never failing,
A casket of gems everlastingly bright.
Sometimes to my breast I have clasped it, exclaiming,
Thou heaven's best boon shall henceforth be my guide,
Since joy, bliss, and glory, yea, all that's worth naming,
'Tis thine, through all ages, blest book, to provide

And nature's fair features, which long I neglected,
Are now with a thousand bright images strew'd,
And voices, where nothing of song was detected,
Alike with a magical softness endued:
The beautiful Hudson that by me is flowing,
Its green-wooded mountains, its beautiful bay,
And fleets of small craft through its bright waters plunging,
All serve in their turn to excite a lay.

The song of that bird on my window-bar seated,
The cricket, whose chirp I hear all the night long,
Meet much the same welcome as though I were greeted
In language of kindness, by some friendly tongue.

of life; and I am well aware there are many within those walls who can adopt the language of Peter, when witnessing, on Tabor's verdant summit, the transfiguration of his Master: "*It is good for me to be here.*" and if ecstatic joy can fill the sainted Howard's breast, bending o'er the diamond minarets of glory, attentive listener to the captive's mournful cry; it is when he beholds the human efforts now in operation for the amelioration of that part of our unhappy race, whose miseries and privations enlisted through life the energies and sympathies of this good and great benefactor of the world.

I am, in conclusion, your humble and obedient servant,

SAMUEL HANSON.

N. B. As Mr. Hopper is anxious to file his letters, I will be obliged if you will return me the enclosed recommendations when I call upon you, which may probably be to-morrow.

FEMALE DEPARTMENT.

The transactions in this department, are so well detailed in the Report of the Executive Committee of the ladies, as to render a notice of them in this place necessarily brief.

In the case of male convicts, there was no difficulty in providing temporary places of residence for them, until employment could be procured. But it was far otherwise with females. It became, therefore, absolutely necessary that a temporary "Home" should be provided. This involved the expense of hiring and furnishing a house, and employing one or more matrons to superintend it. It involved also, together with the want of funds, considerable delay, so that it was not until the month of June last, that "The Home" was opened for the reception of subjects. Since that time, it has afforded relief to 107 females; the number of inmates is now 28, and has exceeded 20 for several months.

The gay little flower through the gravel-bed peeping,
Whose useful monitions I always reverse,
Ever points to the grave where my brothers are sleeping,
And those lovely blossoms oft wet with a tear.

The sun in its glory at even declining,
The pale star of morn with its tremulous blaze,
The beautiful moon, at the midnight hour shining,
And gilding my cell with its silvery rays;—
All seem to be moved by some kindly emotion,
To soothe my condition they all seem inclined,
And serve to engender the warmest devotion,
When viewed through the grating by which I'm confined.

O deem not my home an asylum of sorrow—
There's joy to be found in a region like this,
So long as thy son from misfortune can borrow
A lustre that lights up the future with bliss.
My crimes are forgotten, my sins are forgiven,
My hopes are all anchored where thine have long been;
And mother, dear mother, I'll meet thee in heaven,
When sweetly redeemed from this transitive scene.

SAMUEL HANSON.

There are other difficulties, which have attended this experiment.

In the case of male convicts, we have experienced less difficulty in procuring employment, because our agent exacting from the applicants certificates of their good behaviour in prison, and testimonials from the officers of the prisons, that evidences of repentance and reformation had been displayed during confinement, he was able to afford them suitable recommendations at once.

It is so, also, in regard to females discharged from the State Prison. The admirable manner in which that institution at Sing Sing is conducted, relieves us from all embarrassment, in this respect, in regard to their inmates.

It is far otherwise with the females in the City Prison, and in the Penitentiary at Blackwell's Island. At those places, with the exception of one matron at the City Prison, there is no person who seems to know, or care any thing about their moral condition.

It therefore becomes necessary that the females received into "The Home," from either of those prisons, should remain some time with us, until the ladies of the Committee shall be able to judge, from personal observation, as to the sincerity of their repentance and the prospect of good behaviour.

These considerations necessarily very much enhance the expense of this department of our Association.

It has already cost us over \$1500, and our limited means have compelled us to curtail very materially the sphere of our operations in this respect, and to confine our efforts, as in the male department, to those who are convicted of crime. This excludes the large class of females, who are committed as vagrants, drunkards, and disorderly persons, who constitute by far the largest portion of the female inmates of those prisons; and among whom, we well know, very many may be found, who can be saved from the consequences of their own conduct, and what is equally important, from the injurious consequences of being subjected to the contamination of our prisons.

So free is the intercourse among the inmates of those prisons, and so effectually is the contamination of evil communication encouraged, nay, insured and enforced by the manner in which they are organized; that it is to us a matter of great doubt, whether it would not be better for an innocent female to be consigned at once to a brothel, than to be confined in either of those

prisons. In the former case, she would at least enjoy the advantage of being able to fly from the approach of corruption, at her pleasure.

But according to existing practices, females who have committed crimes, who are drunkards, disorderly, or vagrants, or who are diseased, and aim at a hospital for relief, are confined together, without distinction as to age or moral condition, and sometimes to the number of seven hundred, and never less than four hundred.

When they come from prison, it is impossible for our Committee of ladies to obtain any thing like a satisfactory account of their penitence, or their intentions to reform. To receive all into "The Home" is impracticable, and to discriminate, is equally difficult.

To carry out the objects of our Society in reference to this class of prisoners, will require of us as a duty, to counteract and remedy the ills which our city authorities inflict upon them with so unsparing a hand. This is an important and interesting duty, and one that we would fain perform; but the odds are greatly against us, by reason of the direction which is taken by the full force of the civil authorities.

It can, however, be done, and the effort will be made. But before it can be successful, we apprehend that we shall be compelled to bespeak the patience of our contributors, and the generous support of the public; and we hope soon to be able so to extend the operations of this department, as to embrace within it all the female inmates of our prisons, whatever the cause of their commitment, whenever they shall afford reasonable prospect of reformation.

The Executive Committee cannot conclude their notice of this department, without expressing their hearty concurrence in all that is said by the ladies as to the appointment of matrons in our prisons.

It is to us matter of astonishment, that so obvious a dictate of humanity and good sense should have been so much neglected; and it would seem that our city authorities are retrograding, rather than advancing, in this respect. Not long since, matrons were appointed in both our City Prisons. Their number was inadequate to the whole task before them; yet, limited as it was, the good that was wrought out by their means was immediately manifest, and was much beyond expectation. Yet, before the experiment could be fairly tried, an alteration was made, and the

matrons were mostly withdrawn; so that the several hundreds of females who crowd our prisons continually full, in addition to the mutual contamination to which they are subjected, are consigned to the harsh, irritating, and injurious domination of male keepers.

It surely cannot be necessary to enter into a course of reasoning upon this subject. All experience demonstrates the utility, in a prison for females, of officers of the same sex. And if aught were wanting to work conviction of this truth upon every mind, the admirable results of the experiment at Sing Sing, where the government has been intrusted to the hands of intelligent, educated, and benevolent females, would be enough. There are a thousand avenues to the female heart, which females alone can find, and they must be found and travelled, before the dawns of a new life can be hoped.

As facts are more effective than any speculation, the Committee will be pardoned for inserting the following letters, from two of the assistant matrons at Sing Sing.

Mount Pleasant Female Prison, July 10, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I promised to give you some account of the manner in which we spent the Fourth, but I have been unable to do so till this time. At a meeting of the Board of Inspectors, held in June, the assistant matrons obtained their permission to furnish the convicts, under their charge, with an addition to their usual bill of fare, on the then approaching anniversary of our nation's independence.

There had been a marked and decided improvement in their conduct, during the three months they had been under our care; and we wished to give them some united expression of our approbation, and to show that we appreciated their respectful bearing towards ourselves.

Mr. Edmonds, President of the Board of Inspectors, desired to unite in this common expression of interest, and accordingly sent each of the seventy-three women a fresh and beautiful bouquet of flowers. On the morning of the Fourth these were placed in their cells, before breakfast. They passed their time previous to the morning meal, in walking in the garden, and reading in the shop. They were informed that they would find a present in their cells; and I can give but a faint idea of the kindling of the eye, and the lighting of the whole countenance, at this announcement. They marched quietly to their places, all eager to know what they would find; and by the time the matrons were on the galleries, every woman stood in her cell door with her flowers in her hand; and the whispered thanks, and the earnest "God bless you!" broke upon our ears at every step.

They remained in their cells only long enough for breakfast, and were again taken to the shop while we could prepare food for the day, and distribute the currants, figs, and candy we designed to give them. When all was ready, they were assembled in the chapel, each carrying her flowers in her hand, and looking more cheerful and happy than I had ever seen them before.

Mrs. Farnham, the principal matron, being absent, it devolved on me to address to them a few remarks, expressive of our interest in their comfort, and approbation of their conduct. I endeavoured to impress on their minds the importance of forming habits of self-government here, that they might be better prepared to resist the temptations they would meet in society, and be better

able to control the adverse circumstances to which they might be exposed when released from their present confinement; I endeavoured to show them the influence their conduct here would exert on their future success in life. Many of them were much affected, and gave evidence of deep but suppressed feeling. I wished to speak to them kindly but earnestly, and found my own sympathies so strongly excited at the time, that it was only by effort that I could control my own emotions. I read to them the following communication from Mr. Edmonds:

This is my contribution to assist the females in the prison to celebrate the Fourth of July. I wish them to receive it as a testimonial of my approbation of their general good conduct. It shall remind them of the misfortunes which forbid them the enjoyment of the beauties of nature which surround them, let it also remind them that He who is all benevolence and goodness, while he has conferred on man alone, of all the creatures he has made, the power of knowing and choosing between good and evil, has so formed our minds, that in every situation, and under every circumstance, virtue is sure of its reward, and vice of its punishment; and that in all the productions of nature, and in our capacity to enjoy them, we are taught the lesson that goodness and virtue are most certain instruments of happiness.

I wish the large bouquet, which has my name attached to it, to be given to her who shall be regarded as most amiable among the females. I should like to have the selection made by the females themselves, subject to the approval of the matrons. Thus I shall be able to discern, how well they understand what it is that forms the character which we most love and regard; for nothing is more true than this, that while we struggle against the power of genius, beauty, and fascination, we yield, without reluctance, to the charms of an amiable heart.

July 3, 1844.

J. W. EDMONDS.

I reminded them of the deep interest Mr. Edmonds had manifested in their welfare, and the general welfare of the Institution, and the full confidence he felt that they would choose such a person to receive the bouquet as we should all approve.

Miss Knox, who was acting in place of the principal matron, then requested them to nominate one of their number whom they thought most deserving. Many voices instantly said Mary Smalley, and as many as approved were requested to raise the right hand; the vote seemed unanimous. Miss Knox gave the flowers to Mary Smalley, and the assistants expressed their approval of their choice. They were then told that we had another large bouquet, and wished to name one of their number whom we desired should receive it, and solicited their approval of our choice; Jane Bacon was nominated, and almost every woman instantly rose from her seat, and most of them were affected even to tears. Jane was presented with the bouquet, and seeming quite overcome by the "honour unexpected," received it with tears of gratitude, kissing it devoutly, and the hand that presented it. I have never witnessed among them a manifestation of such deep and correct feeling, such genuine, yet subdued emotion. They were then dismissed to their rooms, with the assurance that the best expression of gratitude they could render, was by their good conduct, and remaining perfectly quiet through the day.

The effect of this little experiment has been manifested in their more quiet and gentle movements, and in the softened and subdued tones of their voices, and in their ready and cheerful obedience. It has deepened my conviction that, however degraded by sin, or hardened by outrage and wrong, while reason maintains its empire over the mind, there is no heart so callous or obdurate, that the voice of kindness and sympathy may not reach it, or so utterly debased, as to give no response to the tones of Christian love and benevolence.

Respectfully yours,

MARY ANN W. JOHNSON.

The fourth of July that I spent in the Female Prison at Mount Pleasant, was one of the most delightful days I have ever passed; delightful, because I had the satisfaction of seeing the efforts we had, for the two or three months

previously been making for the improvement of the unfortunate inmates, followed with success.

It was worth any sacrifice we had made, to see the bright gleam of "hope" awakened in their darkened souls, to see such indications as led us to believe that they would make the effort to break the strong hand which had so long held them in dreadful bondage, and rise once more to virtue and happiness.

At the meeting of the "Board of Inspectors" in June, we applied for permission to give them a little treat for that day, which request was kindly granted by them. Mr. Edmonds, the President, united with us, and gave two baskets of flowers, enough to furnish each of the seventy-two women with a beautiful bouquet. On the morning of the "fourth," these were sent to their cells, while they were engaged walking in the large yard adjoining the prison, and reading in the workshop. They marched quietly to their respective cells, and when I came on to the gallery, each stood at her grated door, with bright and happy face, and the softly whispered thanks, and the murmured "God bless you!" fell sweetly on my ear. They remained in but a short time, and were again taken to the shop while the necessary arrangements were made for the day, and the fruit, candy, and milk, we had provided for them, were sent around.

This being done, we assembled them in the chapel, and it was pleasant to see them, each with her flowers in her hand, her countenance beaming with love and gratitude, and all so peaceful and quiet.

Mrs. Farnham was absent, and as it was the first day of the kind we had spent here, we felt some anxiety as to the result.

Mrs. Johnson addressed them kindly and affectionately, telling them of the deep interest we felt in their improvement, and urging the importance of their cultivating, while here, such habits of self-government and love towards one another, as should prepare them to overcome the temptations they would again meet on going out into the world, and also fit them for the society of the good and virtuous.

They were deeply affected, and I doubt whether any one, however hardened or degraded, could have witnessed the scene without genuine feeling.

Mrs. J. then read the letter from Mr. Edmonds.

Miss Knox then wished them to name one to receive this bouquet, and Mary Smalley was instantly nominated, and received an almost unanimous vote. The selection was approved, and she was presented with the flowers. Miss Knox said, as there was still another bunch, she wished to choose one, to be approved of by them. She named Jane Bacon, and every woman instantly rose from her seat. Bacon was nearly overcome, by this general testimony in her favour. She, bathed in tears, received the flowers, kissing the hand that presented them.

After this, Mrs. J. spoke particularly to these two, telling them of the responsibility they had incurred, in having been thus chosen, as the "most amiable," and the many reasons why they should ever after maintain the character that had this day been awarded them.

She also reminded them of what Mrs. Farnham had told them, when she first came among them, that we all come to do them good; and nothing on our part should be spared, to render them assistance, and counsel, and confirm the good resolutions they should make, and thus enable them to become what woman was destined to be here, and be prepared for that inheritance, beyond this world, where temptation never more allures, and sin never enters.

The effect of this day's scenes, are now to be seen in their kind and respectful bearing towards ourselves, and a softened, gentle manner towards each other; thus proving, that no heart is so callous, no woman so degraded, but she may be reached by kindness and love; and by placing them in contact with superior minds, as an under-spiritual influence, they must become better. And I fully believe, the influence of this day, combined with the efforts before and since, will be felt long after it shall have become one of the dim memories of the past.

SARAH S. MALLORY.

Mount Pleasant, July 28, 1844.

In conclusion, the Executive Committee deem it proper briefly to recapitulate what they have done the past year, and what they propose to do the ensuing year.

They have received about \$3000 in donations of money and articles:

With this amount, they have established an agency, and an office for male convicts, where 122 persons have been relieved:

They have also established a "Home" for females, where 107 have been received, and which has now 28 inmates:

They have found places and employment for 83 persons, from most of whom good accounts continue to be received:

They have attended to the cases of 80 boys, and restored 48 of them to their parents and friends:

They have attended to the cases of several, who have been arrested on suspicion of crime,

And have procured the release of six, who were confined for debt.

They propose to employ an agent, whose whole time shall be devoted to the cause of those who are arrested and detained for trial on criminal charges:

An agent, whose duty it shall be to take care of discharged convicts, and procure them employment:

And an agent, who shall travel through the state, seeking contributions, establishing auxiliaries, and diffusing information as to our purposes, and the public wants.

They propose, also, to continue the establishment of "The Home" for the reception of females, and enlarge its sphere of usefulness:

To have a thorough inspection of the County Prisons of our state, to the end that their evils, being known, may be redressed:

And, finally, to establish a workhouse, for the reception and detention of those who, not yet criminal, are fast verging towards crime, and whose salvation, or fall, will depend upon the manner in which they may be treated.

The Committee are fully aware, that this is a wide-extended field, which is thus spread out before them; but cheered by the generous support they have already experienced, and encouraged by the success which has thus far attended their efforts, they are ready to enter upon the task, with an abiding confidence, that while the labourers will not be few, the harvest indeed will be great.

By order of the Executive Committee,

J. W. EDMONDS, *Chairman*.

REPORT

OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

In presenting the first annual statement of the finances of the "New York Prison Association," the Committee charged with that department have to congratulate the friends of the institution, upon the *great favour and encouragement* it has met with from almost all classes of their fellow-citizens. With no great effort, but with a simple statement of its object, their appeals, with but few exceptions, have been most generously responded to, in a spirit which evinces a deep interest in the success of the enterprise, and leaves but little doubt that it will be most liberally and cheerfully sustained.

The Treasurer's report is herewith annexed. The donations received from various individuals, since the organization of the Society, amount to \$1957 01

And the disbursements to - - - - - 1953 72

Leaving a balance in the treasury of - - - - - \$3 29

A list of the several donors, with the amounts contributed, also accompanies this report. As the several Committees of the Association, in their reports, will fully make known the objects of its formation—what it has done during the first year of its existence, and what it *promises* and hopes to effect in future—it remains for this Committee to state, that to carry out the plans we aim at, an annual amount of eight to ten thousand dollars will be required. Although this may appear a large sum for an infant association to anticipate receiving from the *benevolent and humane*, in addition to the many worthy objects to which they are called to contribute, we feel confident it may and will be accomplished. The field is large, and much good is to be done by means and efforts well directed. There is no fiction in what has been represented to exist in our prisons and penitentiaries—abuses of the most flagrant and revolting character are known to be practised. It is these abuses we aim to correct—to protect the innocent from contamination when unavoidably detained with the vicious—to encourage and raise the fallen—to assist the sick and weary of vice to return to the paths of virtue and happiness—and to give aid and countenance to those who have paid the penalty of their crimes in prison in their efforts to reform and lead honest lives. We are aware that there are many who, equally honest in their views, differ with us, and consider it as of doubtful utility, and a misplaced sympathy to attempt the reformation of persons of the classes named; and in a few instances have been met by some with the remark, that they would contribute to increase the punishment of crime, but nothing for its melioration. To such we commend the example of kindness and charity of our Saviour, who said to the thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Your Committee, while they are pleased at the general interest shown by many of our fellow-citizens, who became members of the Association by contributing to its funds, are impressed with the belief that our resources would be much

increased, by so amending the constitution as to create different grades of subscriptions; and therefore recommend, in addition to the present provisions of the constitution, the creation of Life Patrons by the payment of five hundred dollars, and honorary life members of the Executive Committee by the payment of one hundred dollars.

There is also one other subject which, in the opinion of the Committee, is of sufficient importance to occupy the serious consideration of the Executive Committee—that is, an agency to attend to the general interests of the Association. We are not disposed to point out the duties of this agency, nor to press its adoption any sooner than the unanimous voice of the Association will sanction it, but feel assured the advantages of such a measure will be soon apparent to all, and have a unanimous support.

With a confident reliance on the support and encouragement of an overruling Providence, we commend our cause to the humane and benevolent, trusting that those who are blessed with an abundance of this world's goods, will not fail to contribute of their substance to aid in its charitable attempts to do good; and that many, by so doing, will obtain that approving sentence, "I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

E. PARMLY,

Chairman Finance Committee.

New York, Dec. 4, 1845.

REPORT

OF THE COMMITTEE ON DETENTIONS.

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PRISON ASSOCIATION :

THE Committee on Detentions would respectfully report, that the department of the Association committed to their charge, has particular reference to the present condition of the inmates of the prisons in the cities of New York and Brooklyn. In entering upon their duties at the formation of the Society, your Committee were instructed to inquire into the causes of commitment of all persons detained for trial, or as witnesses in those places, and to adopt proper measures for procuring the discharge of such as were entitled thereto. It became also our duty to visit the prisons frequently, and to endeavour to improve the condition of the prisoners, physically and morally.

It will be proper, therefore, to state what is the condition of the prison, under our charge, what improvements may be effected, and what your Committee have done since they commenced their work.

The prisons in the city of New York in which persons are detained for trial, or as witnesses, are, the House of Detentions, and the Debtor's Jail. In Brooklyn there is but one prison, and that is used both as a house of detention, a prison for convicts, and a jail.

The House of Detentions in the city of New York, is a part of the buildings known as the Halls of Justice; and as a general rule, all persons detained for trial are sent there. It consists of two stone buildings, one of which is appropriated to males, and the other to females. The former measures on the outside, 146 feet in length, and 39 feet in width. Its length inside is 140 feet, and it diminishes in width from the lower floor to the roof, which is at a height of 55 feet. The cells are built against the side walls in four tiers, and are entered from corridors. The main entrance is from the yard, and leads at once into a hall extending the whole length of the prison, and eight and a half feet wide. Above are three corridors of the same length, running along the cells, and leaving the middle space open to the roof. The whiteness of the walls, and the cleanliness of the stone floor, give to the hall a lightness and cheerfulness which ought to characterize every part of this House of Detentions. The large stove by which the prison is warmed in cold weather, produces some closeness, but does not account for a disagreeable odour, which increases in those parts where the cells may chance to be open. There are 27 cells on each tier, making 148 in all. Upon this lower floor the cells are 10 feet 6 inches long, 5 feet 7 inches wide, and 10 feet 3 inches high. Each cell has two wooden doors 21 inches apart, the inside one of which has a hole about 6 inches square, and the outside one has two holes about 2 inches square. This is for ventilation from the corridor, and in the opposite wall of the cell, near the ceiling, is a window 2 feet long by 6 inches

wide, opening into the outer air. The cells are separated by a wall 21 inches thick. They are supplied with water from a leaden pipe that runs inside of the cell, while by means of another large pipe crossing the cell, and having a funnel opening into it, the prisoner is enabled to obey the calls of nature. The only other furniture consists of a pine bedstead, or sometimes a broad shelf, a straw mattress, and blankets. In these cells are confined such prisoners as are committed for drunkenness, vagrancy, and such other offences as are punished by five days' imprisonment. The drunkards are committed in every variety of intoxication, from the insensibility of stupor, to the fury of delirium tremens; and are *turned in singly*, or with others, as the limited number of the cells permits. Four and five are frequently confined in one cell, and sometimes in the double cells, of which there are five, as many as twelve are penned up together.

