

8. The Library is the source of relief and the "minister of consolation" to the Convict in some positions, and on some occasions, which otherwise would peculiarly embitter his incarceration. The Prison is closed in the Summer Season at six o'clock P.M. each day, leaving the Convict nearly three hours before darkness sets in for reading. But, without a Library, these hours would be hours of haunting terror and bitterness to the Convict. Some may probably have spent them in meditating upon plans of escape; others upon schemes of future depredations; many looked upon them as a period of memory's terrible mental suffering; to all it was a time of solitude and misery. The Library has put an end to this, and converted those hours of idleness and misery into a period of profit, enjoyment and comparative happiness.

9. The Library, moreover, is a fountain of continuous instruction to the Convicts. There are moments every day, hours of every week, and days of every month, which, without useful Books, would run to waste, or, what is worse, to vice; but which, by means of the Library, may perpetually add to the extent and variety of the Convict's knowledge, tending to his improvement in the contentment which it brings in its beneficent tenor, and increasing his capacity to receive it, his relish in its enjoyment, and his ability for usefulness.

10. The Library stimulates and keeps alive in the hearts of many Convicts—Fathers, Husbands, Brothers and Children—hopes of future happiness and usefulness amongst their Friends, and in a degree qualifies them for the realization of their hopes. The desire to be useful may always be contemplated with pleasing emotions; but it is especially pleasing to think that even the iron foot of crime cannot utterly crush that desire from the human soul. There are many Convicts here who read and study diligently, with the hope that it may add to their usefulness when they are once more free, and enable them to make some amends in the future for their errors in the past.

11. Finally, whether we consider the fund of knowledge which a Library supplies as food for the Convict's mind; or the stock and variety of new ideas which it has afforded; whether we consider the exercise and invigoration of his faculties it has given; the employment to his thoughts, the habits of industry and beneficial occupation of time it has inculcated; or whether we consider the contentment afforded, or its contribution towards order and discipline, or that its truths, like all other truths, are, in their nature, on the side of virtue and morality,—and, therefore, beneficent—it seems impossible not to recognize the utility and importance, if not the absolute necessity, of the Library as an essential means of order and improvement in all Prisons of Reform,—a central agency which, like the heart impelling the blood to all parts of the system charged with the constituents of nutrition and new strength, send forth through all parts of this Institution to the Convicts the elements of a new and intelligent life, depositing in their hearts the seeds of virtue, or the principle of Religion.

IV. THE ORIGIN AND OPERATION OF THE LIBRARY IN THE PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY.

1. *Its origin.*—From the first establishment of this Prison a copy of the Holy Scriptures has been supplied to each Convict, for the purpose of Religious Instruction. But no step was taken to provide a Library until 1844, when Sir Charles Metcalf gave to the Prison about one hundred and seventy Volumes of Books. These Volumes were not large, but their contents were sound and good, and they constituted the only Library for the Convicts up to the year 1850, or for a period of six years. Lord Metcalf's benevolence was also most universal in Canada, and this contribution to the moral improvement of the Convicts was timely, as it was a much needed charity, and perhaps more fruitful than many other acts of his benevolence—an act of goodness which for years was the source of instruction and happiness to hundreds of criminal men, and which it is a pleasure here to acknowledge with gratitude.

2. In 1850 the Chaplain called the attention of the Board of Commissioners to the necessity of a more general and extensive Library for the Convicts—a necessity the more pressing from the fact that many of the Books given by Lord Metcalf were worn