

PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY.

STATEMENT OF THE ACCOUNTS AND AFFAIRS OF THE PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY,
for the year 1845, laid before the Legislative Assembly on the 31st March, 1846,
pursuant to Statute (of Upper Canada) 4 William IV, Cap. 37.

- No. 1.—Report of the Board of Inspectors.
No. 2.—Report of the Chaplain.
No. 3.—Report of the Officiating Roman Catholic Clergyman.
No. 4.—Report of the Surgeon.
No. 5.—Report of the Warden.

No. 1.

Report of the Board of Inspectors.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable CHARLES MURRAY, Earl Cathcart, Administrator of the Government of the Province of Canada, &c. &c. &c.

The Inspectors of the Provincial Penitentiary, established at Kingston, have the honor to present their Annual Report.

During the past year the labour of the Convicts has been principally applied towards the completion of the buildings, and greater progress has been made than in any former year; much work is, however, still to be done. The west wing has been raised, and is now roofed and ready for the erection of cells, with which the Board intend to proceed in the Spring. The erection of an Hospital and Female Prison will also engage their attention; the wooden shops put up temporarily some years ago are now in a state of decay, and permanent stone ones must be built as soon as possible. The above works, together with the providing a suitable place of Worship, so often called for in the Reports of the Chaplain, will afford abundant work for the Convicts during the next and ensuing summer. The Inspectors hope that after that period the labour of the Convicts will be more profitable to the Institution, and that the more permanent character of their work will enable the Board to pay greater attention to the classification of the inmates of the Prison.

It is with feelings of the deepest regret that the Inspectors see youths of so tender an age as eight years sent to an Institution, the rules of which, imposing constant hard labour and silence, prevent them from giving that attention to the education of the boys which they consider would assist in reforming their characters.

There is another subject of the same nature to which the Board begs to direct Your Excellency's attention. Many of the Convicts are sentenced to be imprisoned for life, and some for long terms of years; no incentive to good behaviour is held out to them, no hope of a remission of their sentences—despair takes possession of their minds, and some of the most hardened and reckless characters would

willingly risk their lives, and sacrifice those of their keepers, in attempts to escape; the most harassing and constant vigilance must be kept up; and, from the degraded and dispirited state of the Convict, neither his moral reformation, nor the full benefit to the Institution of his labour, can be expected. If the law authorizing the transportation of Convicts to a penal Colony were carried into effect, the Institution would be relieved from such committals.

The Board desire to see this remedied; and after giving the subject their most careful consideration, are fully impressed with the opinion that a remission of the term of imprisonment, in proportion to the good conduct and industry of the Convict, would have the most happy effect. This, with several other matters, they trust will engage the attention of the Legislature at its approaching Session.

In several successive Reports the Inspectors have urged the necessity of an enactment defining the duties of the Reverend Gentlemen of the Protestant and Roman Catholic persuasions attending the Institution, and they are persuaded that the spiritual welfare of the Convicts would be furthered by the absence of all attempts at proselytism. They have endeavoured hitherto to prevent this, by forbidding the introduction of all books of a controversial character, but they have found great difficulty in carrying out their views.

They also trust that a permanent and more liberal provision will be made for the remuneration of the Chaplains, and that the Board may in future be spared the disagreeable duty which devolved upon them during the past year, of apportioning between the Chaplain and the officiating Roman Catholic Clergyman, the sum voted by the Legislature for religious instruction. They respectfully suggest that a salary sufficient to secure their undivided attention should be allotted to each.

The Reports of the Warden, Surgeon, and Chaplain are forwarded herewith.

All which is respectfully submitted.

THOS. KIRKPATRICK,
*President of the Board of Inspectors of the
Provincial Penitentiary of Canada.*

KINGSTON, 31st December, 1845.