In the second tier, those prisoners who are committed for trial for the more serious offences, as burglary, murder, and other felonies, are confined. The cells are 9 feet 7 inches long, by 5 feet 7 inches wide. As a general rule, only one prisoner is confined in a cell, though sometimes it becomes necessary to place two together.

The third tier is appropriated to prisoners committed for petit larceny. The cells are 8 feet 5 inches long, and 5 feet 7 inches wide.

In the fourth tier are persons committed for assault and battery, and other misdemeanours. The cells are 7 feet 5 inches long, and 5 feet 7 inches wide. In these two last tiers, it is generally necessary to confine two prisoners in the same cell.

The observations as to the interior arrangements, furniture, &c. of the cells on the lower tier, apply to the prison generally; except that the cells in the three upper tiers, are ventilated by an aperture in the outer wall, opening on the floor, as well as by the window, and apertures in the doors before described.

The objections which are at once obvious upon this description, have been so often made, that your Committee would not repeat them, but for their hope of bringing the attention of the public to a useful bearing upon the subject. It must be seen at once, that the prison is too small for the purposes for which it is used. Prisoners ought not to be confined together. The chances of escape are increased, and the contamination of the less depraved is an almost certain consequence. The building should either be enlarged, or some other mode of disposing of vagrancy and intoxication devised, so that the cells now used for the punishment of those offences may be appropriated to the confinement of prisoners detained for trial.

The want of ventilation on the lower floor, is a great evil. The cell doors are closed every night, and then the only possibility of fresh air entering is from a window, and two small holes, two inches square. Imagine four or five men, in different states of intoxication, cooped up in one of those solid enclosures, and your Committee submit, that whatever may be the moral effect of the punishment, the physical consequences must be dreadful. We hear, occasionally, of persons committed for drunkenness being found dead; we feel inclined to wonder that such instances are not more frequent. Although the ventilation of the cells in the upper tiers is better, it is still entirely insufficient, and the air in them becomes, in the course of a night, unfit for any person to breathe.

The arrangement of the large water-pipes permits conversation between prisoners in any part of the same tier. The top of the funnel being not over eighteen inches from the main pipe, the voice is easily transmitted, and thus the most revolting details of crime are communicated. This is prevented, in the Philadelphia prison, by keeping the pipes filled with water during the day, and emptying them only at night. In one half of this prison the same might be done, though in the other half it is impossible, owing to the sinking of the building towards one end, which would cause the water to overflow the pipes in that direction. The proper mode of constructing such pipes is, to have one large main pipe running under ground, and to place conduit pipes, leading down into it, in each cell. Conversation would thus become impossible.

The female prison is situated in the same enclosure as the male prison. It is of stone, 125 feet long by 21 feet wide. There are, in the prison proper, 24 cells, which are built in two tiers, on one side of the building, leaving a hall of 6 feet 3 inches wide. The cells resemble, in all their main features, those of the male prison, and are liable to the same objections. In the lower tier, vagrants and intoxicated persons are confined, generally two, and sometimes more, in a cell; and in the upper tier are those committed on charges of a more serious nature. These corridors are under the charge of a male keeper.

The lower tier of this prison is the scene of the most disgusting exhibitions of degradation that any city affords. At any hour of the day may be seen, kiling on their filthy beds, or on benches in the hall, in rags, brutish with sensuality, or consuming with the consequences of reckless indulgence, old, young, bearded, bloated, deformed—the wrecks of what were once bright, happy girls. Some dragged from the gutters, insensible from drinking; others brought there for breaches of the peace and outrageous revelling; many self-sundered, in utter helplessness, to remove the disease that devours them; they form, in this dark and miserable corridor, a group full of awful interest. The question suggests itself, What are they here for? Does this constant idleness, and communication with their like, tend to their improvement? If they have not habits of industry and cleanliness, they should be taught them; if they are depraved, they should be improved; if degraded in their own estimation, they should be raised up. It is evidently a useless expenditure of money to keep them in this condition.

Ascending from the prison proper into the right wing, we find two halls, about sixty feet long, from which light and comfortable bed-chambers of various sizes open. In one of these halls are confined female prisoners who are detained for trial, but whose health requires medical attention; and in the other are confined, not only females awaiting trial, but some who have been convicted, and who, for particular reasons, are not sent to Blackwell's Island—as, for instance, women whose friends have surrendered them as victims of intemperance, and whom nothing else has been able to cure. Nothing can be clearer than their rooms, and every thing speaks comfort and hopefulness. The women in these halls are under the care of a matron, and the female influence is discernible in every part. The prisoners are generally at work, sewing or knitting, or cutting out work for others, and books are at hand for those who are disposed to read.

Your Committee most earnestly ask attention to the want of matrons in the

female prison. There is work enough, if faithfully performed, for at least four, and there is but one to attend to it. What is not done by her is done by men, or is left undone. That women should be placed under the care of women, is the dictate of decency; and that the work of their improvement is better performed by women, is the lesson of experience. Now that the expediency of gentleness in the care of prisoners is acknowledged, it is gross inconsistency to place them under the more irritating, rather than the more conciliatory, government: and it is hoped that this repulsive feature in the discipline of this prison, may be changed. The only change, however, that has been made, has been for the worse; for whereas there were until lately two matrons, now there is but one.

The washing and cooking for the prison is done in a large room, in the centre of the yard. The prison fire is coffee and bread every morning, and for dinner soup and beef, and bread every other day; bread, and rice and molasses, on the intermediate days. There is no doubt but that the quality of the food is good, and that it is furnished in sufficient quantities; but as to whether some of the articles might not be changed for others with advantage, there is a question.

That sufficient attention is not paid to the health of the prisoners, is obvious from what has been said; but in the matter of exercise, this neglect is very glaring. There is no system by which every prisoner is allowed exercise every day, but it is entirely discretionary with the keeper; and as a general rule, the male prisoners are not allowed to leave their cells, except upon the representation of the physician that their health is suffering from confinement. It is very true, that the narrow limits of the corridor afford small space for walking, and that there is danger of prisoners communicating with one another, when allowed to pass and repass; but as this is a mere house of detention, justice requires that every thing should be done for the prisoner's comfort, until the danger of too much indulgence has become a matter of experience.

Although the classification of the prisoners is very imperfect, yet as they are not allowed to converse together where it is possible to prevent it, the necessity of a more strict classification is not obvious. The facility with which a prisoner's friends obtain access to him, undoubtedly leads to great abuses; but it seems impossible to seclude him more closely, without running the risk of injustice. And your Committee would remark, that from the fact of this prison being properly one of detention for trial, rather than of punishment for guilt, many principles of the penitentiary system are inapplicable. Rules, which may be very necessary for the safety and improvement of convicts, might be entirely misapplied, and with great injustice, in a place of confinement of those who are presumed to be innocent.

But, in one particular, injustice of another character is very frequently done. Hundreds are confined in this prison every year, whose trial results in their acquittal. They remain in confinement weeks, and sometimes months, before they are tried. They are kept in illness, and not merely are their families deprived of their labour, but while the prisoner leaves the court with the declarations of his innocence, he leaves it without a dollar, without work, and, in the present erroneous state of public opinion, with a stigma upon his character. Some part of this injustice greater elevation of the public mind will remove; but another part can be remedied at once. The prisoners should have an opportunity of

working for their own benefit. In the female prison this has been attempted, and some of the inmates have left with money sufficient to support them for a short time, instead of being forced at once into the harness of sin and death. But, even among the women, little comparatively has been done in this respect. Among the male prisoners nothing has been attempted. For some kinds of work, indeed, the cells would afford sufficient light only for a small portion of the day. But this inconvenience might be remedied, by allowing the doors to remain open while the prisoners were at work. The keeper will give every facility to those who can work; and as a beginning of the system, it is only necessary that the work should be given them to do. For this purpose, your Committee think that all the arts and manufactures that are used in the support of our public institutions, should be introduced into our House of Detention, so far as practicable, gradually, of course, but with the ultimate view of giving the greatest possible variety of employment to the prisoners.

In connexion with this subject your Committee would observe, that the practice of confining vagrants and drunkards in the prison, is in violation of the purposes for which it was intended, and extremely injurious. The prison thereby is crowded, to the utter destruction of discipline, and the impossibility of separation; and those who produce this trouble, are very certain to leave the prison worse than they entered it. Living in idleness and contamination, what good can be expected from their confinement? Your Committee believe, that a workhouse is the only proper place for disposing of this class of persons, and despair of any essential improvement in the moral condition of our population, until such a remedy has been attempted.

Much more than is done might be done for the moral improvement of the prisoner. There is a nucleus of a library both in the male and in the female prisons. But though the books are of an unexceptionable character, they are very few, and there is very little variety among them. The works are generally of a strictly religious character, and your Committee think can hardly be very attractive to the uneducated prisoner. They would suggest that works of general interest, in which information is coupled with amusement, and which teach the principles of morality by illustration, rather than by precept, should be furnished by those who are charitably disposed. We feel that we hazard nothing in saying, that healthy mental occupation, during the time of detention, would, even in cases of guilt, do more for the prisoner, than even the confinement itself.

Very little is attempted in the way of religious instruction, in the male department. About every other Sunday afternoon, some charitably disposed individuals attend, and hold religious services with those in the lower tier, who are brought out into the hall for the purpose; and on the intermediate Sunday, a Temperance lecture is delivered, and the pledge is administered to as many as can be induced to sign it. It is not considered safe, to permit those confined in the upper tiers to come out and join in these exercises. It is to be hoped that some of the seed thus sown may fall upon good ground; but whether it will produce the expected fruit without much cultivation, admits of doubt. The wish of your Committee on this subject is, to follow the worthy example that has been set, and that arrangements should be made to secure religious services in the hall every Sunday.

In connexion with this account of the principal House of Detention, it may be proper to speak of the places of more temporary detention, where prisoners, who have been arrested in the other Police Districts, are in the first place confined.

Two station-houses, connected with the Police Offices in the second and third Police Districts, are now being erected. They are intended for the temporary detention of prisoners, until they can be sent down to the Halls of Justice. The building for the Second District is in course of erection, in the vicinity of Jefferson Market. It will be about 30 feet square, of two stories high. It will contain 25 cells, 19 of which will be 4 feet two inches wide, and 8 feet long. The building for the Third Police District, is in the neighbourhood of Essex Market. It is about 30 feet square, and 2 stories high. It will contain 20 cells, 4 feet 4 inches in width, and 7 feet 10 inches long. As neither of these buildings is completed, it may be premature to criticise them; but your Committee fear that they will prove too small for the proper custody of the many prisoners, who will daily be committed to those districts. And because it may have been an inevitable necessity which led to the use of the present station-houses in those districts, we forbear from comment. The character of our city would be certainly prejudiced by their use for a day longer than may be necessary.

The Debtors' Jail in New York, is situated in Eldridge street. The building was formerly used for a watch-house, but not being needed for that purpose, was appropriated for the safe-keeping of debtors. It might have been anticipated that it would prove an unsuitable place for the confinement of those, whose only offence was inability to pay what they owed. The only purpose of such a place is safe keeping. Conviction, reformation, improvement, is no part of the system. The creditor takes the body of the debtor, in those cases where the remedy still remains, and is allowed to confine him; but beyond that, there is no necessity, nor any justification for prison discipline. But the Jail in Eldridge street is a place of suffering, and a standing monument of public injustice. The prison occupies the second story. A corridor 50 feet long, by 6 feet wide, extends the entire depth of the building. On each side are built cells, in which the prisoners sleep. In the day time, and while they behave well, they are allowed the use of the corridor. If noisy, or disobedient, they are sometimes confined for days in their cells. There are 10 of them, of which 8 are 6 1-2 feet deep, by 5 1-2 feet wide, and 3 are 10 feet by 7. The cells are closed with massive wooden doors, and have no window, or other opening, except a grated aperture communicating with each adjoining cell. In each cell is one, and in some of the small ones, are two beds. At present there are 3 cells, in each of which two persons sleep.

At one end of the corridor is the water-closet; and this too is the place for washing. A Croton water-pipe, immediately over the seat, affords the only means which the debtor has either of quenching his thirst, or of washing himself. Thither male and female, white and black, without any screen of decency other than the closet door, are forced to repair, and in the gradual loss of delicacy, moral and physical, atone for the crime of debt.

The fare is the same as that allowed at the House of Detention, and the prisoners have the option of taking their meals, either on their beds, on the benches, or on a narrow shelf put up in the corridor for that purpose.

We have called this prison a monument of public injustice. It is chargeable to the city generally. The Sheriff is allowed no other place, and has no means of improving this. While public sentiment continues so torpid with respect to the care of prisoners, no amelioration can be expected. Grand Jurors may present, and charitable individuals may give their sympathy in vain. The public authorities alone can act, and public opinion alone will act on them.

The Brooklyn prison is at the same time debtors' jail, house of detention, and prison. Persons arrested upon civil process, persons committed for trial, and convicts sentenced for not longer than six months, are sent there. In addition to these, is a number of witnesses, committed by the United States Courts, until the trials at which they may be wanted.

The building of which the prison is a part, is situated in the outskirts of the city, and presents a very imposing front in the Gothic style, extending 95 feet. The principal prison is built of granite, in three stories. Corridors, 114 feet long and 5 feet wide, extend through each story, and the cells are built upon one side. There are 42 of them; and they measure 11 feet in length, 6 feet in breadth, and are 10 feet in height. They are generally well lighted, the outer wall not seriously impeding the light. The windows are 2 feet long by 4 inches wide, and are grated on the inside. A long pipe with a funnel leading into it, affords the convenience necessary to the natural wants; and water for drinking and washing, is introduced by means of a faucet leading from a pipe, that runs along the corridor on the outside of the cell. The cells are heated by pipes filled with heated water. Each is furnished with a bed of pine wood, a straw mattress, and blankets. The doors are double, and of iron. The inside door is of grating, to the distance of sometimes one-half, sometimes one-third, from the bottom, and has, besides, an aperture in the upper part, large enough to hand the prisoner's meals through. The outer door is solid.

In these cells, persons detained for trial on criminal charges, and convicts, are confined. About half the cells were occupied by more than one person to each. In the lower tier, blacks, male and female, are confined. The prisoners are not allowed to leave their cells, and, therefore, no classification is attempted. Still, they do find opportunities of conversing, and the pipes offer the same facilities here as in the New York House of Detention.

In another part of the building, is a department allotted to white females. It consists of fourteen cells, opening into a large and well-lighted room. The cells are 8 feet by 5 feet, and are closed with doors of iron grating. There is a want of ventilation, which makes the air very close, especially as there is no water-closet, or other means of carrying off offensive matter. In every other respect, it is as neat and cheerful as a prison can be made.

The prisoners on civil process, and witnesses, are kept in another part of the building, in two large rooms, which are in every respect comfortable, and sufficiently well furnished.

Your Committee have thus described the condition of the department in which their duties have been exercised, and have endeavoured to point out some of the many existing evils, and to suggest the remedies. It remains only to state what they have done during the year.

We have been in the frequent habit of visiting the prisons in New York, and of observing their condition. Every facility has been afforded us by the princi-

pal keepers in the prosecution of our labours, and all the necessary information cheerfully afforded. Thus, an organ of communication between the prisoner and the public has been maintained, and much valuable experience as to the working of our prison discipline, in regard to detention, has been gained. Where a case has come under our notice, requiring attention, it has been attended to; and where the usual course of the criminal Courts has seemed calculated to do harm to the individual, it has, in some instances, been suspended, and the discretion of the Court has been directed to the production of good. Boys of tender age have been counselled and warned. Parents have been visited at their homes, and informed, sometimes for the first time, of the crimes and imprisonment, and impending doom of their young children. Counsel has been secured to the helpless in many instances, and when the offence has been slight, and the injurious course of punishment has been obvious, legal rights have been insisted on successfully. But your Committee have been careful to distinguish the cases where their interference would probably be ultimately useful, from those where the only result would be securing the liberation of the prisoner. Where it seemed probable that punishment would be productive of good, no attempt has been made to prevent it, nor has any inquiry been made into the means of the defence. We have not considered our duty to be that of legal counsel, so much as that of friends.

Particular instances may be usefully given, as illustrative of our course, but they form only a part of what has been done, and that has been but little, compared with what might have been done under other circumstances.

W. G., a boy of sixteen years, stole from his employers. A few minutes after being committed, he was visited by one of your Committee, and counselled, and the truth elicited. His entire seclusion was secured by representations to the keeper. His friends, in another part of the state, were written to. He was supplied with books, and every attempt was made to produce a salutary effect on his mind. On his trial he was induced to avow the truth. The Court was addressed in his favour, and their judgment suspended. The same day he was sent out of the city, and supplied with means of reaching his friends.

C. M., aged eleven years, stole five dollars. He had absented himself from home for a week previous. He was induced to confess his crime. His parents were informed of his situation, and brought to see him. They were advised as to the proper influences to address to him, and were aided and encouraged in their efforts to awaken him to a sense of his wrong, and were advised as to the most effectual means of procuring his release.

J. T., a girl of seventeen years old, had been brought to prison from a brothel, where she had gone upon her mother's procurement. She was younger in mind than in years, but well educated, and fitted to adorn society. She was persuaded not to go back to her former life, and was encouraged to hope for friends, and self-respect. Prayer was taught to her lips, long strangers to it, and for her despair, the promises of mercy were substituted. After much labour and discouragement, amid threats from her mother, and fears of her own weakness, she has been preserved four months from pollution, and is now placed with a most careful and exemplary family in the country, who have devoted themselves with affection, and courage, to effect her entire recovery, and write frequently the most cheering accounts of her improvement.

C. S. was a German woman of sixty years of age, and was imprisoned for non-payment of \$29 costs. She had been imprisoned four months when your Committee found her. She had no friends who could pay her small debt; her creditor was inexorable, and his lawyer would not interfere. Time wore on without relief. The poor old woman, shut up with the male prisoners, and debarr'd from communication with her fellow prisoners, was, in her utter helplessness, her tears, and her trust in her Bible, a picture of the too frequent combination of age and want. Your Committee, having exhausted every other remedy, procured bail for her, and she was liberated.

B. G., a sea captain, fifty years of age, was confined at the private suit of an individual, and on a suit of the United States, for an infraction of the revenue laws, which had been instituted at the information of the same individual. A stranger, and without means, he remained in prison during some of the hottest weather of the past summer, without the slightest prospect of relief, except from charitable interposition. Your Committee petitioned the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington, and negotiated with the creditor here. Finally, after weeks of delay, and about fifty calls at different offices, they succeeded, by the kindness of the United States District Attorney, in this city, in obtaining his discharge from the arrest in the penal suit; and finally, after the poor captain had been stripped of even the shadow of property, they procured his release by the individual creditor.

Andrew Klein, a German, about forty years of age, burnt a woman to death, in the sixteenth ward, under circumstances of horrible cruelty. Your Committee visited him, and became satisfied that he was deranged in his intellect. They procured physicians to visit him, and were confirmed by their report. They stated his case to the Hon. J. W. Edmonds, the Circuit Judge, and enlisted his sense of duty. He requested additional examinations, by medical men, and instituted new tests of his sanity. At his trial, able counsel were appointed for him, who brought such indubitable evidence of his insanity before the jury, that he was acquitted, and sent to the State Lunatic Asylum, at Utica, where he now remains, in a condition of unequivocal insanity, as recently reported by the inspectors and physician of that institution. In this case your Committee would remark, that, through the whole trial and the examinations as to the prisoner's sanity, the keepers of the prison were against the supposition of insanity; from which it may be inferred, with probable justice, that but for the exertions of this Committee, and the careful examinations instituted by the Judge, the unhappy man might have shared the fate of many whose apparent derangement has been attributed to cunning.

These instances will suffice to give a general idea of the character of the labours of your Committee. A great many more might be adduced, in which their exertions have been more or less useful, but their recital would be of no benefit. But to show that these are only individual cases, and few of many, we may add, that in the class of juvenile offenders, out of seventy-three cases, forty-eight, by strict attention to their legal rights, or more often, by consultation with the proper authorities, were discharged without the brand of crime, with the door of reformation left open, and often with friendly and parental admonitions of the evil, to recall them to the paths of virtue. In concluding this report, however, your Committee wish to say, that they have done very little,

compared with the work that was to be done; and that where they have been the instruments of public justice in one case, ten cases have happened where the public injustice could not be prevented. Your Committee is composed of men engaged in active business. They are not able to devote their whole, or even much time to the subject, and that subject is inexhaustible. The prisons under our charge are always full, and the vacancies created by discharges or convictions, are filled up by new arrests and commitments. Day after day the flood of vice and poverty sweeps by the prison's ever open doors, and every setting sun leaves some new inmates to tremble in its solitary cells. Every case requires attention, and no attention will be availing that is not continued. The influence of advice is lost if not repeated, the warmth of sympathy is chilled if left too long; and the actual business of this effort at relief requires a great deal of time. Old cases are discharged; the prisoner now free requires to be sustained in his efforts to do well;—new cases come in; they are to be inquired into; advice is wanted; information must be had;—the courts are almost constantly in session; counsel must be present;—cases are frequently delayed and adjourned; they must be followed up;—great care is required; opposite lawyers are watching for mistakes;—different prisons are to be visited; persons residing at a distance must be seen, and engagements must be continually made for continual new calls;—in fine, the labour of attending to the business your Committee undertook, would occupy as many individuals, otherwise unoccupied, as those who now engage in it in their leisure hours. The consequence is, that much has not been done which ought to have been done. Much wrong has been committed which ought to have been prevented. Many cases of injustice have passed unremedied, and hundreds have been carried on in the career of wrong, who might have been checked.

