

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT, 1896.

Number of men reported to our Association during the year: Montreal Jail, one hundred and seventy-two; St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary, ten; Kingston Penitentiary, one; Toronto Central Prison, one.

Number of men helped: City Jail, one hundred and twenty-eight; St. Vincent de Paul, six; Kingston, one; Toronto, one; one hundred and twenty-three men were met and assisted immediately upon release. With the time at our disposal it was found impossible to follow up all the men for any length of time, consequently we adopted the plan of asking men who had been committed for trivial offences to return to us if they failed to get work or needed further assistance; seventy-three men were cordially invited to return in this way after being assisted once, but only twenty returned, and we subsequently learned that some of those who did not return had got work or left the city.

There was a decided disposition amongst the men, with the exception of three from the penitentiary and a few drunkards from the jail, not to be imprisoned again if they could prevent it by good conduct.

A room was rented for a whole year to enable us to a certain extent to keep men away from other resorts where they might meet old companions, and it was fairly successful, but had to be given up at the end of December for various reasons, though it is hoped it will be replaced by another more suitable one before long.

A detailed account of total year's work appears on last page, but we give here separately the use made of the room as it may be interesting: orders given to 23 men for 213 nights, of which 26 nights were not used (sometimes because a man got work before time of order expired) leaving balance of 187 nights used, an average of about eight nights per man. Six of the men sent to the room turned out very good, nine moderately good, three indifferently, three badly, two not known.

A number of men released from one to three years ago return to us at intervals for moral and material help, and we give it. The material assistance needed is generally two or three nights lodgings in Winter by a few of the men out of work temporarily, and the total sum expended is very small but is of great help to them in the position they are in at that particular time.

A petition was forwarded to the Minister of Justice in November against the erection of a Dominion Reformatory at Alexandria, Ontario, until further enquiry is made by the Dominion Government as to suitability of site.

Mr. H. J. Mudge, who acted as President for two years, resigned at the close of 1895, partly owing to ill-health, and was succeeded by Mr. A. M. Crombie, Manager Bank of Commerce; Mr. J. A. Barry, who acted as Treasurer for three years also resigned at the commencement of present year, and his duties were kindly taken by Mr. T. H. Walsh, Real Estate Agent, 69 Temple Building, St. James Street.

We thank our subscribers for their support. We are indebted to Miss Wray, Ministering Children's League; St. James the Apostle Church, Rev. E. McManus, Mr. R. E. Crane, Mr. J. Elliott and Mr. A. M. Crombie, for clothing. Some of the clothing was sent in at a very opportune time and was given to men who kept it. We have to thank Mr. Crombie for gift of six pieces of furniture for use in our room. We acknowledge the uniform courtesy of Mr. Vallée, Governor, and his assistants at the Jail, and the continued help of Mr. Ritchie Bell with the sailors.

We give herewith a few sample cases:—

A. B.—Young man released from penitentiary two years ago, after being twice in that institution; has worked steadily ever since, whenever he could get work. He visits us on an average once monthly; is very grateful for help we gave him at time of release, and at intervals since, and has not cost the Association any money at all.

C. D.—Man released from jail last year, after four convictions for drunkenness; has worked steadily all this year and kept sober under very trying circumstances (sickness and death in his family). He is very grateful for aid we gave him at different times.

E. F.—Young man released from jail this year,—offence, vagrancy. Got work four days after release, during which time was kept by our Association; worked a considerable time, very long hours for small pay, and finally lost situation, through no fault of his own. At present out of work.

G. H.—Little boy, ten years old, through a misunderstanding, committed to jail for playing ball on the street. We immediately took action to obtain release.

I. J., K. L.—A sailor and a steamship stoker, both released after close of navigation. The sailor was helped for ten days, when he got work in the country. The stoker was kept five days, when he got away with cattle at a time when he would be able to meet his own ship (which owed him money) on its return trip to the port to which cattle were going for shipment.