The remedy that your Committee recommend for this evil, is the appointment of a permanent agent, for the prisons of New York and Brooklyn, whose business shall be to visit the prisons daily, and devote his whole time to the good of the prisoners—advising them, procuring them counsel where it may be proper, and, in criminal cases, interceding with the Courts, when the age, or the previous character of the offenders, may render the expediency of the ordinary modes of punishment doubtful. For advice or assistance of any kind, he will always have a right to call on this Committee; and in this way their important duties will be faithfully and effectually performed. Your Committee have no doubt of the necessity of this appointment, and believe that the public will sustain it, as a partial means of discharging its long-neglected debt to the prisoner.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

CLARKSON CROLIUS, Chairman.

New York, December 1, 1845.

MR. DUER'S SPEECH.

Mr. Duer, being called on by the President, as Chairman of the Committee on Prison Discipline, spoke as follows:

There are but few words, Mr. President, that I mean to say, or in fact, as Chairman of the Committee, have a right to speak; for, although I have not been indifferent to the duties of the Committee, nor wholly negligent in their discharge, yet I must confess, that it is by other gentlemen belonging to the Committee that the most important and valuable portion of our labours has been performed. I shall, therefore, leave it to the gentleman who is to follow me, the Secretary of the Committee, to explain, in detail, what has been the nature of our labours, the object to which they have been directed, and the result they have attained. The remarks I intend to submit will be of a general nature.

There is no exaggeration, sir, in saying that there are no objects, none whatever, that demand more imperatively the attention and study of the legislator, or claim more entirely, more absolutely, not simply the attention, but the devotion, of the philanthropist and the Christian, than those that this, our Society, seeks to accomplish—the diminution, the prevention of crime, and the reform of the criminal. In the field of exertion that these objects present and open, all the highest and noblest faculties of our minds may find an adequate and full employment: all the purest and holiest affections of our nature be called into exercise, until transient emotion shall become fixed disposition, and desultory effort, systematic action. Let it not be said, Mr. President, that the hopes on which our Association is built—our hopes, that much good may be done; that great, and extensive, and permanent good may be accomplished by our efforts—let it not be said, that these hopes are visionary and delusive. Such is not the fact. The assertion is not true. Much good has already been done, and far greater remains in prospect; and if we are true to ourselves, true to the convictions that hitherto have animated and sustained us, much that remains in prospect is certain to be accomplished. It is, indeed, a libel on Providence, a practical denial of the moral government of the world, to assert that the efforts of benevolence—of consistent, enlightened, and systematic benevolence—of benevolence, acting under the guidance of calm reason and sober judgment, can ever prove entirely abortive. It is not the will of Providence that such efforts, so directed, should be wholly fruitless, and, in fact, they never are so. Those who engage with activity and zeal in the duties of benevolence, often meet with difficulties that startle, alarm, and, for a time, discourage them. They often meet with disappointments of the most painful nature, that for a time cast a gloom over their minds, and threaten to sink them into utter despondency; but they do not sink. They rise again, strengthened by their trials. They rise again, more thoughtful, more patient, and more resolved. Their trials are the winds that shake the branches above, but root the tree more firmly in the soil. They constitute that school of experience, in which true wisdom is learned, and faith is strengthened, and courage is invigorated, and the flame of a bright and an abiding hope at last kindled. Yes, sir, those who are devoted and zealous in the labours of charity and love, in the result, are certain to find—in the result, have abundant and conclusive evidence, that it is the designs of Providence that they have been selected to fulfil; and, humble instruments as they are, that they are executing His will by whom their lot was appointed. However obscure, and feeble, and insignificant these efforts may seem to the world at large—with whatever contempt and disdain the sensual, the ambitious, and the proud may regard them;—they know—they have the evidence of facts, and the evidence of consciousness—that their labours are not fruitless, but blessed—blessed in their motives and in their result, blessed to others, and blessed thrice blessed to themselves.

It is true, Mr. President, that the reports of our Society, those that have been read, and those that remain to be read, disclose a mass of evil to be resisted and overcome—a solid accumulation of abuses, that must be attacked, and, if possible, scattered and swept away. They disclose a mass of evil—an accumulation of abuses, that it is fearful to contemplate. But shall we therefore shrink from that contemplation in dismay and despair. Shall we seek a refuge in selfish indolence from the painful thoughts that the existence and magnitude of the abuses that we are forced to consider, and called to resist, will afford no refuge to those who know their duty, and have the means of performing it; and it is to their own peril that they seek the refuge. It is at our own peril that we forbid to flow those currents of the soul that give life to ourselves, and life to those around us;—at our own peril, that we suffer the living waters to be converted into a stagnant pool, corrupting all that is within, and infecting the atmosphere without. We may escape the conviction, if we please; yet the truth is certain, there is a curse, a blight upon those who know their duty, and have the means of performing it; but from the dread of failure, or the love of ease, instead of listening to, and obeying, resist and silence the voice of conscience;—instead of following, suppress and quench the divine promptings of benevolence;—of that which alone deserves the name, self-denying and self-sacrificing benevolence. Such has not hitherto been our course—such, I fervently hope and trust, will not be our course. No, sir; the existence and the magnitude of the abuses that we have discovered, and are called to resist; the difficulty of the remedy to be applied; the extent and arduous nature of the reforms to be accomplished;—these considerations, instead of reducing us to inaction and despair, should stimulate us, and I trust will stimulate us to renewed exertion—will stimulate and nerve us to increased activity. We know that the inactivity of those who believe in the existence of these evils, and the necessity of a remedy, by their indifference and apathy, are not simply blameworthy, but criminal. From this guilt our consciences, I trust, will be clear.

If I shall now be asked, sir, what is the object of these remarks? to what purpose these observations are directed? my reply is prompt and unhesitating. My observations are addressed to all who are present. They are designed to act on the individual conscience of every man, and of every woman that hears me. What is your duty and mine, and we confess to be such, is equally the duty of all. None who listen to the reports of this Society, and believe in the substantial truth of the representation of facts that they contain, can longer shelter themselves from the claims of duty, under the plea of ignorance. We now know that the abuses that exist in our prisons,—I speak more especially of our city prisons:—the foul and loathsome Penitentiary; the still more foul and loathsome Tombs!—we know that these abuses are frightful, appalling, almost unexampled, and in all their atrocity, quite unutterable; and now, that these abuses are exposed and known, *if they are still to be tolerated in a Christian community*, every one who is silent and passive, who fails to denounce and resist, to expose and counteract them, *will share the guilt of their continuance*. We now know that our prisons, instead of being places of salutary restraint, and rigid, but useful discipline, are schools of infamy, of corruption, of vice in its most disgusting and horrid forms. We know that their wretched inmates, instead of being awakened to a sense of their degradation and misery, and, perhaps, inspired with the hope of amendment and recovery, are subject to an influence that, by an infallible process, hardens them in their iniquity; and when they are released, throws them back upon society, more accomplished than ever in the arts, more determined than ever in their purposes of villainy.

The Tombs! an awful name, but how appropriate, how descriptive, how significant! The Tombs! where living men are buried, and by a refinement of cruelty, the living are chained to the dying and the dead, until the whole become one mass of moral putrefaction. The Tombs! whence those who

were buried, issue forth again, speaking and moving as men, and bearing the form of humanity; but with death—death spiritual and final—with death stamped on their visages, and reigning in their souls. These are strong words, sir, but they are not stronger than the occasion demands, not stronger than the truth requires, not stronger,—not half so strong, as the claims of that duty, which our knowledge of the truth imposes.

I call then upon all who are present, on each individual man, and woman, upon all who are not already members of this Society,—I call upon them, not in the language of entreaty, not as an appeal to their charity, but in the discharge of an imperative duty, to come forward and enrol their names, and give us their aid as members of this Society.—The immediate active duties of the Society, those that the constitution intrusts to the Executive Committee, most of necessity devolve on a few individuals, and, indeed, from the nature of these duties, there are only a few who can be found, that are at once willing and able to discharge them. But although the labours of the Society must be performed by a few, it is upon the public—the public at large, that the Society must rely for its establishment and support. In plain words, it is the public that must supply, and ought to supply, the necessary funds. The experience of the past year has satisfied the Executive Committee, that we ought no longer to depend upon occasional supplies, and temporary contributions. If the Society is ever to be established on a solid basis, if it is ever to flourish as it ought to flourish, we must have a certain, adequate, and reliable income; and it is only from an increase, and a large increase of our annual subscriptions, that this necessary and adequate income can be derived. It is this increase, therefore, of our annual subscriptions, that I now most respectfully, but most earnestly urge, by calling again upon all who are present,—who take any interest in our proceedings, who approve of what has been done, and desire to see accomplished that which we propose to do; to come forward, and by their subscriptions, give us the necessary assurance of their countenance and support.

REPORT

OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRISON DISCIPLINE.

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PRISON ASSOCIATION :

The Prison Discipline Committee report, that the sphere of their usefulness has been materially circumscribed during the past year, by the failure of the application to the Legislature for a charter, conferring upon the Association those important powers which are so indispensable for its successful operation. This failure, to whatever cause attributable, has in a measure paralyzed the efforts of this department; and any attempt to render it of very essential service, until clothed with proper legal authority, will, it is believed, be attended with constantly increasing difficulties. The nature of our investigations, and the wide field of observation which we propose to occupy, embracing the supervision of the internal organization and management of prisons, and the comparison of prison systems and reforms, imperiously demand a more minute and searching examination than is allowed to the ordinary visitor. This Committee therefore would urge upon the Association, the importance of taking immediate measures for the purpose of obtaining the necessary legal powers, at the earliest moment after the opening of the coming session of the Legislature. Though labouring under a difficulty of this nature, and being further embarrassed by the limited number of those willing to engage in the duties of this Committee; we have, nevertheless, been in active operation, and submit the annexed facts and suggestions as the result of our investigation.

Immediately after the organization of the Committee, its attention was directed to an examination of the City Penitentiary; and the first public act of this Committee was, to report upon the then condition of Blackwell's Island. As this report presents a very accurate account of its situation at the commencement of our labours, we have thought proper to introduce it here, that the Association may be the better enabled to mark its future progress.

TO THE PRISON DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE :

The Committee appointed to examine the City Penitentiary, report, that they visited Blackwell's Island on the 21st March, for the purpose of investigating the actual condition of the prison; and having, through the courtesy of the Deputy Superintendent, been allowed to examine, not only the prison itself, but the books and documentary evidence of its present condition, feel it a duty they owe themselves and the public, to report their conviction that abuses exist, affecting both the character of our city and the moral and physical well-being

of those held in confinement. A thorough investigation of the condition of so extensive an establishment, would require more time than the Committee could devote to the subject—still, facts lying on the surface, were sufficiently glaring, to convince even a superficial observer, that a thorough and radical change is needed, as well in the system itself, as in the management. The first inquiry that naturally suggested itself, was in relation to the number under confinement, and the causes of their commitment. According to the return of March 21st, made by the Superintendent to the Alms House Commissioners, the whole number of convicts was 1146, of which 286 males and 63 females, were what are termed Court convicts, and 306 males and 503 females were what are called Police convicts; or in other words those who, having no visible means of subsistence, have been convicted on their own confessions as vagrants. The number of prisoners appears to have been on the decrease since February last, when it amounted to 1256, viz. 221 white and 78 black male Court convicts, and 25 white and 20 black female Court convicts; 518 white and 34 black females, and 221 white and 78 black male Police convicts. The commitments for the winter months appear uniformly greater than for the summer months—the whole number of prisoners in one week of last summer, falling as low as 748. The second subject of investigation, was the manner of commitment, and in this seems to be the first great source of most of the evils and abuses which we shall notice. Out of the 1146, now inmates of the Penitentiary, 809 are Police convicts, and of these, nearly three-quarters of the females, and half the males were committed on their own confession, principally because they were infected with a loathsome disease, thus perverting the Penitentiary from its legitimate objects, and making it the great *Feveral Hospital* of the city. The attention of the Committee was particularly directed to this subject, by the printed forms of commitment, many of which were as follows :

A. B. being a vagrant, viz. being without means of support, and having contracted an infectious disease, viz. the venereal disease, requiring charitable aid to restore her to health, whereof she was convicted on her own confession, &c.

But whatever may be the opinion in reference to those who, by their own confessions, are committed for profligacy and dissoluteness of character, there can, we think, be but one opinion in regard to a great number of cases of individuals, free from other contamination than that of poverty, who, in the hurry of business at our Police Offices, are made to swell the calendar of crime, and increase the evils of our overloaded Penitentiary. These cases seem to be attended with peculiar hardships in the first instance, from the moral effect of a commitment of a purely unfortunate human being, to a receptacle of crime, and secondly, from the contamination which unrestrained intercourse with the profligate and abandoned, is too sure to produce. The intelligent Deputy Superintendent assured the Committee that it was his deliberate conviction, that many inmates who had previously led comparatively pure lives, had gone out corrupted, and become prostitutes and thieves afterwards. The Committee next directed their attention to the accommodations of the prison, convinced that upon the nature of these the future government of the prison must to a great degree depend. The inadequacy of accommodation is sufficiently apparent from the fact, that there are only 496 cells for the use of 1146 prisoners— that these cells are but 4 by 8 feet in area, with an average height of between 7 and 8 feet. The general arrangement of each cell is such as to admit of only a bunk or bed, about 2 1-2 feet wide, upon which two persons are expected to sleep, the head of the one corresponding with the feet of the other; and some of the cells have been necessarily further burdened by the intrusion of third persons, who of course must sleep upon the floor. The over-crowded state of the prisons has compelled the keepers to appropriate the 2d floor of a building, just north of the prison, to the accommodation of the convicts, and here, congregated in a room 35 by 70 feet in area, were found 70 persons breathing a loathsome and pestilential atmosphere, made still more noxious by the use of an overheated stove. In this room, the prisoners are confined during the night

with closed doors and windows, and no other means of ventilation than is afforded by a tolerably well-lighted room. Around the sides of the room are two tiers of bunks, in which the prisoners stow themselves at night, as best they may. In connexion with the accommodations of the prison, it may be proper to notice the subject of ventilation, which, in the present crowded state of the prison, appears to be entirely inadequate to a proper consideration for the health of the prisoners. The only means of ventilation, apparent to the undersigned, were a number of holes about 2 1-2 inches square, at the upper part of each door, through which alone light, heat, and fresh air are admitted. The next object of inquiry was in relation to the discipline of the establishment.

It is so manifest from what has been already stated, as hardly to require remark, that there can be little or no opportunity for the exercise of any thing like reformatory discipline; and this is further evident from the fact, that there exists no classification of the prisoners whatever. The young and the old, the novice in crime, the mere vagrant, and the hardened reprobate, are all thrown promiscuously together by night as well as by day; and it was particularly evident, even during our short visit, that too many opportunities exist for a *promiscuous intercourse of the sexes*. It was a matter of surprise and astonishment to the Committee, that not a single matron or nurse is provided for the female department, except such as are taken from among the convicts; this department being under the sole charge of male keepers, and at night watched by male guards, who freely communicate with females selected from among the prisoners to wait on such as may be taken sick during the night. Intimately connected with the discipline of the establishment, is the fact, that while the keeper and his deputy receive their appointments from the Common Council, the assistants are appointed by the Alms House Commissioners, the superintendent having thus, in effect, no control over them. Under such a system, it is perhaps only wonderful that so few abuses actually exist.

The hospital of the establishment came next under the observation of the Committee; and while we bear testimony to the general appearance of cleanliness, good order, and comfort everywhere existing throughout the female department, (we are sorry we cannot say the same of the males,) we are constrained to express our conviction, that some properly-qualified medical attendant should be resident upon the island, or visit it daily, and not that two hundred and thirty-three prisoners, the number now in the hospital, should be left to the experiments of Tyros in medicine, or, at best, mere students, with only an occasional visit, once or twice a week, from the resident physician. It further appeared to the undersigned, that the number of keepers and guards were totally inadequate to the present necessities of the prison; the whole number of keepers amounting to only ten, and the guard to only six. The Committee were gratified to remark, that the prison was freely supplied with Bibles, Tracts, and other books of a moral and religious tendency, and they are informed that on the Sabbath the convicts are sedulously brought under religious teaching; but it is a subject of deep regret that there is no provision for ordinary instruction. In conclusion, it is the conviction of the Committee, that the evils of the system depend generally on the over-crowded state of the prison—the conversion, in part, of a criminal establishment into a general hospital—the custom of sending to the Penitentiary as vagrants many who would seem to be fitter objects for our Alms House—the method of appointing the keepers—the impossibility, under existing circumstances, of classification and separation, and the habit of detaching certain portions of the prisoners to attend in the hospital and Alms House, where they are left in unrestrained intercourse with one another. These abuses seem to attach solely to the system; and the undersigned, while they bear testimony to the urbanity of the officers, are willing to believe that they do all that men can do, in their position, to remedy the abuses complained of.

B. F. BUTLER, R. N. HAVEN,
JOHN DUER, JOHN D. RUSS, CHANNING,

As a consequence of this report, we are happy to state, that matrons have been appointed for the female department, and the power of appointing assistant keepers transferred from the Commissioners of the Alms House to the principal keeper.

On the 24th of last July a second Committee was appointed to examine the condition of the Penitentiary, and the result of their labours is embodied in the following report:

The Committee appointed for the purpose of visiting the City Prisons, and Penitentiary, report:

That they have in part performed that duty, by spending the most of July 25th on Blackwell's Island, and the Long Island Farms. They were accompanied by Mrs. G. W. Hatch and Mrs. Fitch, of the female department, and were treated with great kindness and attention by the officers at the Alms House and Penitentiary; every facility was afforded for making the most thorough investigation, and the following is a brief statement of the result.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS.

The whole number of prisoners on the 25th July was 963 416 males, and 547 females.

The numbers for the previous six months were as follows:

In January,	1206	-	-	629	males,	-	-	577	females.
" February,	1256	-	-	661	"	-	-	595	"
" March,	1146	-	-	592	"	-	-	554	"
" April,	817	-	-	427	"	-	-	390	"
" May,	771	-	-	408	"	-	-	363	"
" June,	861	-	-	453	"	-	-	408	"

Making an average of the whole number of 1,092 prisoners.

This prison is, therefore, the largest and most important in the United States, and is exceeded only by a very few in any part of the world.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PRISONERS.

The general character of the offences is comprehended in stealing, disorderly conduct, (including riots, and assault and battery,) and vagrancies.

The prisoners are divided into two classes: those that are tried in the Court of Sessions, and duly sentenced; and those who are committed by the Police Magistrates.

There are at this time 666 prisoners thus committed by the Police Magistrates, principally for vagrancy.

Unlike any other prison, of which we have any knowledge, used for the confinement of both sexes, the number of females is nearly equal to that of the males. For the last six months the average number of males was 506, of females, 502.

One hundred and one, or about one-ninth of the whole number, are coloured people.

Most of the prisoners are of foreign birth. Owing to a want of time, and some defects in the books of the institution, this could not be ascertained with precise accuracy. We are able, however, to approximate to the truth in saying, that after the "Court Prisoners," that is, those who are tried and sentenced by the Sessions, over one half, both males and females, are of foreign birth. And of the "vagrants," more than two-thirds of the males, and nearly two-thirds of the females are also foreigners. In other words, of the whole number of 963 now in custody, about 615 are foreigners, and 348 native born.

Of the large number of females now in confinement, 519 are committed for "vagrancy," but are in fact either diseased, destitute, or abandoned;—only 28 females being committed for other crimes, or about one in sixteen of all the

convictions for crimes,—a proportion which justly compares with the relative number of female offenders in the state at large.

Very many of the females are sent to the Penitentiary at their own request. "Being sick," as they call it, they "give themselves up." By means of this, the prison is, to the extent of nearly one-fourth of its inmates, converted into a hospital for the reception of dissolute persons, suffering under loathsome disease. Several of the prisoners, both male and female, are old and infirm in body or in mind, and are sent to the prison as to an asylum, and not for the purposes either of punishment or reformation; and are far more fit subjects for an almshouse than a prison. Some of these, though the time of their commitments had not generally exceed six months, have, as we were informed, been residents at the prison for years, making it their home and their only home. We were not able to ascertain the number included in this description, but it is evidently large and increasing, and soon will, if it does not already, amount to fifty persons.

We found, also, that it was not of unfrequent occurrence, that prisoners remained in confinement after the expiration of their terms of imprisonment. This, of course, depends on the opinion of the warden; and there being no account kept of those who are daily entitled to their discharge, a prisoner can, if he pleases, be thus for some time supported at the public expense. To what extent this abuse prevails we had not time to ascertain, but we could discover no precautions to prevent its being carried to an inconvenient extent.

DISCIPLINE AND GOVERNMENT.

The prison is constructed on the plan of the "Silent System," involving separate confinement at night, and labour in common by day; and requiring, in the day time, a most vigilant and careful watch to prevent intercourse between the prisoners. That watchfulness is essential to the very existence of the system, and without it, all the evils of the old-fashioned prisons must exist in the fullest extent.

We were extremely pained to perceive, in this prison, an almost total absence of this indispensable watchfulness:

The number of keepers is only twenty; a force utterly inadequate to the attainment of this object:

The number of sleeping rooms, or separate cells, is only about five hundred, and, as a matter of course, several must sleep together:

And we observed, wherever we went, the almost freedom of intercourse between the prisoners, both male and female, tolerated.

Only two matrons are employed among the female prisoners, a number far too small to produce the necessary watchfulness, even if their time were not almost exclusively engrossed in superintending the labour, and caring for the sick.

Several of the keepers are employed rather as mechanics than as watchmen, and are frequently compelled to leave their gangs without any overseer. Indeed, so little attention is paid to this most essential feature of prison discipline, that one of the keepers is too deaf to hear or detect ordinary conversation. And we saw in one of the workshops a visitor freely conversing with the prisoners, and he and they were discussing matters with as much absence from restraint as could be found in any workshop in the city.

The result must inevitably be, that the prison, instead of being a Penitentiary—a place where the vicious may be reclaimed or punished—becomes a school of vice, where the old offender hardens and perfects in crime the newly initiated, and where the process of mutual corruption goes on, not only without restraint, but actually with the fostering care of the officers of justice.

Years have now passed since philanthropists, in all parts of the civilized world, have united in condemning the practice of imprisonment in common, and there is scarcely a government either in Europe or in this country, that has not adopted measures to correct its manifold evils. Yet this city, distinguished as it is for its enterprise, and its many noble charities, presents the extraordinary spec-

tacle of a prison, the largest on this continent, almost in the world, conducted upon principles which the wise and the good of all countries have united in condemning; which must promote, rather than punish, crime; which must increase, rather than diminish, the number of offenders; which is utterly destructive of all hopes of reformation; which involves the young and hardened offenders, the criminal and the destitute, in a common fate; and which renders the whole matter a continually-increasing burden upon the honest portion of the community.

This sad state of things is by no means imputable to the officers of the prison. It would be impossible for them, however competent, to have it much otherwise. The evil is inherent in the whole system, as now established by our city authorities; and with them the remedy is to be found, and of them it must be asked.

It would perhaps be regarded as presumptuous for this Committee to dictate the nature of the remedy. Their duty may be regarded as performed, when they disclose the numerous and crying evils of the system as now conducted.

There is, however, r one glaring defect, which the Committee could hardly excuse themselves for omitting to notice, and that is, the want of some general governing and supervisory power over the prison.

The members of the Common Council are burthened already with too many and arduous duties, to expect that they can devote more than a passing attention to this matter. The Commissioner of the Almshouse is similarly situated; and, in consequence, the prison is permitted pretty much to govern itself, with no one to inspect it, no one to look out for abuses in those who manage it, and no one to mature or carry out a plan of government that shall approach towards the end in view.

The appointment of a Board, whose exclusive duty it should be to inspect and govern the prison, constituted, as it might be, of intelligent and disinterested citizens, would of itself remedy most of the ills now existing, and suggest such other corrections as might, in a brief period, make this prison an honour to our city, instead of being a source of deep mortification, as well as seriously injurious.

LONG ISLAND FARMS.

The Committee also visited the Child's Hospital on Blackwell's Island, and the schools on the Farms at Long Island. Almost 5000 children are cared for in these institutions, 70 of whom are in the hospital.

Here, too, we discovered the want of that guardian care, so essential to making this great charity as beneficial as it might be.

With a few exceptions, all the persons in charge of these poor children, are either paupers from the Almshouse, or convicts from the Penitentiary.

At the children's hospital, ten male and twenty female convicts are employed. But we did not ascertain how many paupers were engaged there and at the Farms. It seemed to us, however, exceedingly unfortunate, that these little children should receive their earliest and most enduring impressions from persons selected for the task, not because of their fitness, but because they had been either criminal or dissolute.

We were not, therefore, surprised to find the persons in charge of these little children, generally unsuited to the task; and among the children themselves, a general air of depression, unhappiness, and fear.

In the hospital, we saw an attendant handle a weak and dying child, with no more regard for its sufferings, than if it had been a stone as hard as her own heart; and we heard some of the other attendants scolding the children with loud and angry voices, and in language exceedingly vulgar and offensive.

At the Farms, we saw a crowd of little ones, nearly one hundred in number, and scarcely any of them over eight years of age, under the charge of a young girl of about eighteen, whose countenance was repulsive, and whose manner towards the children was very harsh. She carried a rattle in her hand, and

drove the children about as she would sheep. Though narrowly watched, she was not observed once to smile, or speak a kind word.

Another gang was under the charge of a coarse and vulgar woman, in the uniform of the Alms House, who with loud scolding, and in a harsh manner, was driving her flock to play. They obeyed her, yet, while their hands and feet moved in the game, their faces showed too plainly that their hearts were filled with fear rather than gladness.

Such was the general impression produced upon us, by the manner and appearance of these children. There was, however, one exception; a gang of elder boys, under the charge of a lame man, while they seemed to be as well governed and as orderly as any, they did not evince that continued dread, and that unhappy depression of spirits, that marked all the other children.

It is evidently impracticable for the superintendent, or matron, to correct these evils. They must have assistance; and as long as they are compelled by the city authorities to seek for their help in the Poor House and the Prison, they can witness, but cannot correct the abuse.

Until it shall be corrected, it appears to be inevitable, that these children, drawing thus their first impressions from such contaminated sources, are being educated rather to tenant our prisons, than to become useful members of society.

SANITARY CONDITION.

To the casual observer, the appearance of the various apartments of the prison is clean and wholesome. We observed no collections of filth, either in or out doors, that could in any appreciable degree vitiate the air; and a judicious care appeared to be exercised by the officers to maintain this condition. A critical examination of the buildings and cells, has, however, wrought the conclusion, that there are some very important defects in the arrangements, the removal of which would add greatly to their good and healthy condition. There is an entire absence of ventilation in any of the cells, or any part of the Penitentiary buildings. By this we would be understood, no means whereby the air, rendered foul by respiration, perspiration, and other causes, can be withdrawn, as it should be, as fast as it is generated, in order to preserve the atmosphere in a state of purity. In the construction of the building, an attempt appears to have been made, by a vent-hole in the back wall, next the ceiling in each cell, to accomplish this important purpose; but satisfactory tests assured us it is a complete failure, and the cells are wholly unventilated, except through the gratings of the doors, a plan well known to be utterly inadequate. Each cell will supply pure air to the lungs of its inmates, (supposing it is pure when he enters it, which it is not,) for a period of thirty minutes; he then begins to re-inhale the air, and it may easily be perceived that in the morning, after twelve hours' confinement, the atmosphere must be of a very offensive description. The close attention of late years bestowed upon the evil effects of foul air, has developed the important fact, that many diseases, (especially scrofula and fevers,) have their origin in it alone, and that the bodily and mental sufferings produced by it are very great. Pure air is the inviolate and incessant pulsation of life itself, and a privation of it is as deleterious as the indigestion of bad food.

We observed two cells, used for punishment, which are *air tight*, and perfectly dark, the grating in the door being covered by a stout iron sheet. In these literally Black Holes, where nothing was to be seen but the bare floor and walls, we were told refractory convicts are sometimes confined, in utter darkness, for twenty-four, or sometimes forty-eight hours, without the least renewal of air, except when the door is partly opened to thrust in the meals. If the keeper of a prison cannot be permitted to maintain a convict for life, neither should he be allowed to subject him to such a horrible ordeal as this, inevitably sowing the seeds of disease, which half a lifetime of the best air and nourishment may not eradicate.

It has happened that the crowded state of the prison has obliged the con-

finement, in each little cell, of two, and sometimes three convicts. Two would then sleep on the bunk, and the other on the floor;—a condition scarcely less offensive than the Black Hole of Calcutta.

While it is due to truth to say, that the interior of the cells are well coated with lime-wash, and presented generally a cleanly aspect, a close examination gave too abundant evidence that disgusting vermin had resisted all the attempts made to exterminate them. A thorough ventilation would do much towards the abatement of that nuisance.

The Female Penitentiary Hospital is a wooden building, situated at the south end of the Island—its different parts apparently erected at various times, and most awkwardly arranged for its purposes. It contained about 130 patients, nearly all afflicted with the most loathsome scourge of humanity.

The ceilings are low, and the rooms very fully occupied, with no apparent means of ventilation, except in warm weather by the windows and doors. Every thing appeared clean and well conducted, and the medical attendance judicious, as far as we could observe. We could discover no particular attention given to attempts at reforming this most degraded of all classes of humanity, though many little evidences were afforded that gentle and refined feelings had not wholly forsaken the frail daughters of vice, and leading us to believe that well-directed efforts, faithfully persevered in, might succeed in drawing some from longer treading the paths of ruin.

To many persons it is a subject of surprise, that so large a number of abandoned females should constantly be found on the Island, and especially in the hospital department of it. The Committee have taken some pains to look into this matter, with a view, if possible, to discover the mode in which an exhibition, so terrible and extensive, of human degradation, is maintained; and how it is that the great expense of supporting and curing these miserable creatures, is thrown wholly upon the city; for it is well known that they are generally committed as vagrants only, assuming that appearance either voluntarily, or on compulsion of the brothel-keepers, solely for the purpose of being relieved of the disease with which they are afflicted. Our inquiries have resulted in the following communication from a gentleman of veracity and philanthropy, whose vocation, that of a druggist, brings him into communication with many of this wretched class, who have freely informed him of the vile schemes used to detain them in the employ of those worst pests of society, the keepers of brothels.

New York, August 1st, 1845.

DEAR SIR:

In reply to your inquiries, why the Penitentiary and Houses of Correction, at Blackwell's Island, contain so great a number of prostitutes, the following facts may afford some explanation. It is a constant and well-known practice of the keepers of the houses of prostitution, in various parts of our city, particularly the most abandoned and degraded portion of them, to look to Blackwell's Island as a place of refuge and last resort for the inmates of their establishments, in case of sickness and disease. Whenever any of their boarders, (as they are termed,) become diseased, or unfit to do their part towards supporting the house, they are made to turn out into the streets after the night watch is set, and give themselves up as vagrants, when they are lodged in the watch-house, and next morning sent to Blackwell's Island for thirty or sixty days. Or if this plan does not succeed, they are plied with liquor, (which they are more or less addicted to,) and when again intoxicated they become noisy and quarrelsome, and the poor wretches are soon arrested by the watch or police, as disturbers of the public peace, and thus the object of the keeper of the establishment is attained. When taken to the Island, they are examined, and being found diseased, are placed in the hospital. The attention and care they receive there, suffice, in most cases, to cure them by the time the period for which they were committed expires, and they are then ready to return to their former haunts, and pursue the same course over again; and the same individual will be found in the hospital, at Blackwell's Island, again, in the course of three or four months.

It is easy to perceive that such a system, well followed up by the keepers of brothels, (as it undoubtedly is,) will supply a very large number of wretched females to be

supported at public expense, and that our Penitentiaries are absolutely made, indefinitely, to support and encourage crime.

Respectfully, yours, &c.,
To _____

The Committee offer no comment upon this remarkable exposition;—it is needless. Nor will they attempt to propose any means for suppressing the evil. One suggestion, however, they feel it imperative to make, viz. that in every instance of a female of this character being sent to the island, the keeper, or, in his default, the owner of the house from which she came, should be compelled to support her there, and her own declaration taken as *prima facie* evidence against said keeper. This is due both to public justice, and to the fact, well ascertained, that all the earnings of these poor creatures go into the pockets of their keepers, who board and poorly clothe them, at high charges, keeping them thus always in debt, and with no resources in sickness.

In the *Male Penitentiary Hospital*, the sicker sickens at the worst passions utter and disgusting abandonment of men to the control of the worst passions of the animal. The task of reformation would indeed seem hopeless, for every good feeling appears expunged from the heart. This place, too, appears without any means of ventilation, and hospitals, of all places, require it the most.

At the Farms on Long Island, better care has been taken to preserve the inmates against disease. The diet has been within a year decidedly improved. The dormitories have ventilating shafts, (which, though imperfectly doing the work, are better than nothing,) and each child is furnished with a towel fastened upon the dress; in a word, every possible precaution against Ophthalmia, which has so long and so often been the scourge of this place, appears to be taken.

Those who are taken sick at this place are immediately removed to the *Nursery Hospital* at Blackwell's Island. Here were seventy-one patients, sick with various infantile diseases, but a very gratifying diminution in the amount and severity of Ophthalmia, as compared with former years. The defects observed at this hospital were, principally, low-ceiled and unventilated wards; nurses in the garb, and with the rough and unfeeling deportment towards the tender sick, of convicts, and a restraint upon the children, even in the open air, as little conducive to their improvement in health, as it was natural to the buoyancy of their years and spirits. An air of subsidence and unhappiness was upon the countenance of almost all, the removal of which would go far to relieve their physical ailments. The Committee observed, in the medical attendant, a degree of harshness and roughness in the treatment of the sick and suffering infants, not at all necessary to a firm and judicious application of his skill.

The beds, bedding, and other appurtenances, were clean and well kept. All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. W. EDMONDS,
JOHN D. RUSS,
JOHN H. GRISCOM,
N. B. MORSE,
J. L. TELLKAMPE, *Committee.*

July 26th, 1845.

A more recent examination of this Institution, has confirmed the general accuracy of these reports, and enables us to present the following additional statistics. The whole number of convicts on the 8th of Nov. 1845, was 1340, viz. 288 white and 80 coloured male, and 60 white and 16 coloured female Court convicts; and 263 white and 19 coloured male, and 575 white and 39 coloured female Police convicts; making a total of 364 Court, and 444 Police convicts. Of this number, there were 162 patients in the female hospital, and

85 in the male, besides about 150 invalids. The largest number it is believed ever on the Island at one time, was Oct. 18, when there were 1381, of which 737 were females. An examination of the weekly reports from the 5th of July to the 8th of November, for the years 1844 and 1845, present the following results.

	White Male Court Convicts	Col'd Male Court Convicts	White Male Police Convicts	Col'd Male Police Convicts	Frm. Court Convicts	Convicts	White Female Court Convicts	Col'd Female Police Convicts	Admissions.	Deaths Male	Hospital.	Female Hospital.
19 weeks of 1844.	3526	863	4494	305	506	143	9014	717	1386	1006	2537	
19 do 1845.	5113	1250	7777	229	1034	301	10381	555	1494	1269	3067	
Prop. of '44 to '45, as 1 in	1.44	1.44	0.84	0.75	2.04	2.10		1.15	0.77	1.16	1.26	1.31

We regret that the books of the Institution have been so kept, as not to allow us to compare similar periods in former years. The alarming increase of Court criminals, both male and female, but especially female, is well calculated to arrest attention, and would seem to require that its cause should be investigated. An examination of the register, confirms the opinion expressed in the last report, that about two-thirds of all the prisoners are foreigners. To state the fact more accurately, we find that of the whole number of female Court convicts, for every 100 Americans, there are 184 Foreigners; and of the whole number of female Police convicts, for every 100 Americans, there are 174 Foreigners, and about the same proportions hold in regard to the males. An examination of the commitments of females for the last month, presents the following facts. Committed as common drunkards 22, as vagrants 64, as prostitutes 45, total 131; or in other words, one-half were vagrants, one-third prostitutes, and one-sixth drunkards. What, and who these vagrants are, becomes a matter of serious consideration. They are charged in their commitment with no crime but that of destitution; and is this, we may ask, a sufficient evidence of crime? We feel constrained again to urge upon the proper authorities, the necessity of giving to this matter their immediate attention, and providing some more suitable place for the merely destitute, than the walls of a prison. Another very considerable class of prisoners are those dissolute women, who ask to "be sent up" as the phrase is, for the purpose of being cured of a loathsome disease. These women are not properly subjects of the Penitentiary, and tolerating them there is at the expense of prison discipline. Beyond a doubt, we think this class of prisoners should be provided for separately. And we suggest, if they must be a charge to the city, whether motives of economy as well as humanity, do not point to the erection of a hospital, for their separate accommodation;—a place where reformatory influences might be brought to operate upon them, and an attempt made to win them back to the paths of virtue and happiness. If this plan were adopted, and those vagrants which are committed solely on account of poverty, were sent to the Alms House, where they properly belong; or what would be decidedly more appropriate, a Work

House was provided for them, the prison would be relieved of the larger part of its inmates, ample accommodations secured, and an opportunity for the exercise of disciplinary government afforded. At present, the Institution is so crowded, that it is impossible to exert any reformatory influences. There are but 496 cells for the accommodation of 1340 prisoners. About 250 are constantly in the Hospital, and 130 or 140 employed at Randall's Island, Bellevue and the Lunatic Asylum, where many of them sleep, leaving from 800 to 1000 to be accommodated in the prison, which would give an average of nearly 2 persons to each cell. The keeper, however, convinced of the impropriety of thus overcharging the prison, selects those whom he thinks most harmless, and they, to the number of from 170 to 200, are disposed of in a small building adjacent to the prison, called the Loony House. There, under the sole control of a captain, selected from their own number, without beds or even straw, arranged in rows upon the floor, they pass the night amid oaths, and ribaldry, and obscene jests. The old Bridewell, or even Newgate itself, might be challenged to produce a picture of greater moral deformity, than is here presented.

The City Prison, though a sumptuous building, in the heart of this great metropolis, open daily to the examination of our citizens, is, in many respects, a worthy compeer of its neighbour on the island. A want of the necessary discipline for such an establishment, is everywhere apparent. Prisoners of every grade and class walk together in the galleries, and abundant opportunities seem to exist for familiar intercourse. Even those confined for capital offences, while awaiting the execution of their sentences, are allowed to communicate with others, both in and out of prison.

The female department of this prison, is in a worse condition than the male. The lack of order, system, and separation, is more apparent, and added to this, many of the cells are in a filthy condition. A portion, however, of this part of the establishment is extremely neat, but entirely unfitted for the purposes of a prison; separation is nowhere attempted, and should it be, would be found impracticable. There is attached to this department only one matron, and considering the number of those submitted to her charge, it must be evident that no one individual, however competent, can satisfactorily perform the duties of this station. The upper corridor, to which the matron is more particularly attached, is used by the prisoners as a sort of common sitting-room, and here, even in the presence of the matron, the prisoners appear to be under but little restraint. What then must be their condition when locked up together, and the matron in another and distant part of the building? To satisfactorily perform the duties of this situation, more matrons are indispensable. These should be females, selected not from motives of economy,—because they will work cheap,—but on account of those moral and intellectual endowments which would enable them to exert a benign influence upon the objects of their charge.

Besides the prisons of New York and Brooklyn, the Committee have to report a personal examination of six County Prisons, and the State Prison at Sing Sing. In most of the County Prisons, the wholesome provision of the statute requiring the separation of the prisoners, has been either entirely neglected or imperfectly adopted. This is the more to be regretted, as whatever arguments may be used against the separate and solitary system, for more protracted periods of confinement, they can have but little force when applied to

cases of mere detention, which are generally for short periods, and during which the prisoner is buoyed up by the hopes of a not distant release, and his mind occupied in preparation for trial. A just regard for the rights of the accused would seem to make it an imperious duty, that at least while undergoing examination, and awaiting trial, he should be secured from the contaminating influences of evil association, and preserved from those disgusting exhibitions of humanity which such places too frequently afford. Especially should this be the case with the innocent witness, whose misfortune it has been to be cognizant of some fact in the criminal history of another, and is therefore detained, that by his testimony the ends of justice may be secured. The state owes, and the welfare of society demands this protection for all such. Else our prisons, instead of securing us from the lawless and unprincipled, will continue what they have too often been, the most accomplished schools of vice. The condition of one of these prisons is so clearly exhibited in the presentment of the Grand Jury of Chemung county, that we introduce it as presenting, in no exaggerated colours, the present state of a great many prisons in our country.

[The Report is omitted here, as it has already been introduced in the Report of the Executive Committee, pp. 28, 29.]

It is to be hoped that there are few, if any other prisons in the state, in the same sad condition as this; still, reforms are more or less called for in all.

The condition of the prison at Sing Sing, constructed upon the Auburn plan, is so well known through the last annual report of the Inspectors, that it need not be particularly noticed in this connexion. With its prototype at Auburn, it must be considered as one of those experimental establishments in which the great problem of the silent system is being worked out, and the general superiority or inferiority of this to the separate, or Pennsylvania system, being tested.

As two different methods exist, let us urge upon the respective friends of each, the adoption of such measures as shall bring each method to the perfection of which it is capable, while, wedded to neither, we carefully note the operation of the two upon the health and morals of the convict. We may, possibly, in this way, discover that our apprehensions in regard to the rigours of the solitary system, are ill-founded, or perhaps find some middle ground, free from the objections at present urged against either; and thus, instead of an Auburn system, or a Pennsylvania system, establish a great American system, embracing the distinctive merits of both, and avoiding their defects. An approximation to something of this kind seems to be now making at the Pentonville prison, near London; and if we are not diligent in perfecting our system at home, we shall find it perfected for us abroad. Thus we may become indebted to a foreign people for the model of our own system. Indeed, a new feature in prison discipline* has already been ingrafted there, and a system of rewards established, which, if it does not tend to the moral elevation of the prisoner, will, without doubt, have the effect to render him more docile and manageable during his confinement. Might not the surplus earnings of our own convicts be thus beneficially appropriated? Another improvement, worthy of imitation, is the setting apart of a

* See extract from Sing Sing Report, page 43.

† Mrs. Farnham, the very worthy and intelligent matron at Sing Sing, has recently most successfully introduced the same plan there.

portion of each day for the purposes of instruction. In this manner our prisons might truly become schools of reform, where the thoughtless profligate, steeped in crime, should first become awakened to a sense of his utter degradation, and taught the means of administering, by honest employment, to that support which previously was only obtained by violence and crime. Happily, the day is past when the culprit was looked upon only as a fit object of the vengeance of the law; and though we still recognize the necessity of punishment, we insist that this punishment should be tempered by mercy, and directed to reformation.

HEALTH.

In the investigation of this subject, we are met at the outset by a want of that accurate information which the examination of so important a matter demands. Consecutive reports of the different Penitentiaries for a series of years, are only to be obtained with great difficulty, and even when obtained, on account of the desultory manner in which the statistics of health are presented, afford no very satisfactory data for comparison. An uniform method of reporting the different facts, if generally adopted by the physicians of our Penitentiary, would greatly facilitate future investigations, and enable us to form some just estimate of the effect of confinement and prison discipline upon the health. Our examination of this subject inclines us to the opinion, that imprisonment rather tends to increase than diminish the chances of life; for though the moral effect of confinement is doubtless injurious to health, regular habits, simple but wholesome diet, comfortable clothes, an equal distribution of rest and labour, and a freedom from great excitement, are eminently restorative in their character. If, then, the tenants of our prisons are diseased, or die in undue proportions to persons at large,—this sickness and death must arise, we should think, from other causes than those necessarily connected with, and inherent to imprisonment. Small, low, ill-ventilated, dark, and damp cells; severe punishments; the nature of the employments, and want of cleanliness, may, and undoubtedly do, in many instances, operate to produce disease. These, however, are not the necessary adjuncts of a prison, and it would be exceedingly wrong to charge upon imprisonment the results of negligence, carelessness, or thoughtlessness. Neither should a prison be made accountable for the sickness or death of all those who enter it with worn-out and broken-down constitutions, or diseases contracted while they were at large. It is a fact familiar to all, that the natural operation of crime is sickness and death; and it will not, therefore, be a matter of surprise, if even a larger proportion of invalids are to be found in our prisons than elsewhere. The report of the Auburn State Prison for '43 and '44, containing a detailed account of the deaths by each particular disease in that establishment, presents the astounding fact, that out of 229 deaths that have occurred in that prison since 1817, 124 died from some form of diseased lungs, and 103 with consumption; thus making more than one-half of all the deaths to depend upon this one cause. In Sing Sing for the last year, the proportion has been about the same, nine out of sixteen having fallen victims to diseased lungs. In the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, for a series of ten years, a similar proportion has prevailed; and should this proportion hold good for other prisons, it becomes an inquiry of exceeding interest to discover, whether this extraordinary prevalence of a particular disease is caused by a

prison life, or by previous habits of exposure, dissipation and crime. To enable us to arrive at a definite conclusion, the reports of the medical officer should contain the state of the prisoner on entering prison, the date of entry and of death, the length of his sentence, the disease, age, colour, employment, sex, and crime. It should state the size of the cell, manner of ventilating, heating, cleansing; the number of ranges, or tiers of cells, and from which tier the invalid was taken; also, state generally, whether the cells are damp or dry, well lighted or dark; and any other fact he may know which will be likely to exert an influence upon health. The following tables present the best information we have been able to collect in relation to the mortality in our prisons, and certainly show a very large per centage, when we recollect that the greater portion of the convicts are between the ages of twenty and fifty. Another interesting feature in these tables is, the great disparity of deaths between the whites and blacks.

TABLE contrasting the proportion of deaths of whites and blacks in the Philadelphia Penitentiary, with the deaths of whites and blacks in the City, for the following years.*

	PENITENTIARY, PHILADELPHIA.		PHILADELPHIA CITY.		
	White, deaths per cent.	Coloured, deaths per cent.	White, deaths per cent.	Coloured, deaths per cent.	
1830	4-19	-0	1821	2-31	5-92
1831	4-18	10-02	1822	2-39	4-65
1832	1-44	13-52	1823	2-96	5-71
1833	1-11	0	1824	2-85	5-71
1834	-8	6-68	1825	2-36	3-70
1835	1-26	4-61	1826	2-48	3-82
1836	-09	6-74	1827	2-11	5-29
1837	3-	6-49	1828	2-29	4-81
1838	2-92	11-80	1829	2-27	4-22
1839	-81	4-62	1830	2-20	3-66
1840	3-88	8-02			
1841	1-97	4-61		24-22	47-51
1842	1-41	9-03			
	27-24	86-14		2-42	4-75
	2-09	6-62			

It will be perceived, that these numbers are to each other in the proportion of 1 to 1-96. That is, out of 1000 of each colour residing in the city, 196 blacks die for every 100 whites, and for every 1000 of each colour in the Penitentiary, the astonishing number of 316 blacks, to every 100 whites. Returns from the Philadelphia County Prison for the last ten years, show that out of 101 deaths in that establishment, 54 died of consumption. Of these, 40 were coloured, and 14 white; 34 were delicate, or diseased on entering, and 20 were well. Of the blacks, 26 were diseased at the time of entry. In ten cases, death was caused by masturbation.

* We are indebted to the Philadelphia Journal of Prison Discipline for the material from which this table is constructed.

TABLE

Contrasting the Deaths among the Whites and Blacks in the following Penitentiaries, for a series of years.

PENITENTIARY.	Whole No. of Prisoners.	Whites.	Coloured.	DEATHS.		Total of Deaths.
				Whites.	Coloured.	
Weathersfield from March 31st, '41, to March 31st, '44.	609	460	149	13	15	28
Eastern Penitentiary from Dec 31st, '40, to Dec. 31st, '43.	1025	648	377	12	25	37

This gives an average of deaths for Weathersfield of 2.22 Whites. 10.66 Coloured.
 " " " " Eastern Penitentiary 1.25 " 6.63

The following TABLE of the whole number of Prisoners, from 1835, in the Philadelphia County Prison, the number of Deaths, and the colour and sex of each, presents some curious and highly interesting results.

Colour and Sex.	Whole number from Nov. 30, 1833.	Died.
White Males, - -	996	24
" Females, - - -	183	1
Black Males, - - -	770	68
" Females, - - -	319	8
Total, - - - -	2218	101

The proportion of white males to white females in these prisons is as 1 in 7-47; but the deaths are in proportion of 1 to 24. The proportion of black females to black males is as 1 to 2-41; while the proportion of deaths is as 1 to 8-50.

TABLE

Showing the average number of Prisoners, and whole number of Deaths per year in the following Penitentiaries.

YEARS.	N. YORK. AUBURN.		MASS.		N. HAMP.		PENNA. PITTSBURG.		VIRGINIA.		MAINE.	
	Prisoners.	Deaths.	Prisoners.	Deaths.	Prisoners.	Deaths.	Prisoners.	Deaths.	Prisoners.	Deaths.	Prisoners.	Deaths.
1820			306	6	61	2	180	9				
1821			282	5	65	3	201	15				
1822			279	10	57	3	210	12				
1823			308	6	66	1	215	14				
1824	349	2	298	6	62	1	214	16	58	1		
1825	427	3	314	1	66	2	201	23	69	1		
1826	427	7	313	6	59	1	0	173	18	79	3	
1827	525	9	385	1	48	2	0	153	16	72	3	
1828	571	9	290	4	56	0	0	149	17	99	1	
1829	639	5	262	6	50	1	0	148	21	94	2	
Total, 2938	35,2937	51	590	15	141	2	21844	151	471	9		

YEARS.	NEW YORK.		MASS.		N. HAMP.		CONN.		VERMONT.		KY.		VIRGINIA.		OHIO.		MARYD.		MAINE.	
	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.	AMERK. KING'S CO.	DEATHS.
1830	620	18	506	7	66	0	167	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1831	647	14	514	5	81	0	182	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1832	623	13	514	23	297	11	182	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1833	617	11	514	22	250	6	186	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1834	670	11	514	22	250	6	186	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1835	654	10	514	23	272	4	187	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1836	618	10	514	23	272	4	187	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1837	670	19	723	29	321	5	199	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1838	639	18	514	23	272	4	186	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1839	643	11	514	22	250	6	186	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1840	683	14	737	17	329	3	180	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1841	700	9	835	18	327	8	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1842	710	7	736	37	349	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1843	711	11	741	31	370	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1844	717	10	745	32	369	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1845	717	10	745	32	369	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total, 1312	170,045	323,898	70,109	7,323	63,726	10,102	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382	10,382

Showing the average number of Prisoners, and the whole number of Deaths per year for the following years in each of the following Prisons:

temperature between that limit and the temperature of the corridor, which can be so regulated as to produce a minimum effect.

"A few cells immediately over the steamboilers in the kitchen, and those adjoining the flues of the apparatus, also required a special provision for keeping them at the same general temperature as others; and it has been effected by placing a ventilator in one or more squares of the window. It was a great object to prevent the transmission of sound, and to leave the regulation of the opening at the command of the prisoner. The contrivance adopted was found to answer the purpose.

"A series of experiments have been carried on at the request of the Commissioners for the government of the prison, by Dr. Owen Rees, the principal medical officer of the establishment, by which the subjuncted facts are established:

- "1st. That from 30 to 45 cubic feet of pure fresh air is made to pass into every cell in a minute; and that the ventilation is maintained with great regularity.
- "2nd. That this amount of ventilation, and a temperature ranging from 52° to 60° can be uniformly maintained in the cells during the coldest weather, at an expense of less than a farthing a cell for 24 hours.
- "3rd. That the same degree of ventilation is effected during the summer months, at less than half that expense."

The present method of ventilating the cells in our prisons from the bottom, results effectually in no ventilation; for as soon as the weather becomes a little cool, both the lower and upper vents are closed by the prisoner, and he is thus shut up in an atmosphere, which he must breathe over many times during a night, and which will thus be rendered unfit for the support of animal life. But, however ventilated, the cells in most of our prisons should be enlarged, and especially increased in height to ten or eleven feet.

Besides the evils resulting from imperfect ventilation, the cells in many of our prisons are rendered still more unhealthy, by the employment of wooden night tubs, which are kept in the cell during the entire night; and which are no doubt powerfully influenced in sowing the seeds of disease.†

INSANITY.

Upon a subject of so much interest and importance, we deeply regret our inability to procure more copious and satisfactory statistics. Much attention has not, till quite recently, been directed to this subject, and no well-authenticated data obtained except from the Pennsylvania and New Jersey prisons;—all on the separate system. The reason of this is, perhaps, owing to the greater difficulty under the associated and silent system, in distinguishing those who are absolutely insane, from those who only feign insanity. The last Report of the Inspectors of the Sing Sing prison, presents a striking illustration of this fact in the case of a prisoner who had been several times punished for feigning insanity, and with the most marked success. This prisoner, again manifesting symptoms of insanity, was examined by the physician, and his case declared to be one of simulation; and he was accordingly again subjected to severe punishment, but without success. He was sent to a lunatic asylum, and, shortly after, died in a state which could leave no doubt as to the reality of his disease. We mention this fact, simply to point out the difficulty, where so many are congregated together under circumstances which must constantly keep those in authority on their guard against deception, of distinguishing certain forms of insanity, and the danger of punishing, as dissemblers, those who are truly afflicted. The same report further states, that 31 of the prisoners then in pris-

* See Philadelphia Journal of Prison Discipline.

† See note on preceding page.

on, or at Blomingtondale Asylum, were insane, but that most of them were still capable of being useful in various occupations. If attention was more particularly directed to this subject in all our prisons, and more searching investigations instituted, it might be discovered, that the disparity which is said to exist under different systems of prison government, would disappear; and perhaps the fact be established, that in many instances a predisposition at least to insanity had manifested itself, if the disease was not fully developed, before imprisonment. It is to be hoped, that in a case where the interests of humanity are at stake, no pride of system will influence the officers and those who have charge of prisoners, to withhold one single fact which will tend to elucidate this subject; and we would respectfully invite, and urge every physician connected with our prisons, to make the most thorough examinations, and give to the world the result of their inquiries in their annual reports. The alarming frequency of masturbation, as a cause of insanity, is strikingly depicted in the following table of mental diseases, for the Eastern Penitentiary for 1838 and '39.

Years.	Total Whites.	Total Blacks.	Masturbation.		Cured.		Relieved.	
			W.	B.	W.	B.	W.	B.
1839	13	13	3	12	6	9	4	2
1838	8	10	3	10	5	9	1	1
1845*	11	4	0	00	3	1	0	0

REFORMATION.

Equally important with the health, is the reformation of the convict. This is the great object of prison discipline; and on its more or less perfect accomplishment, must mainly depend the fate of both the present systems of prison government. Till within a few years, the thought of reforming the violator of law and order, scarce occupied the attention of the most benevolent. The ban of society was upon him, and thrust away from the view of man, he was left, as irreclaimable, to the mercies of fiends yet more wicked than himself. Or if some kind heart now and then dreamed that all hope was not extinguished, the idea was treated as Utopian, and abandoned without an effort. Contrast the condition of our prisons thirty or forty years since, with most of those of the present day, and we shall perceive abundant reason for congratulation, and we hail with peculiar satisfaction, the formation of Prison Associations and Prison Discipline Societies, in different parts of our land, as evincing an increasing interest in this important subject. Public attention is thoroughly awakened, and the experience of the last twenty years has incontestably proved, in a multitude of cases, that there is even hope of reformation within the walls of a prison.

The chaplain of the Mount Pleasant Penitentiary, in one of his last reports, gives an account of one hundred, who had been inmates of that prison during his chaplaincy, from whom he had received the most satisfactory accounts; and adds, that no doubt many more, from whom he had not heard, continue steadfast in the good resolutions they had formed previously to leaving prison. We may add to this, one hundred and forty more, mentioned in a report of the Au-

* For Philadelphia county prison for 1845.

burn Prison. These accounts of reformation should undoubtedly be received with much caution; but even under the least encouraging view, we are favourably impressed in relation to the reformatory action which, under favourable circumstances, may be exerted in prisons. Similar facts, collected and reported for all our prisons, might have a beneficial effect; and by showing the discharged convicts that they are cared for and watched over; be an additional inducement for them to continue in the paths of virtue:—or if productive of no moral effect upon the convicts themselves, would at least form an interesting item in criminal statistics. Great assistance, in making a statement of this kind, might be derived from yearly communications from the discharged convicts, to the chaplain, or some other officer of the institution, of their residence, situations, employments, and prospects. From a majority of the prisoners, of course, no return would ever be received; others, no doubt, would make false statements; but would not a considerable number find their weak purposes strengthened by this apparent solicitude, on the part of Government, for their future welfare!

INSTRUCTION.

The increasing attention which is given to moral and religious instruction, as an important part of prison discipline, cannot but be productive of the best results, and an exceeding weight of responsibility rests upon every state, in this regard. The statistics of our prisons conclusively show, that ignorance is one of the most frequent causes of crime; and a neglect to provide proper instruction, and set apart a portion of each day for that purpose, is to abandon one of the most important elements of reformation. We are happy to perceive, everywhere, a growing sense of the importance of this subject.

Thus, the last message of the Governor of Maine contains the following suggestions. "In some of the neighbouring states the Legislatures have provided the means of furnishing the convicts with some moral, or religious, or temperance periodical. Where this has been practised, it has been found to produce a salutary influence; and it is worthy of inquiry, whether a like measure might not be attended with equally beneficial results in this state also." The Governor of Massachusetts, in his last message, says: "It is worthy of inquiry, by the Legislature, whether a greater amount of instruction than the prisoners receive under the present laws and regulations, would not tend to further the great end of all humane punishment, the reformation of offenders, and the prevention of crime. * * * * *

"It is important that men who are excluded from society for violating its laws, should be made to feel that those who are placed above them, do not act as monsters and tyrants, but that they are the reasonable and necessary instruments of the law, to see that the penalties which they have justly incurred, are properly executed." Another great obstacle to reform is here hinted at, namely, severity of prison discipline. A large portion of the tenants of all prisons have been thrown at an early age, poor and ignorant, upon the cold sympathies of the world, where the voice of parental solicitude, friendly assiduities, or affectionate kindness, has rarely reached them. Pursued, down-smitten, trodden on by society—like Ishmael, they feel that every man's hand is against them, and, as a natural consequence, their hands are against every man. To such, severity

of treatment has no reforming influence. They have been accustomed to it in the daily walks of life, and surely they can expect no less in prison. In these, let the germ of virtue be warmed into life by considerate kindness; let them be encouraged, advised, admonished, exhorted,—by respecting them, teach them to respect themselves; and thus subdued and softened by the first accents of kindness, a new principle of action will be excited, which, properly fostered, will lead to reformation. The lash, while it lacerates the flesh, degrades and debases the affections. There are, perhaps, some convicts so brutalized by their past habits and crimes, that they can only be controlled by bodily suffering. But if such there are, we believe their number to be exceedingly small. In proof of this position, we would point to the last report of the keeper of the Sing Sing Penitentiary, in which it is stated, that by comparing the monthly reports with last year, it is found that the number of lashes has been reduced about seventy-five per cent., and the whole number of violations of discipline, fallen off about forty per cent. "The cause of this great difference, in my opinion," says the warden, "is attributable to the introduction of our library among them, as well as the milder mode of punishment which has been adopted; and not from actual inflictions with the whip." The warden of the Maine State Prison also says: "The discipline of this prison is, perhaps, as perfect as any in the country. The punishments are almost universally mild and merciful, and the calendar of punishments for the past, shows them to be fewer in number, and milder in degree, than in almost any former year. Corporal punishment seems to be almost obsolete—it has not been inflicted for several years past in this prison. The mode of punishment almost invariably adopted, is solitary confinement in a cell for a few days, which is always found sufficient to subdue even the most stubborn. Experience has fully shown, that the old mode of inflicting corporal punishment, although it may subdue, will never reform the criminal, but will enkindle and keep alive the blighting spirit of revenge." The warden of the Massachusetts State Prison, in his report for 1844, says: "The government of the prison has been administered without corporal punishment. The shower-bath has not been used, and yet I think I can safely say, that the convicts are as orderly, as industrious and obedient, as heretofore, and more contented, docile, and happy. A feeling of mutual respect, kindness, and friendship, seems to be growing up between us. I am sure I experience these affections towards the convicts, and every day gives evidence that the same affections are being excited in their breasts towards me. I have long believed that what comes from the heart, will reach the heart; and I am happy to learn that this will apply to convicts in prison as well as others; that there is no sane convict that cannot be reached by sincere and persevering affection. Men may be governed by severity, but not reformed." The idea is too common, that as soon as a man is deprived of his liberty as a punishment for his crimes, he is at the same time divested of all the qualities, attributes, and feelings of humanity. The prisoner seems, in the estimation of most, to have been transformed into a being of another order; and to be influenced by different principles, and acted upon by different motives. But does not the licentiousness, debauchery, and crime, which stalks unpunished through our land, and which is

Prisoners' needs

* See Boston Prison Discipline Reports, pp. 372, 377.

arrested by moral and religious influences, teach us that the same appliances may, and will work the same results in a prison?

Another great obstacle to reformation, is the obstinacy with which society rejects the prisoner after his discharge. A better feeling must be excited in this respect, and this can only be effected through the operation of societies with the same general objects as ours.

We fear that the habit of instructing the prisoner upon his entrance to the prison, in his duties and responsibilities, has been too little attended to; and that few attempts have heretofore been made to impress upon his mind the fact, that his imprisonment is not for punishment only, but also for reformation. This idea should be inculcated and enforced in every way, and on all proper occasions. The rules of the prison should not only be read to him, but placed in his cell, and he should be taught that he is entering upon a new life, and that while by his confinement he is paying to society the penalty attached to his past crimes, he may be also laying the foundation of a future spotless reputation.* That it depends upon himself whether society will receive him to its bosom on his discharge, as an erring, but repentant subject, or spurn him as a hopeless reprobate; and that he possesses the power to win his way back to honourable consideration, and respectable association, if he will only use it.

The solemnization of funerals is another means for reformation which should be everywhere carefully observed, and no opportunity neglected of impressing upon the prisoners the important lesson which the occasion presents. Morning and evening prayers should be strenuously insisted on, and the employment, besides a chaplain in all our large prisons at least, of one or more instructors, whose duty it shall be to cultivate the understanding, and improve the dispositions of the prisoners, and by opening new trains of thought, to change the current of their affections.

CLASSIFICATION.

Another important element in producing reform is *classification*. To derive the greatest possible advantage from our present system of prison government, this should be introduced into all prisons upon the Auburn plan, as an important part of discipline; and here the question may arise, whether the classification should be made according to the crimes committed, or to the conduct while in prison. Perhaps an arrangement, which should regard them as the *hopeful, doubtful, and irreclaimable*, would answer the objections which may be urged against other modes of classification, and at the same time secure the advantages of all.

REWARDS.

Intimately connected with the classification of prisoners, is the subject of *rewards*. We would give to the convict, while expiating his offence, that stimulus to exertion that actuates men in common life. All hope of reward being annihilated, who among us would be willing to toil? The case of the prisoner is like the man without hope; give him this hope, and you have placed an object before him worthy his exertions. Whether this reward should be of

* One of the present inspectors of Sing Sing prison remarked a few days since to a member of this Committee, that the law for the regulation and government of our prisons, does not contemplate reformation at all. If such is the fact, is it not high time that our legislators should direct their attention to this subject?

a pecuniary character, or whether it should affect the duration of his confinement, or both, is a subject for future inquiry.

VISITATION OF PRISONS.

Besides those whose admission is provided for by the statute, and such distinguished strangers as visit for the purpose of investigation, none should be admitted into our prisons but the particular friends, and near relatives of the prisoner, and these only at distant and stated periods. The practice of selling tickets of admission at two shillings a piece, is too much like the admission fee to a menagerie, ever to have any other than a debasing influence upon the mind of the prisoner. The very idea that he is seen, perhaps recognized and remarked upon, must have a very unfortunate tendency; as the more you proclaim his disgrace, the further you drive him from reformation.

PARDONS.

The certainty, rather than the severity of punishment, has undoubtedly the greatest influence in preventing crime; and just in proportion as the pardoning power is frequently exercised, will the law cease to be a terror to evil-doers. Of what use are our Penitentiaries, and prisons, and the whole paraphernalia of courts, justices, and police officers, if justice is rendered a solemn mockery by the frequent exercise of the pardoning power? To such an extent has this exercise been carried, that the more infamous the crime, and the longer the sentence, the less chance there seems to be of its receiving the punishment justly awarded; and the individual sentenced for life, has, in this respect, a decided advantage over the one sentenced for seven or ten years. In this state, in a period of ten years, sixty convicts, sentenced for life, were pardoned; none having been imprisoned more than ten years, and several less than two; and we have the authority of a late Governor for stating that—so frequent has been the exercise of the pardoning power—the statistics of our prisons conclusively show that the average length of imprisonments for life does not extend beyond a term of seven years.

The frequent exercise of this power is not only, or solely, blamable upon the Executive;—the people themselves are equally in error. No matter how outrageous a man's conduct may have been, or what crime he may have committed;— sentence him to be hung, or imprisoned for life, and he becomes a sort of martyr, upon whom public sympathy is freely expended. An abundance of influential names can be procured, invoking Executive clemency, in so much, that it requires no small share of firmness and decision to withstand the combined influence of so many respectable individuals.

One of the most dangerous features in the exercise of this power, is its prostitution to political purposes. Whether this has ever occurred, we stop not to inquire. But such is our liability, and so great the inducement to such an abuse, that we would suggest, whether it might not be advisable to take this power from the hands of men, who, to keep their situations, must necessarily listen to the promptings of political friends, and place it in the hands of some one or more men, whose position elevates them above partisan considerations.

TABLE NO. II.
Showing the average number of Prisoners, and the whole number of Pardons for a series of years in the following Penitentiaries.

NEW YORK.		SILENT SYSTEM.										SEPARATE SYSTEM.																
		ARISTON. (SING SING.)		MASE.		N. HAMP.		CONN.		VER.		KY.		VIRGINIA.		OHIO.		MARYD.		MAINE.		PENNSYLVANIA.		N. JERSEY.				
No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.			
1830	639	38	900	7	65	4	167	10	158	4	158	4	158	4	94	4	94	4	94	4	94	4	31	0	64	2		
1831	627	33	814	41	526	12	81	5	182	8	164	5	164	5	96	5	96	5	96	5	96	5	67	1	68	6		
1832	683	59	814	41	527	10	82	6	192	9	169	12	169	12	101	12	101	12	101	12	101	12	75	11	823	9		
1833	679	57	814	41	550	7	72	1	186	1	152	9	152	9	64	6	64	6	64	6	64	6	61	183	8	15		
1834	684	57	814	41	579	16	78	16	195	5	158	5	158	5	65	6	65	6	65	6	65	6	56	566	15	15		
1835	686	61	814	41	578	7	76	4	204	5	155	4	155	4	72	9	72	9	72	9	72	9	369	3	101	5		
1837	1837	753	31	817	17	82	10	209	1	179	17	179	17	179	17	370	14	370	14	370	14	402	10	57	0	5		
1838	685	62	816	39	310	7	175	8	189	9	189	9	189	9	44	338	12	44	338	12	44	338	12	434	13	124	12	
1839	685	14	823	30	320	14	196	2	160	24	189	10	189	10	338	25	338	25	338	25	338	25	405	20	139	19		
1840	686	33	795	25	320	3	203	3	189	6	189	6	189	6	66	398	15	66	398	15	66	398	15	381	5	156	24	
1841	700	35	835	19	327	26	55	4	207	3	163	36	163	36	47	66	298	12	66	298	12	66	298	12	335	15		
1842	710	38	798	38	309	9	55	4	207	3	163	36	163	36	47	66	298	12	66	298	12	66	298	12	335	15		
1843	741	38	741	38	276	23	55	4	196	4	169	6	169	6	66	298	12	66	298	12	66	298	12	335	15			
1844	741	38	741	38	276	23	55	4	196	4	169	6	169	6	66	298	12	66	298	12	66	298	12	335	15			
Total	1806	315	10453	460	3399	157	898	80	5498	72	69	9	322	60	2385	112	893	110	2908	124	748	71	1808	133	1844	136	593	93

TABLE NO. III.
Showing the Proportion of Pardons to the average number of Prisoners, for periods of five years and under, in the following Penitentiaries.

NEW YORK.		SILENT SYSTEM.										SEPARATE SYSTEM.															
		ARISTON. (SING SING.)		MASE.		N. HAMP.		CONN.		KY.		VIRGINIA.		OHIO.		MARYD.		MAINE.		PENNSYLVANIA.		N. JERSEY.					
No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.	No. of years.	Pro. of pardons to av. no. pris.		
1 Yr.	1824	573	5 Yrs.	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93
2 Yrs.	1824	573	5 Yrs.	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93
3 Yrs.	1824	573	5 Yrs.	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93
4 Yrs.	1824	573	5 Yrs.	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93
5 Yrs.	1824	573	5 Yrs.	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93	1919	10	93
1829	1674	1830	19	85	1829	24	242	11	17	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10
5 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
4 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
3 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
2 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1 Yr.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1839	1674	1830	19	85	1829	24	242	11	17	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10
5 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
4 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
3 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
2 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1 Yr.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1839	1674	1830	19	85	1829	24	242	11	17	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10
5 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
4 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
3 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
2 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1 Yr.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1839	1674	1830	19	85	1829	24	242	11	17	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10
5 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
4 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
3 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
2 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1 Yr.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	
1839	1674	1830	19	85	1829	24	242	11	17	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10	1829	24	10
5 Yrs.	1834	225	5 Yrs.	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35	5	4	1834	27	40	1834	7	36	1834	35						

TABLE No. 1.

Showing the average number of Prisoners, and the whole number of pardons per year, in the following Penitentiaries, for a series of ten years.

YEARS.	NEW YORK.		VIRGINIA.		MASS.		N. HAMP.		PITTSBURG.		MAINE.	
	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.	Prisoners.	Pardons.
1830	..	180	20	306	25	61	2	..	..	..	..	..
1831	..	201	13	292	32	65	1	..	..	..	..	..
1832	..	210	20	279	14	57	2	..	..	..	..	..
1833	..	215	12	308	6	66	5	..	..	..	..	..
1834	349	64	114	15	298	10	62	5	..	..	69	2
1835	427	27	201	1	314	13	66	3	..	..	79	6
1836	427	86	173	6	313	14	59	4	..	..	72	4
1837	525	43	153	4	285	27	48	7	26	3	72	1
1838	571	76	149	6	290	14	56	4	43	4	59	1
1839	639	27	148	4	262	19	50	7	62	3	94	5
Total	2938	323	1844	101	2937	174	500	40	131	14	471	22

For most of the Penitentiaries, Table No. 3, exhibits a very satisfactory improvement, in regard to the frequency of pardons, although the general average 18-95 is still much too high. It would perhaps be better for society, if instead of the so frequent exercise of the pardoning power, the amount of imprisonment were in most cases diminished. Whether such a measure could be safely recommended, we are not prepared to state; but believe the results of a judicious reduction in the term of the sentence less injurious than frequent pardons. A comparative view of the length of sentences in nine States, Prisons, extracted from the sixteenth Annual Report of the Boston Prison Discipline Society, is here introduced, as tending to an elucidation of this point.

	Massachusetts, average sentence of	225,	whole number in prison	Sept. 30, 1840	5	Years.	Mon.
Connecticut,	"	125	"	March 31, 1841	7	3	9
New Jersey,	"	155	"	Sept. 30, 1840	4	7	3
Philadelphia,	"	128	received during	1840	2	5	0
Maryland,	"	104	"	year ending Nov. 30, 1840	3	3	0
District Columbia,	"	79	in Penitentiary during year	1840	3	8	0
Virginia,	"	131	"	ending Sept. 30, 1839	6	10	0
Kentucky,	"	162	"	Nov. 30, 1840	4	9	0
Louisiana,	"	68	"	1839	5	1	0

By comparing the length of sentences in the different states, to the average of crime to population in those states, we may be enabled to form some idea of the results of longer or shorter periods of confinement. To make this comparison of much value, it will be necessary, however, to extend the examinations to five or ten years.

FINANCIAL SYSTEM.—CONVICT LABOR.

So much has been recently said and written upon this subject, that it becomes an inquiry of serious importance to know, whether the labour of the convict in any way injuriously affects the interest of the honest mechanic. The primary cause of this has undoubtedly arisen from the Contract System, which certainly seems entitled to much of the odium it has received. As at

present managed, the labour of the convicts is farmed out to certain individuals, at extremely low rates, so that articles manufactured in prison can be sold at a heavy discount on ordinary prices, and still afford enormous profits to the contractor. By this plan, both the prisoner and the community suffer. The prisoner, through the rapacity of the contractor, who is unwilling to spare any of his time for the purposes of ordinary instruction, and the community through competition with persons fed and clothed at the public expense. This evil is sometimes further increased by collusions between the convict and the contractor, by which the government is defrauded. The system is liable to so many, and such frequent abuses, that we are persuaded it should be instantly avoided.

To prevent the clamour which has been so unsparingly directed against it, a practice has been introduced, in some of our prisons, of employing the convicts in some occupation, which, from the capital requisite for its prosecution, or for some other cause, is least likely to interfere with the common pursuits of men. This virtual abandonment of the most distinctive feature of the Penitentiary system, the reformation of the prisoner, is decidedly wrong; and it would be in vain to expect any lastingly favourable results from imprisonment, unless we secure to the convict some employment by which he can obtain an honest livelihood after his discharge.

The following table embodies all the information, of a satisfactory character, which we have been enabled to collect in relation to the expenditures of our prisons, and the support of the convicts. It is much to be regretted, that a uniform system of reporting these facts, does not everywhere prevail; but not only does the system differ in every state, but in the same state from year to year. There seems to be no good reason why the cost of new buildings, and extraordinary repairs, should be included under the ordinary yearly expenses for support, or that the cost of material for manufactures, tools, &c. should be included under the same general head with bedding, clothing, fuel, or any thing else. It will greatly facilitate comparisons if, in future, the accounts are so kept as to give a *distinct account* for building and repairs, and also for manufactures. In Sing Sing and Auburn, a considerable portion of the disbursements, amounting to perhaps one-seventh of the whole amount, are for building or material; while in Connecticut and Virginia, the disbursements are strictly confined to support. Even including the above-named expenditure, there is a marked disparity in the expenses of different institutions, which will in some degree account for the fact, that in many of the prisons, the disbursements considerably exceed the income. Connecticut, where the expense for support amounts to only eleven cents and three mills per day, for each individual, has, as we might expect, been one of the most successful in regard to its income; having within the last fifteen years earned \$70,709 14 over and above all expenses. To derive much useful information from the reported receipts of prisons, we should be advised, as well of the numbers engaged in each particular pursuit, as of the gross proceeds. We can in no other way judge of the individual productiveness of any employment; and this is of vast importance to the decision of what trades can be most advantageously, and most usefully introduced and pursued.

TABLE

Showing the average number of Prisoners, the disbursements, and the per diem per centage of disbursements to each Prisoner.

	Years.	Disbursements.	Average of Prisoners.	Expenses per day for each prisoner.
Mt. Pleasant or Sing Sing, -	1840	\$77,460 00	795	27.9
	1841	76,322 46	835	25.6
	1842	72,301 28	798	25.2
	1843	66,658 60	741	24.6
Auburn, - - -	1844	64,215 08	861	20.2
	1842	67,870 79	710	26.1
	1843	56,509 04	742	20.8
	1844	68,107 48	775	24.0
Virginia, - - -	1843	10,483 06	209	13.7
	1844	11,115 10	211	14.4
	1837	57,263 14	391	40.0
	1838	47,092 49	370	34.8
Maryland, - - -	1839	48,081 83	340	38.7
	1829	47,070 10	306	42.1
Massachusetts,	1821	32,766 12	282	30.8
Connecticut, - -	1831	7,342 16	175	11.3

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION.

It is evident that all rules for the government of prisons, and the proper administration of discipline, may be rendered inefficient by the incompetency, ignorance, and negligence of the officers to whom the immediate supervision of the convict is intrusted. To secure the services of capable and faithful men, is, therefore, an object of such primary importance, that upon its attainment the success of all other plans of reform may be said to depend; and the services of such men cannot be secured unless their offices are made respectable, and within certain limits, permanent in their tenure. The highest interests of the prisoner and society seem to require, therefore, that the appointing power should be vested in some competent and respectable body of men, not subject to the political currents that agitate the country; or that all appointments should be made by the Legislature, for a certain number of years, and the appointees only removable for improper conduct. While the appointing power remains in the hands of the Executive or Legislative branches of government, without limitation, at every political change the officers of our prisons will be subjected to an ostracism which will drive every man from his place, however honest, capable, or faithful, unless he bows to the same political idol with those in power. These constant changes, did they operate solely on the individual, would be of but trifling importance; but on the contrary, they are felt in every branch and department of the prison. The information acquired by months of experience, is lost in the triumph of a day. A new master commences his experimental labours, and peradventure, just as he begins to understand the duties and responsibilities of the situation, has in turn to give place to some more favoured political aspirant;—thus preventing or retarding any plan of sys-

tematic reform, and making our prisons pent-houses of moral corruption, or engines of political abomination.

QUALIFICATIONS.

The opinion, we fear is too common, that any person is good enough for a prison-keeper. We view this matter in a very different light; and to us it appears to require the combination of a strong mind with exalted benevolence, deep penetration, undoubted integrity, prompt decision, great firmness, an intimate knowledge of the human heart, together with a gentleness and kindness which shall beget or win the respect of all. In the selection, both of Chief and subordinates, it should be a cardinal point, that they be fitted both by nature and habit for the important situations they are to occupy; and *no man, however honest and well-intentioned, should be placed in so important a position, unless he has previously shown some peculiar adaptedness for the office; so that while performing his legitimate duties, he may be enabled to avail himself of the opportunities which frequent intercourse affords, of inculcating the great principles of morality and virtue, recollecting that a word spoken in season is often more effectual than a formal lecture.* Let men thus elevated in character be selected to rule over our prisons, and never allow these offices to become the promised rewards of political ambition. Many, perhaps most of the evils complained of at Blackwell's Island, originate in this sole cause, and so long as this plan is adhered to, will be an insuperable objection to all efficient reform.

COMPARISON OF PRISON SYSTEMS AND REFORMS.

The present modified form of Penitentiary discipline owes its origin to the United States; and to the sister states of New York and Pennsylvania are we indebted for the two systems, which at present engross such universal attention. The distinctive features of the Philadelphia system are separation and insulation; of the New York, silence and association. In the one system, the prisoner is cut off from all communication, for the period of his confinement, with any one but the officers of the prison, such benevolent individuals as may visit the prison for his moral instruction, and, at stated and distant periods, with a few of his nearest relatives. He eats, drinks, sleeps, and works alone. In the other, though separated at night, he associates in the workshop, the school, and the chapel; but everywhere the strictest silence is attempted to be enforced. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these two systems? The Pennsylvania system most effectually prevents the corrupting influence of evil communication; it enables the prisoner to return to society without having formed any new associates in crime. By leaving him alone to the mornings of his own conscience, with nothing to distract his mind but his task, his book, and his instructor, appears to afford the best opportunity for his reclamation. As it rarely requires the infliction of severe punishment, it is the more merciful; and as it in a great measure executes itself, its success does not depend, to the same extent, upon the character of the individuals selected to administer it. The New York system is more economical, and said to be more healthful; and if the grave charge of producing insanity, in frequent instances, which has been urged against it, can be fully substantiated, the feelings of every humane man must rise in condemnation. The objections to the New York system are: That

to enforce silence requires great severity of discipline;—that it never has, and never can be, strictly and continually enforced;—the natural language of signs still affording a ready means of communication;—that acquaintances are made which may be renewed after their discharge, to the detriment of either the one or the other. Such, so far as we can discover, seem to be some of the principal arguments and objections used by the advocates of the respective systems. With our present knowledge in regard to these systems, we take a neutral ground; determined to collect, arrange, and classify all the facts, which an anxious desire to elicit truth shall place in our power, intending to present the result of our examinations and reflections at some future period.

The following tables exhibit the number of recommitments in some of our Penitentiaries, and the proportion of average number of prisoners to population in several of the states. In comparing the proportion of recommitments for Massachusetts, with the proportion of the average number of prisoners, we observe a gradual and progressive diminution from the commencement of the series. In Pennsylvania, on the contrary, both proportions are increased. The slave-holding states, with the exception of Maryland, show a less proportionate amount of crime than the free states. This proportionate difference is undoubtedly, in part, produced by their peculiar institutions; but even allowing for this, they still possess a superiority over most of the free states, which, if confirmed by future and more extended investigations, will demand the closest scrutiny.

TABLE showing the proportion of average number of Prisoners during different series of 5 years, to the entire population in each of the following states:

New York,	.....5 years from 1829 as 1 in 1592
	.....do.....do.....1834.....do.....1563
.....do.....do.....	.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....1669
	.....do.....do.....1819.....do.....1849
Massachusetts,	.....5.....do.....1824.....do.....1995
	.....do.....do.....1829.....do.....2444
.....do.....do.....	.....5.....do.....1834.....do.....2425
	.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....2449
Connecticut,	.....5.....do.....1829.....do.....1643
	.....do.....do.....1834.....do.....1897
.....do.....do.....	.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....1560
	.....do.....do.....1824.....do.....4572
Maine,	.....5.....do.....1824.....do.....5923
	.....do.....do.....1839.....do.....6527
Silent System.	.....do.....do.....1819.....do.....4097
	.....do.....do.....1829.....do.....4774
.....do.....do.....	.....5.....do.....1829.....do.....3747
	.....do.....do.....1834.....do.....3893
.....do.....do.....	.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....5371
	.....do.....do.....1819.....do.....5950
Virginia,	.....5.....do.....1824.....do.....7085
	.....do.....do.....1829.....do.....7875
.....do.....do.....	.....5.....do.....1834.....do.....7335
	.....do.....do.....1839.....do.....6635
Kentucky,	.....3.....do.....1836.....do.....7437
	.....do.....do.....1839.....do.....7039
Maryland,	.....3.....do.....1831.....do.....1219
	.....do.....do.....1834.....do.....1224
.....do.....do.....	.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....1566

Separate System.	{ Pennsylvania,.....5 years from 1829 as 1 in 7119
	.....do.....do.....1834.....do.....2990
	.....do.....do.....1839.....do.....1959
	{ New Jersey,.....3.....do.....1836.....do.....1378
.....do.....do.....4.....do.....1839.....do.....2642	

TABLE

Showing the number of Recommitments per year for a series of years, in the following Penitentiaries:

YEARS.	MASSACHUSETTS.		PHILADELPHIA.		PITTSBURG.		VIRGINIA.		
	Average number of Prisoners.	Recommitments.	Proportion for series of 5 years.	Average number of Prisoners.	Recommitments.	Proportion for series of 5 years.	Average number of Prisoners.	Recommitments.	
Average of 10 Yrs. from	1820	191	1837	†			1850	28	65:05
1830	2907	19					154	0	
1831	2501	26					169	1	
1832	227	15					147	1	
1833	250	12					122	1	
1834	277	16					81	1	
1835	279	13	16:44	266	12				
1836	278	7		360	6				
1837	291	13		367	19				
1838				402	25				
1839	310	10		183	3				
1840			26:93	434	33				
1841				405	13				
1842	309	7		381	27				
1843			37:65						
						16:27			
Total.	3087	147		2918	139		1350	5	
								2555	36

We have experienced so much difficulty in the prosecution of our labours, from want of proper and reliable data on which to base our deductions, that we feel it to be an important duty to urge upon the association the adoption of immediate measures for the formation of a library, and to secure a free communication between this Association and others having the same general objects. To effect this, measures should be taken for obtaining a copy of the yearly reports of each of the Penitentiaries, both in this country and Europe; and the inspectors, or keepers of Penitentiaries, should be requested to forward one or more copies of all the reports of their institutions for previous years, to the chairman of the Executive Committee of this Association. No effort seems ever to have been made to collect, collate, and compare the statistics of our prisons; or if this has been the case, the loose, unmethodical, and unsystematic manner in which the same facts have been reported, makes it impossible to render them of any essential service to the cause of prison statistics, and humanity, without greater perseverance and more determination than falls to the share of most men.

For the purpose of introducing uniformity into all future reports, we take

* Report of Boston Discipline Society.

† Phil. Journal Prison Discipline.

‡ Report to Legislature of Virginia.

the liberty to suggest, that the officers of our prisons, in making out their annual returns, should state distinctly, under the head of receipts, the income from labour of prisoners at their different trades and employments, crediting all work done by convicts on the prison at its just value, and enumerating all other sources of income. Under the head of disbursements, that they should state separately the cost of provisions, clothing, and material; the amount paid for salaries, ordinary and extraordinary repairs, particularly and separately distinguishing them; and all expenditures for new erections. The report should further state the name, age, sex, colour, crime; the moral, religious, intellectual, and civil condition; the number of times committed, and in what prison; and the report of the physician should include all the facts already mentioned, under the general head of health. Experience may, and undoubtedly will, suggest other inquiries equally important, and such may be introduced hereafter. Our present object is merely to secure uniformity in the manner of reporting the same facts, so that we may obtain matter useful for the purposes of comparison. And here we would urge upon those who may be engaged in making up these statements, the momentous importance of adhering strictly to unvarnished facts; let no preconceived ideas, or prejudices, in favour of any particular system, induce them to distort, colour, or withhold a single item; recollecting that the great object is not the advancement of this, or that plan of prison government, but the moral elevation of the convict. To facilitate future investigations, we have heretofore annexed a list of those inquiries which we think most essential to the elucidation of the subject.

Another important facility in conducting the operations of this Association, might, we think, be derived from the appointment from among those distinguished individuals—both in this country and Europe—who take an interest in prison matters, a certain number of corresponding members; and it seems particularly desirable that it should have, at least, one corresponding member in some way connected with each Penitentiary. As a measure of this nature would largely increase the duties of the Corresponding Secretary, it would, perhaps, be advisable to increase the number of secretaries, and so to divide their duties, as to have one devoted to domestic and one to foreign correspondence. In conclusion, we would suggest, whether greater stability would not be given to the Association, and desirable objects attained, by making the Executive Committee perpetual, by the election hereafter of only one-third of its members yearly, and of course increasing the term of office of each to three years. In this way, the action of our sub-Committees would be continuous, and no important subject under the consideration of either the Executive or sub-Committees, be arrested by the expiration of the term of service.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN D. RUSS, Secretary.

QUESTIONS

To which the attention of the Officers of Prisons is particularly invited, and answers to which are respectfully requested in their Annual Report.

- 1 What is the average number of prisoners?
 - 2 How many white males?
 - 3 How many coloured males?
 - 4 How many white females?
 - 5 How many coloured females?
 - 6 How many committed more than once?
 - 7 For what periods previously committed?
 - 8 How many blacks re-committed?
 - 9 How many whites re-committed?
 - 10 How many committed during the year—and white males and females during the year—distinguishing each.
- EMPLOYMENT.**
- 11 What number of prisoners is engaged in each particular trade or employment?
 - 12 What are the gross proceeds of each particular trade or employment?
 - 13 What are the net proceeds?
- EXPENDITURES.**
- 14 What is the entire annual expense of the Institution?
 - 15 What the cost of ordinary repairs?
 - 16 What the cost of extraordinary repairs?
 - 17 What the cost of new erections?
 - 18 How much paid for rations?
 - 19 How much for clothing?
 - 20 How much for tobacco?
 - 21 How much for salaries?
 - 22 How much for guard?
 - 23 How much for building materials?
 - 24 How much for materials for manufacturing—distinguishing different kinds?
 - 25 How much for medicine?
 - 26 How much for bedding?
 - 27 How much for fuel?
- RECEIPTS.**
- 28 What are the entire annual receipts?
- PARDONS.**
- 29 What the number of convicts pardoned during the year?
 - 30 How many white?
 - 31 How many black?
 - 32 How many of each sex?
 - 33 What the term for which each prisoner pardoned, was committed the crime, length of actual confinement, and the grounds upon which he was pardoned.
- DEATHS.**
- 34 How many deaths during the year?
 - 35 How many of each sex?
 - 36 How many of each colour?
 - 37 How many deaths of each disease?
 - 38 How many entered diseased?
 - 39 What were the diseases with which they entered?
 - 40 Did the same disease produce their death?
 - 41 What was the term for which each convict dying was convicted, and the length of time in prison?
- CELLS.**
- 42 What is the average temperature of the cells in winter, and what in summer?
 - 43 What are the dimensions of the cells?
 - 44 Are they well lighted, and ventilated?
 - 45 How are they warmed?
 - 46 How are they lighted?
 - 47 Are they damp or dry?
 - 48 Is every cell provided with a Bible and slate?
 - 49 How many cells in the prison, and what the cost of construction of each cell?
 - 50 Is there more than one occupant ever assigned to a cell?
 - 51 Are night tubs used in the cells, or what other provision is made for satisfying the wants of nature?
 - 52 Are the cells free from vermin?
- PUNISHMENTS.**
- 53 What punishments are inflicted?
 - 54 Is the "cat" used, and if so, what is the greatest number of lashes ever inflicted?
 - 55 What the usual number inflicted?
 - 56 Is the douche or bolt-lash ever used, and with what results?
 - 57 Of what punishments are inflicted?
 - 58 By whom are punishments directed?
 - 59 Has each keeper a discretionary power to inflict punishment, and if not, how is his discretion limited?
 - 60 What has been the usual effect of punishment on those who have been subjected to it?
 - 61 How many stripes inflicted each month?
- EDUCATION, AND CIVIL CONDITION.**
- 62 How many could only read on entering?
 - 63 How many could read and write?
 - 64 How many had received a common education?
 - 65 How many well educated?
 - 66 Is there any provision for daily instruction?
 - 67 Is there a choir in the prison?
 - 68 Is there a library for the prisoners?
 - 69 How many had father only?
 - 70 How many had mothers only?
 - 71 How many had both parents?
 - 72 How many religiously educated?
 - 73 How many were temperate?
 - 74 How many were married?
 - 75 How many were single?
 - 76 How many with families?
 - 77 How many Americans?
 - 78 How many foreigners?
 - 79 How many foremen?
 - 80 At what age, was the first offence committed?
 - 81 At what age committed to prison?
- DIET AND CLEANLINESS.**
- 82 What is the daily bill of fare for the week?
 - 83 Are any variations made in diet corresponding with the seasons?
 - 84 Is the food always of a plain but wholesome quality?
 - 85 Do prisoners eat in their cells or at a common table?
 - 86 How many times are they fed in the day?
 - 87 In what prison abundantly supplied with good and wholesome water?
 - 88 Are the prisoners allowed conveniences for washing?
 - 89 How often is the bedding changed?
 - 90 Are they any conveniences for bathing?
 - 91 How often do the prisoners shave, and have their hair cut?
- CLOTHING.**
- 92 How often changed?
 - 93 Is it sufficient in quantity?
 - 94 Did any of the prisoners die in fashion or color?
 - 95 Is a Sunday dress provided for each prisoner?
- MISCELLANEOUS.**
- 96 Is there any classification of the prisoners, and if so, how chased?
 - 97 Who are permitted to visit the prisoners, at what hours, and under what regulations?
 - 98 How much money is given on his discharge?
 - 99 Are tickets of admission sold for the benefit of the prison?
 - 100 How many are the opportunities for moral and religious instruction?
 - 101 Is there a Chaplain to the prison?
 - 102 Are the prisoners allowed to converse in private?
 - 103 What the average length of confinement?
 - 104 How many prisoners laboured under insanity?
 - 105 How many prisoners (entered insane)?
 - 106 Are the prisoners obliged to write and receive letters from their friends, and if so, under what regulations?
 - 107 What the average length of sentences?
 - 108 What the causes for committing the offences of which they are victims?

success during the brief period of our existence as a Society, we have surely good reason to rely with confidence on the sympathy and support of the public. If regarded merely in an economical point of view, it is a great social benefit, for it costs less to prevent crime than to punish it. But, when looked at as a matter of humanity, the movement is of incalculable benefit; for it is true, and all experience shows it, that a very large proportion of all who leave our State Prisons, need only friends to rely upon, and kind, judicious advice, to strengthen those good aspirations which spring up in every human soul after seasons of severe humiliation. To afford such aid and encouragement, is our purpose; and our short experience affords good foundation for the hope that much money may be saved to the state, and many fellow creatures redeemed from ruin.

ISAAC T. HOPPER, *Chairman*.

✓ *January 20th*, 1845. F— H. J—, a native of this city, 28 years old, was convicted in this city of grand larceny, and sentenced to Sing Sing for three years. He served his time out, and was discharged on the 6th of January, 1845. Upon his release, he made application to this Committee, who agreed to contribute a small sum weekly towards his support, for a short period. In about four weeks, employment was procured for him in a respectable establishment, where he still remains, and conducts to the entire satisfaction of his employer.

✓ *January 31st*. P— M'G—, born in this city, where he was convicted of grand larceny, and sent to the State Prison at Mount Pleasant for two years. He is 32 years of age. After an imprisonment of about one year and eight months, the remainder of his term was remitted, and he was discharged the 30th of December, 1844. He has a wife and five children. He applied for assistance in purchasing a horse and cart. Before granting his request, I visited his family, and found his wife busily engaged in household affairs. Her countenance was dejected, and her spirits greatly depressed. She said that she had been able, by hard labour, and rigid economy, to keep her family together during her husband's absence. A horse and cart were procured for him, and he has since maintained his family comfortably. He is sober and industrious, and manifests sincere gratitude for the relief afforded him. The family has been visited several times. The children were clean and decently clad; his wife appears industrious and tidy. P— has been a good deal unwell, so as to disqualify him for labour; and has had the misfortune to lose a horse; but by constant industry they are enabled to get along comfortably.

✓ *January 31st*. J— R—, born in Ireland, 32 years old, was convicted in this city of passing counterfeit money, and sentenced to Sing Sing for five years. He served his time out, and was discharged the 18th of January, 1845. He conducted well in prison, and after his release, was kindly entertained in the family of John Lacey, the chaplain. P— has had previously borne a good character; but a rogue had palmed off bad bills upon him, and when he discovered they were counterfeit, he, more from ignorance than with any bad intention, thought himself justified in getting rid of the bad bills in the same way. His sister, hearing of his imprisonment, hastened from Ireland, all alone, to tell him that she would stand by him, and help him in his trouble. The chaplain of the prison kindly afforded her a home, till the expiration of her brother's term, which was in two months. As soon as they arrived in this city, they called at the office of the Prison Association, seeking employment. In the course of a few days, a place was procured for him. We supplied him with the necessary tools. He had partially learned the *business* in prison, but not being perfect in all parts of it, he was discharged in two or three days. James brought his tools to the office, and deposited them till another situation could be procured. In the course of a few days, another was obtained with a person who agreed to perfect him in his business. He still remains steady, and is doing extremely well.

✓ *February 22d*. ———, a native of Connecticut, 42 years old. He was convicted in this city of coinng money, December, 1839, and sentenced to Sing Sing for seven years. He was pardoned by the President, and discharged 12th December, 1844. We furnished him with some second-hand clothes. He afterwards, through the influence of ———, procured a horse and cart, and is doing well. He manifests much gratitude for the assistance he has received.

✓ *February 24th*. G— J—, 36 years old, an Englishman by birth, has been in this country about 14 years. He was convicted in Kings county of grand larceny, and sent to Sing Sing for two years. He served his time out, and was released the 15th February, 1845. He was furnished with a small sum for temporary relief. In a few days, employment was obtained for him. He is industrious, and appears to be doing well.

✓ *March 26th*. J— B. R—, about 21 years old, a native of New Hampshire, was convicted in this city of grand larceny, on the 12th of March, 1844, and sentenced to Sing Sing for four years and six months. From some circumstances, subsequently developed, there were strong reasons for believing that he was innocent of the crime of which he was convicted; and having conducted well during his confinement, the Governor was induced to pardon him. He was discharged the 21st of March, 1845. He is a shoemaker by trade. We furnished him with tools to commence business. He is sober and industrious. His father is intemperate, and the support of the family devolves upon the son, whose industry keeps them comfortable.

✓ *April 9th*. T— T. B—, about 40 years old, born in Ireland. He has been a musician on board one of our public vessels; but having lost some of his teeth, was thereby rendered incapable of following his profession. He became discouraged for want of employment, and yielded to the temptation of strong drink. He was at Blackwell's Island five months for intemperance. On his release a place was procured for him to board, and his expenses were paid by this Committee. From the time he first came under our notice, he has entirely refrained from intoxicating drinks, and conducted himself with great propriety. He is a man of good education, and is a superior penman. He is Secretary of a Temperance Society, and is much respected by those who are acquainted with him. We are in hopes, ere long, of obtaining permanent employment for him.

✓ *April 14th*. D— P—, about twenty-three years old, was brought up at Saratoga. Soon after she was of age, she went to Albany, and engaged as a domestic in a respectable family. Here she became acquainted with people who had a bad influence over her. She was convicted of grand larceny, and sent to Sing Sing for two years and one month. Served her time out, and was discharged the 14th of April, 1845. She came directly to this city, and made application for assistance. In a few days, a situation was procured for her. By the matron at Sing Sing she was considered a hopeless case; but since her release, she has conducted herself well.

✓ *April 18th*. J— B—, a native of New Jersey, about thirty-three years old; was convicted in this city, and sent to Sing Sing for four years and ten months. He served his time out, and was discharged the 18th October, 1844. Assistance was afforded him to purchase a horse and waggon. The last account we had from him, a few weeks since, he was sober and industrious.

✓ *May 14th*. A— A. W—, about 28 years old, a native of Hudson, in this state, lost her parents when very young, and was taken charge of by an aunt, who treated her with much severity. The aunt kept boarders, and one of them persuaded her to elope with him, before she was fourteen years old. When she had lived with him some time, he abandoned her. Being deserted by him who had been her ruin, and forsaken and despised by her friends and relations, she sunk into licentious company, and for fourteen years lived a life of prostitution. She was very intemperate, and was committed to the Penitentiary as a vagrant. Becoming disgusted with her bad course of life, she went to the Tombs and asked the keeper to receive her, in hopes that

some of the ladies who visited that place would take compassion upon her, and provide a situation for her. She had been there but a few days, when she was taken into a respectable family as a domestic. She has now been in this family about eight months, and has conducted with great propriety. She is remarkably neat and capable, and has entirely refrained from strong drink. She is thoughtful and serious.

April 26th. G—E—, born in Germany, about thirty years old; was in business in this city, where he was convicted for receiving stolen goods, and sent to Blackwell's Island for six months. His time having expired, he was released the 23d of April, 1845. He has been well educated. He procured a profitable employment—is making a good living and something more. He has frequently called to express his gratitude for the assistance rendered him, and appears to be respectable and happy. Thus has a young man, whose condition seemed to be desperate, broken down and discouraged, been restored to himself, to his friends, and to society.

June 11th. G—S—, about thirty-three years old, born in Ireland; was convicted in this city of grand larceny, and sentenced for three years to Sing Sing. Her time expired, and she was discharged June 10th, 1845. In a few days a place was procured for her as a domestic, in a respectable family on Long Island, where she now is, and conducts satisfactorily. In the early part of her imprisonment, she was turbulent and ungovernable; but by kindness, coupled with firmness, she was reduced to order, and a desire for reformation engendered in her, which she is now evidently carrying out.

June 14th. W—M—, a native of Kentucky, thirty years old, was convicted in Albany of grand larceny, and sent to Sing Sing for six years and four months: his time expired, and he was discharged 13th June, 1845. In a few days a place was procured for him as a servant, in a respectable family in this city, where he now is, and conducts much to the satisfaction of his employer.

June 18th. D—O—, a native of this state. He was convicted of grand larceny in the city of New York, and was sent to Sing Sing for three years. His time expired, and he was discharged. He has a wife and six children. Upon his release he received some assistance. In a few weeks he obtained employment, and has ever since maintained his family comfortably. He is sober and industrious.

November 17th. D—W—, a native of Monroe county, in this state, about twenty-one years old; was convicted at Buffalo of grand larceny, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment at hard labour, five months of which he spent at Auburn, and the remainder of the time at Sing Sing. He was discharged on the 14th November, 1845, and immediately came to this city. He says that his father died when he was about four or five years old, and his mother also deceased when he was about sixteen years old. From that time forward he had no settled home, and wandered about from one place to another for several years. Some time before he committed the crime of which he was convicted, he was in Michigan, and fell in company with an old acquaintance, and they concluded to return to the state of New York in company. They came as far as Buffalo, when his friend's money was all expended, and his was nearly so; his friend proposed that they should purloin some property from a store in that place, whereby they might replenish their exhausted funds. This proposition was adopted, and resulted as above stated. The prisoner professes to be penitent, and I hope he is so. He had been in the city but a few days when he procured employment.

October 25th. J—C—, twenty-two years old, is a native of Liverpool, England, and has been in this country about six years. He was convicted in this city of grand larceny, and sent to Sing Sing for two years and eleven months. He served his time out, and was discharged the 23d of October, 1845. He is well recommended by one of the assistant keepers, and Hiram Rowel, the agent of the prison. In a few days employment was obtained for him. He gives promise of being sober and industrious.

October 25th. S—H—, about twenty-nine years old, was born in England, and came to this country about four years ago. He was convicted of grand larceny in this city, and sent to Sing Sing for three years, which expired, and he was discharged the 21st of October, 1845. He is well recommended by the officers of the prison for orderly conduct. He is descended from a highly respectable family, and has had a good education. His father lately deceased, and has bequeathed to him several hundred dollars, which he is expected to come into the possession of soon. He seems to be sensible of the evils of his former life, and manifests a disposition to pursue a different course in future. Arrangements have been made for his support for a few weeks.

October 26th. J—M—, is a native of Tolland, Conn., and about thirty-two years old. He was convicted in Scobarie county, in this state, of grand larceny, and sentenced to Sing Sing for four years. His term expired, and he was discharged the 27th of October. He made application to this Committee for advice and assistance, bringing with him recommendations from the officers of the prison. M— is an active man, and capable of business. A small sum was advanced to him, and the payment of eighteen dollars was guaranteed for articles to trade with. In a few days he paid the eighteen dollars for which he had become security, and returned ten dollars of the money he borrowed, and we have no doubt of his paying the balance soon. M— called at the office the 22nd inst., and informs us that he has already cleared sixteen dollars with the ten loaned him the 6th of the present month.

October 28th. G—L. W—, is twenty-eight years old, and was born in Salem, Mass. He was convicted of grand larceny in this city, and sent to Sing Sing for four years and eight months. He served his time out, and was discharged the 27th of October, 1845. The principal keeper says: "His conduct has been good for the last year." He has had a good education, but for the last few years, previous to his imprisonment, his life has been a continued career of crime. He appears to be much subdued, and says that he is determined to lead a virtuous life in future. He attributes his change of disposition to the kind treatment he received during the latter part of the time he was in prison. We hope he is sincere, and there is reason for believing that he is so. He has been used to the sea, and is a good sailor. Boarding was procured for him at the Sailor's Home. In about a week a berth was obtained for him on board of a vessel bound for Mobile and Europe. He was supplied with a complete fitting outfit at the expense of the Association, and returned \$15 of it before he sailed.

The following letter was addressed to the Agent of the Prison Association in New York.

Norwich, Monday, August 11, 1845.

DEAR SIR:—I was in hopes to be able to return home this week, prior to my Courts in the Western counties, but I find so heavy an amount of business here, that I am compelled to remain, and shall not be at home until some time in September.

As the Executive Committee will meet in the mean time, I beg to make some suggestions to them.

I forward, herewith, a newspaper account of what I have done in regard to our matters. My charge to the Grand Jury produced from them a presentment, which will be published this week, and which I will also forward to you.

I shall continue, in the other counties which I visit, to pursue the same course, so that when I return, I shall be able to report to the Society the state and condition of some six or eight of our County Jails.

The County Jails afford a wide field for our operations, and I suggest to the Committee, that they cause an examination of a number of them to be made during the summer.

We have examined that in New York. Those in Brooklyn and Staten Island, can very easily be examined. That constitutes the 1st District. If the Committee should

* This man has since repaid us our advances for him, and contributed \$20 to our funds!

authorize an examination of those in the 2d District, those two districts, with the prisons which I can report upon, would make some 29, whose condition could be stated in our annual report, and make a very valuable addition to it. I wish you would oblige me by calling the attention of the Committee to the subject.

I have here met with cases of three discharged convicts, which deserve attention. One, a Dr. B——, who came out of Sing Sing some four or five years ago, and who returned to this county, united himself to his family, collected together his property, accumulated some more, and after four or five years of honest industry, moved with his family to Wisconsin, with the means of buying him a farm.

A man by the name of I——, an Irishman, sent to Auburn from this county, staid his time out and returned to the county. In the prison he learned the trade of a cabinet-maker. On his release, he took with him his wife and children out of the poor-house, where they had been during his confinement, and began to work at his new trade in the village of Oxford, where he has lived the last two years. He has now plenty of business, is making money, is very much esteemed and trusted by his neighbours, and has lately been appointed sexton to one of the churches in the county.

The third case is that of a man who has been out only two or three months. Before he went to prison, he was a rough rowdy from the Backwoods. He is now an orderly, decent, industrious man, and says the prison has been a good school to him. Every body notices the change in his deportment.

It will be well to keep a record of these things, as they all go to show the beneficial results that may be attained.

With my regards to the members of the Committee,

I remain yours truly,

Mary McHugh belonged to a respectable Irish family, in Upper Canada. There being several sisters at home, and her services not needed, she deemed it best to relieve her parents of a part of their burthen, by an effort to earn her own living. For that purpose she came to the United States, and entered into the service of Mrs. ——. She discharged the duties of her station in a satisfactory manner, and secured the confidence and affectionate good-will of the family.

At the death of Mrs. ———, she engaged in another family in the same neighbourhood. This Mrs. ——— promised her a dollar a week for her services; but after she had been there three weeks, she told her that she should give but sixty-two cents. Mary then requested the wages that were due her, that she might go into the service of another family near by, who had offered her a dollar and a quarter a week. Mrs. ——— declared that she should not leave till she had procured another servant; that she would not pay her a cent till another servant came, and that she would pay her only sixty-two cents a week from the beginning to the end of her stay.

This oppressive and altogether unjustifiable conduct, excited Mary's resentment. Partly in anger, and partly from the idea that her employer intended to wrong her, she hid a silver can and some spoons in the wood-house. There is every reason to believe that she had no intention of stealing them, and she was not aware that such a step subjected her to the danger of a criminal prosecution. Mrs. ——— was extremely exasperated; and, it is to be hoped, more under the influence of thoughtless anger than of deliberate cruelty, she caused the poor girl to be arrested. The silver was found where she confessed she had hid it; she was tried, convicted, and sentenced to Sing Sing for two years.

A sense of the disgrace which her imprudence had brought upon herself and family, and especially anxious that it would inflict on her mother's heart, completely broke the spirit of the sufferer. Her sensitive nature could not bear up under the terrible struggle, and she sunk into a listless despair. She took extremely little nourishment, and obtained scarcely any sleep. It soon became evident that reason was giving way under the influence of perpetual grief, and that she was in danger of melancholy lunacy the remainder of her life. Her father, a venerable old soldier, who had been lamed in the British army at the battle of Saratoga, came from Canada with an earnest petition in her behalf, backed with letters and certificates from magistrates and other people of influence and high respectability, testifying to the good character and conduct of

Mary and her family. The cruel circumstances of the case being officially laid before the Governor, in connexion with these certificates, he granted a pardon, and communicated the welcome intelligence to the afflicted father, in a letter which did him great honour. While I write this, my heart ejaculates, "May Heaven bless him!"

A letter from Eliza W. Farnham, the excellent matron of Sing Sing Prison, inquired of me, (as agent of the Committee on discharged convicts,) whether the Prison Association could provide for this unfortunate creature till such time as her father could come for her. I replied, that a suitable place had better be procured in the neighbourhood of the prison, and the Association would pay her board till she could be restored to her home.

As she was labouring under derangement of mind, and required some gentle restraint, it was difficult to procure a suitable place, and she was conveyed to the County House. Another letter from E. W. Farnham informed me of this, and expressed great anxiety on her account. For four days she had tasted no food, nor obtained a single hour of sleep. The letter concluded by saying, "This, in addition to her previous exhaustion, must, if continued, soon produce death. She is exceedingly miserable, and my heart is sore at the thought of leaving so sensitive and shrinking a spirit all unshielded as she is."

Unwilling that she should remain in the County House an hour longer than was necessary, I started for Tarrytown the very day I received the letter. I had seen the poor child of "misfortune at Sing Sing, some months before, and my sympathies were awakened in her behalf. She recollected me at once, and made no objection to returning with me to New York. She was in such a delicate state of health, mind and body, that I could not bear to place her with strangers, who would feel no sympathy for her; and though it was inconvenient to receive her into my family, I thought it best under the circumstances to do so. We found her simple-hearted, unoffending and grateful; easily guided, though somewhat troublesome from the wanderings of her mind, and the highly excitable state of her nervous system. She expressed an earnest desire to see Bishop Hughes. I went for him, and was much pleased with the prompt and hearty cheerfulness with which he came to speak to her words of encouragement and consolation. She soon began to take nourishment, and during the four weeks that she remained under my roof, she continued to improve in health, though her mind still remained feeble and wandering. The female branch of the Prison Association having provided a home for the women convicts released from Sing Sing, it was thought best that Mary should go there. A few days after she left my roof, her mother came for her. She appeared to be a respectable, worthy, hard-working woman. I conveyed her to her daughter, and it was truly affecting to witness their meeting. They threw themselves into each other's arms, wept, looked at each other, and wept again. On the eighth of this month, they departed together for their home in Canada, and it is hoped that time will gradually restore poor Mary to health and reason.

I have purposely avoided mentioning the name of the woman whose oppressive and harsh treatment occasioned the wreck of this poor, well-meaning girl, and such great distress to an innocent family. May the consequences of her proceedings teach her a lesson for the future. Not for the wealth of the Indies, would I do such an injury to a fellow-being.

November 22d. P——, twenty-four years old, was born in Hamburg, and has been in this country near four years; he was convicted in this city of grand larceny, and sentenced for two years, which expired, and he was discharged the 10th November, 1845. He has learned the business of a stonemason at Sing Sing, and now has the o'er of employment if he can procure tools. I have given him an order to get such as he needs. P—— is strongly recommended to the attention of this Committee by the officers of the prison. He called several days ago, and expressed a hope that he would be able to earn his own livelihood without our aid; he procured employment for a short time, but was not able to earn more than paid for his board.

REPORT OF THE FEMALE DEPARTMENT.

THE Female Department, organized under the eighth article of the Constitution, dates its existence as a regularly constituted body, from a meeting held at the Lyceum, January 18th, 1845. Previous to that period, a number of ladies had prepared themselves for acting on the subject by visiting the various prisons; and reports of these visits were read at the meeting, in order to give the audience a definite view of the objects proposed to be effected by the Female Department. The conclusion drawn from these reports, and from various statements of fact made by ladies present, who had long interested themselves in the condition of female prisoners, was, that little effectual could be done for this class of persons, without a *place of reception*, where they could be preserved from evil influences while suitable places were being found for them.

At this meeting, a constitution and by-laws for the regulation of the Female Department were adopted; an Executive Committee of twenty-four ladies was chosen; and from this Committee were elected a First and Second Directress, Treasurer, and Secretary.

This Board was afterwards enlarged, in the hope that the arduous duty of visiting the prisons might be somewhat lightened, by enlisting more members in the service. A Corresponding Secretary was also added, to facilitate communication with the Parent Association.

Frequent meetings were held during the winter, at the house of one of the members, to report on the condition of the prisons, and to devise means for the effectual assistance of female convicts after their discharge. It was found that many of the inmates of the City Prisons as well as of the prison at Sing Sing, professed a desire to lead new and better lives, if help could be offered them; and of these, not a few presented appearances which afforded rational ground of hope that they might be restored to respectability and usefulness.

When persons of the latter class were discharged, the Committee endeavoured to find shelter and employment for them, and some even received them into their families, rather than disappoint the expectations excited by the visits and conversation of the ladies at the prisons. But the difficulty of procuring board in decent families for persons fresh from prison proved so great, that it became evident to all, that the Female Department could do nothing materially to benefit this almost hopeless class of unfortunates, without a *house*, in which to receive and keep them, until permanent places could be found for them; a temporary *home*, where kindness, order, neatness and industry, might all be brought into action to fit them for residences among the regular and the good, who would, it was hoped, be induced to give them a trial in that best of all schools, the humane and moral private family.

It is needless to recount the toils and delays which beset the attempt to open such a House of Refuge. Differences of opinion as to the expediency of the plan, forebodings of failure from want of public support, and a thousand other

considerations, sincerely urged, and deeply felt, seemed destined to impede, if not to crush entirely, any present effort towards the foundation of an institution, which aimed at no less an object than to assist a great city in caring for a very large, and most degraded class;—to thin the ranks of female prisoners by preventing recommitments, and to produce an important change in the condition of the prisons themselves. But every month's records making it plain, that something must be done for the hundreds of females committed and re-committed, for every variety of offence, doubts and fears gave way to the necessity of the case; and the Committee, as with one voice, were urgent with the Parent Association, to aid in establishing a Home, for the temporary reception of such discharged female convicts as might show a disposition to reform.

The consent of the Association having been obtained, a house was procured, and, on the 12th of June, opened for the reception of such females as should come recommended from the various prisons. Competent matrons were secured, and a considerable amount of furniture contributed by various benevolent persons. Since that time, 107 females have been sheltered at the Home; some, only for a single night, others, for a longer period, according to their circumstances. Of this number, places have been found for twenty-five, and from thirteen of these, favourable accounts have been received; while with regard to those from whom no accounts have been received, we may safely conclude, that at least some have given satisfaction to their employers.

Places in the country are considered the most desirable, in every point of view; and the Committee hope to excite a degree of interest among the benevolent in our villages, which will lead them to consider, whether they can easily render a more acceptable service to humanity, than by taking into their houses, as domestics, these persons, after their conduct in the prison and at the Home, has been such as to give good hope of their entire reformation. Many of the inmates of the Home have been excellent in the various departments of household labour; while others, less robust perhaps, have been no less skilful as seamstresses. It can scarcely be doubted that throughout the country, where domestics are procured with so much difficulty, to give employment to such persons as these must be productive of great good;—not to those alone who appeal so touchingly to the sympathies of the virtuous and the happy, but to those who should be induced, through a sentiment of christian kindness, to extend a helping hand to such as the careless world is apt to consider hopelessly fallen.

Our experiment has been tried on a very narrow scale, and under various disadvantages; yet the degree of success which has attended it has been more than sufficient to assure us, that, with adequate means at the outset, and proper management throughout, it may be made the instrument of vast good. Under the influence of kindness and sympathy, we find sparks of goodness still remaining where the outward aspect of humanity is almost obliterated; and hears, hard as the nether mill-stone to reproach and contempt, soft as infancy, to gentle remonstrance and appeals to the better nature. Habits of neatness and industry are not so difficult to establish as we had feared. Those who are unwilling to work in return for the shelter and assistance offered them, are the exceptions. So zealous and effective has been the service of the inmates, that we see good reason to hope the establishment may, in time, be made nearly to support itself, by the voluntary exertions of those who are anxious thus to repay, in part,

the benefits conferred upon them; and, from the amount of work already offered, and the satisfaction expressed with that which has been done, we anticipate an increase of our facilities when the establishment shall be better known. From the effect of time, also, we hope to find the difficulty of procuring places for such subjects as we can recommend, constantly diminishing. We are told, that at other benevolent and reformatory institutions, which are known to furnish capable domestics, such as are about to leave them are bespoken long in advance; so that those who have the charge, have a choice of applicants. This, therefore, is a rational object for our efforts; and we trust experience will give such value to our recommendations, that we may find no difficulty in placing advantageously any of whose reformation we can feel reasonable hope.

That an establishment, like the Home, is imperatively called for by the necessities of this city, cannot be doubted by any person who will give the subject one moment's reflection. All the arguments which are urged with such irresistible force, for the utility of the original Association, apply without exception to the provision of a shelter for released female convicts;—who can be aided in no important respect, while they are wandering in the haunts of infamy, beset with temptations on every side, and sure to have whatever good resolutions may have dawned in their wretched souls, swept away by those who lie ever in wait to prevent any escape from the ranks of degradation. Whatever reformatory influences might be exerted in the prison,—and, unfortunately, those are at present sadly disproportioned to the necessities of the case,—when a woman is discharged, penniless, or with a few shillings in her pocket, her almost inevitable fate is a return to vice, unless some asylum be at hand for her rescue. Benevolent individuals may at once exert themselves to procure a situation for her, but where is she to remain during the interval? where can she stay for a single night? This may seem extravagant; but those who have made the attempt will testify, that to find any respectable home, bed or board, for the newly discharged convict, is almost an utter impossibility. To say to her, "Go for the present, and when I have found a place, I will send for you," is to condemn her almost without hope, to a state which will, in all human probability, prove "worse than the first." Without character, without money, clothes, home, friends,—what is, what can be her resource? Let our city records answer; let street brawl,—midnight murder,—despairing suicide,—speak what language is inadequate to describe.

"But the establishment of a House of Refuge is expensive." Not so much so as may be supposed, when the number of those to be benefited is taken into consideration; and at any rate, not so much so as the perpetual recidivism, helplessness, and hopeless degradation of a large portion of the lower class of women in this city. As a measure of public economy, the wealthy part of our tax-payers cannot lay out money to better advantage, than in aiding us to place that establishment on a liberal and permanent footing.

In touching upon the subject of funds, we would remark, that our attempts to benefit discharged female prisoners, have hitherto embraced all such as appear to us sincerely desirous to reform; thus making our selection depend rather upon our judgment of individual character, than any rule of classification. But of late, the narrowness of the means at command of the Association, has been urged as a reason why we must, at least for the present, confine our efforts

to such as are in a strict legal sense convicts; i. e. persons convicted of crime, and not those imprisoned only for misdemeanor. While we submit to this as a painful necessity, feeling that there must be, among those who have suffered imprisonment for various slighter causes, numbers whom we might be the happy instruments of saving from total destruction, we venture to hope for greater good with greater means; and that they will not refuse to intrust us with funds sufficient for making further experiments on a scale more nearly commensurate with the greatness of the undertaking.

Of the other branch of duty assigned to the Female Department,—that which relates to the case of females while in prison,—we can scarcely speak with as hopeful a feeling. We have become convinced, that until our prisons are provided with means of reformation,—especially, classification of offenders, and efficient female care,—little can be done by unempowered individuals, however zealous and self-sacrificing. Of all the prisons that have come under our observation, Sing Sing alone gives the offender an opportunity for a return to decency of life. In the others, almost every evil influence seems at work to unfit for reformation, and educate for deeper crime. A condemnation to either of the City Prisons, appears to us almost equal to a sentence of moral death; so hopeless is the attempt to preserve even a spark of virtue or good intention, hewn in, and overpowered on every side, by masses of infamy and corruption.

We should be the last to desire any interference with the legitimate ends of punishment; but we would have it borne in mind, that at least one of these is the reformation of the offender; and if, for the sake of making him miserable, in return for the evils he has inflicted on society, we make him more wicked and shameless than before; we prepare a yet worse member for the community, and increase, in frightful progression, the very ills for whose cure punishments were instituted. The wholesome restraints of decency and good morals are, in fact, punishment to the corrupt; and it is not until these shall have wrought a salutary change, that there can be any danger of the prison proving too tolerable.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the well-known deplorable condition of the Penitentiary and Hospital at Blackwell's Island. Nor can there be any hope of substantial improvement, until a radical change be effected in the Female Department of both. And here, the Committee would express their settled conviction, that this department should be under the control of intelligent and judicious women; sufficient in number to carry out, with precision, a proper system of classification, to superintend the different employments of the prisoners, attend to the nursing of the sick, and advise and instruct in all that concerns the well-being of the women;—subject, of course, to the general oversight of the Superintendent, Commissioners, &c. We believe that justice, mercy, decency, and sound economy, all point to a provision, *by law*, for the immediate supervision and control of female prisoners, by competent persons of their own sex. It cannot be supposed that two matrons—the number now at the Penitentiary—are sufficient to bring order out of confusion, and to take proper care of more than four hundred female prisoners, comprising the sick and the well, and all degrees of ignorance and depravity.

We can speak, with confidence, of the benefits of such a provision for the Female Department in our prisons generally, from the great degree of success

attending this experiment, wherever it has been fairly tried; as, for instance, in the prison at Sing Sing, and in the City Prison, while under the care of the two matrons recently discharged. Even the order, industry, and comfort established at the Home, prove, to our entire satisfaction, the expediency and practicability of similar government upon a large scale. In the present state of things, the initial step towards the change we desire, we consider to be this:—That the law, in its provisions for female prisoners, shall recognize the natural right of women to the sympathy, counsel, and care of the benevolent and judicious of their own sex, and that it therefore secure this right by proper enactments.

The nomination of matrons should be made by women; and their continuance in office should certainly not be subject to the fitful changes incident to appointments made by political parties.

E. EATON, *First Directress.*

C. M. KIRKLAND, *Corresponding Secretary.*

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FEMALE DEPARTMENT OF THE PRISON ASSOCIATION, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE "TEMPORARY HOME" FOR DISCHARGED FEMALE CONVICTS, RECENTLY ESTABLISHED, AND THE "EASES."

It has long been known to those who have interested themselves in this class of persons, that it was the practice of discharged female convicts, immediately upon leaving their places of confinement, to return to their old haunts of vice, and the society of their former associates, from the fact that none others would receive them. The virtuous instinctively shrunk from them, fearing disgrace and contamination. Being counted unworthy of confidence, and inefficient as labourers, this unhappy class could obtain no friends or employment among the orderly and the good—scarcely the hearing of their humble petitions for leave to toil in the most menial service. Abundant confirmation of this fact was discovered by the Committee, during their visits to the prisons. Also, that among the many convicts a great diversity of character existed—degrees in crime were apparent. Some were found intelligent, with capacity and skill to labour; some were young, and their degradation appeared more the result of outward circumstances, than of innate depravity and wilful crime; and the entire reformation to habits of sobriety, honesty and virtue, of many, if placed in favouring circumstances, was deemed but a reasonable expectation. While no systematic provision was made for this crisis in the fortunes of these fallen ones, the assistance afforded them was accidental, rarely offered, and altogether inadequate to meet the necessities of their case; they seemed, therefore, compelled to run the same round of miserable changes, resulting often in a return to prison again and again—this wretched variety being "the portion of their cup." The number of recommitments, it is believed, could thus, in part, be accounted for.

Added to these facts, the tearful, touching appeals for a shelter and honest employment—so often made by those soon to be discharged, to the visitors of the prisons—stimulated to enterprise and experiment, and confirmed them in the belief, that in this way, good might result to those who otherwise were sure to be lost.

Under these circumstances, the plan of the present Home early suggested itself to the Executive Committee. Our means being limited, we confined ourselves to a limited scale of operations, hoping that, after having tested the utility of the scheme, more adequate arrangements might be made.

It has been ascertained that a similar system of classification is necessary for a few, that has been found indispensable for a great number. Were there only six or twelve to provide for, a diversity of employments, to suit the different capacities, would be important; so also, the same necessity might exist of preventing free conversation among them, that those skilled in evil practices might not thus further corrupt and educate in wickedness the young and comparatively inexperienced in crime;—so that we would hardly consider the present a fair test of what might be done upon a more extended plan.

A number of circumstances have contributed to forbid the making of much effort, hitherto, to induce individuals to take advantage of this provision for them. Most of the members of the Committee left the city soon after the Home was opened, and were absent during the summer; and the few who remained, found enough to do to

attend to the general concerns of the Home and its inmates, many of whom found their way thither without solicitation from any of the visitors.

Another reason which discouraged our endeavours in this direction, was the fact, that the condition of the female departments of the prisons, has afforded little opportunity for direct and profitable labours within their walls, for the benefit of the convicts. The want of matrons of suitable character, and sufficient in number, in the prisons in this city, on whom we could depend for a cheerful and efficient co-operation, and who could establish a correct system for the reformation and well-being of the female convicts, rendered our labours among them nearly fruitless. An exception should be made of the two valuable and excellent matrons of the City Prison, during the period of their labours. Still another reason that pointed to the want of success of very active efforts to obtain inmates for the Home was, that as many came with the present amount of effort as could be conveniently accommodated; so that we wait for the ability to provide for a greater number, before we offer the charities of the institution to the hundreds who are suffering for the want of them.

We bear in mind, that the provisions of the Home have respect only to those who come under the action of the law, and have been for a longer or shorter time tenants of a prison; if, after examination, they are found unable to support themselves, they are recommended to the public provision in such cases.

Also, we adhere to the rule, that the stay of the women at the Home be limited to the time elapsing between their departure from the prison, and their finding a proper home and employment.

The following account of the number received at the Home since the 12th of June last, and of the disposition made of them, is taken from the records kept at the house:

Whole number received,	75
Discharged for disobedience and quarrelling,	2
Left for frivolous reasons—such as too much work,	2
“ without permission,	2
Sent to Bellevue Hospital,	5
“ “ Blackwell's Island Hospital,	2
“ “ their friends,	2
Taken home by their friends, at their own expense,	2
Placed at board,	1
Service places found for,	31
Received for one night,	5
Remaining in the house,	—75

Of the 31 sent to service places, there are remaining in those places, from whom excellent accounts have been received,	9
Left her place, it is believed with good reasons, but has uniformly conducted well,	1
Not heard from,	13
Gone back to the Island,	4
Left their places on account of ill health, and refusing to go to the Hospital,	2
Left places on account of intemperance,	—31

With respect to success in the complete and abiding reformation of any of the subjects of our care, they have been too short a time under the influence of our measures for us to speak with confidence. The evidences, however, of reformation at present, are, in some cases, quite satisfactory.

During the first month there were some instances of insubordinate conduct, and some dismissals on account of it; but the last two months have developed no such difficulty. Order, quiet, and industry in the house, and submission to the rules, have been secured by the matrons with ease. One woman, to whom the matrons, on account of her disobliging conduct, could not give “a character,” succeeded at length (through the agency of individuals who entered into the views of the Committee) in obtaining a situation in the country. The letter enclosed has been received from her, and needs no comment.

Two of the ten from whom good accounts were received, were employed in an intelligent family in the country. The gentleman of the house called at the Home, and said of one of them, “She is the smartest girl we ever had in our House, and behaves with perfect propriety.” Of the other, he said, emphatically, “She is a good girl.” Another went to her place the first of July, where she is still, and has sent money to redeem her clothes, and at the last accounts was doing well. Similar statements have been received respecting the whole ten.

The amount received for work done at the Home is \$55.34. Owing to the limited stay of the women at the Home, little dependence was made upon its reformatory influences; the result, so far, is more favourable than we anticipated. The improvement of the women in their various kinds of work, is highly gratifying; they receive advice and instruction with apparent pleasure, gratitude, and profit.

E. EATON, *First Directress.*

Caroline Elizabeth O'D—, committed for intemperance. She has been at the Home most of the time since it was opened, and her conduct has been unexceptionable—has rendered her services invaluable, because of her adroitness in shirt-making, and sewing in all its varieties. She assists in the superintendence of the sewing department; has had great experience in sickness, and has proved herself an excellent assistant.

Sarah O— left the Home July 12th, to go to Pennsylvania; she is engaged in general housework on a farm. A letter received from the person who employs her, states that she is, in all respects, doing well.

Sarah P— went to her place July 17th; called at the Home October 27th, to report; herself and employer well satisfied.

Maria G— secured a home August 6th; October 21st very favourable accounts received.

Catherine N—, from City Prison, has been at the Home about three months; is employed in the kitchen department; is industrious and very useful there, but too advanced in years to perform all a family would require.

Rebecca G—, an inmate since the 2d of July, is in very feeble health, and not able to leave the house, but when well enough, renders herself useful as tailoress.

H— American, age thirty-eight, from Pennsylvania October 17th; behaved well while at the Home. Left November 3d, without permission; not heard of since.

Mattilda H—, came in sick; is a woman of unusual intemperance; has passed, at different times, about six weeks at the Home. Is capable of making herself useful in almost any circumstances, and has so far recovered her health as to be able to seek other quarters.

In addition to the above number, *houses* have been provided for *twelve*, from whom accounts have not yet been received; there are *twenty-four* remaining.

The following is a list of those who have conducted badly, and of whom no just expectation can be formed of their amendment. According to their own statement, they were committed for drunkenness:

A— *H—*, Irish, age twenty-five; came June 12th, from one of the prisons; staid two weeks and left, saying the work was too hard. She is now at the Penitentiary.

* This work was done at the customary low prices of “shop work”

