

the Rev. D. B. Nichols. The school was opened in November, 1855, under the patronage of the municipal authorities, with seven boys from the county jail. At first, personal restraint was supposed to be indispensable. The boys were brought in irons, and locked in their cells with barred windows, at night. In spite of all the humane genius of the superintendent could do to disguise or modify the effect of the coercive restraints, the boys made little or no improvement under this system. A new one has been adopted, which appeals exclusively to the springs of action in its subject. Every end under the head of regimen, is attained by playing genially and skillfully on the susceptibilities which are characteristic of human nature as distinguished from the brute. Mr. Brace says:—

"The great principles of Mr. Nichols' management, are an appeal to, and a confidence in the *sense of honor* among the boys, and a fatherly kindness on his part, even to the extreme of bearing their penalties for them. The actions of Mr. Nichols in this last matter seem almost incredible. A loafing vagabond boy is brought to the school, sentenced for stealing from a market woman. He finds school lessons and the workshops and the high fence, after his free life, rather confining. He proceeds, incontinently, to break the windows, and to knock some of the small boys' heads. The boy-police arrest him and shut him up in a room. He is sentenced to bread and water for a week. The first meal is brought to him of these plain materials, but after this, he finds that he is served with good food—better, perhaps, than he has ever eaten before. He is surprised at this, and asks the reason. The Janitor replies that "Mr. Nichols has done it," that he has taken the bread and water for his own meal, and given the boy *his* dinner.

"The boy is still more surprised, and thinks it is a very good dodge; and we can imagine him, with the knowing smirk of a street boy as he eats the comfortable dinner, saying he hopes he may have a good deal more of such bread and water. The same thing is repeated the next day, and the lad asks more questions about it; he begins to have misgivings, but still he manages to make himself comfortable. On the third day, perhaps, as this silent goodness continues (Mr. Nichols never appearing in the mean time,) some glimmerings begin to draw on the poor lad's mind of what has been done toward him. There enters into his mind, it may be, a glimmering of the light of unselfish love. His heart is softened—he refuses to eat, and begs to see this man who is thus patiently taking on himself the burden of his transgressions. Mr. Nichols at length comes in, talks with the boy, and tells him what he is trying to do, and what prompts him to do it; what the boy can become, and what a way there is open before him if he will only choose it. The lad is penitent, and henceforth the school has a new friend and faithful officer in it. Trust is reposed in him, and it may be at length he commences a new and reformed life.

"There are in the school five grades of honor, and five of disgrace. These are accompanied each with certain privileges or deprivations, as, for instance, particular kinds of food, places at the table, badges, privilege of visiting the city, and the like, so that the lads constantly find themselves divided into distinct ranks and classes. They become very ambitious of attaining certain honors, and feel very much mortified when they lose them. On the day on which we visited this institution, a little janitor, with his bundle of keys, guided us through the various parts of it. He informed us that there were a number of other gate-keepers and superintendents among the boys. One of the boys is the captain of the police department, and if a boy escapes, they permit him to take his own way to bring back the fugitive. More than forty have been trusted to go alone to the city, and to remain from Saturday night till Monday morning, and of these not one has ever betrayed his trust. The whole number of escapes out of this Reform School during the last year was only seven, from nearly two hundred members."

To this description Mr. Brace adds the following important and just remark:

"It should be remembered that the success of all this rests not so much upon the system as upon the man. The same measures might be tried elsewhere under another superintendent, and prove an utter failure. As in all great movements of reform, it is the living soul rather than the doctrines which has done the work. It is true something of this excellent plan may be imitated by some of our reformatory institutions, but the permanent fruits will depend on the manly heartiness, the genuine kindness, the judgment and the piety of the officers."

The moral of all this, to our own mind, is a conviction now tolerably matured by a series of observations, that while all may and should contribute something to the reclaiming of the vicious and the preservation of the viciously disposed, that work is on the whole one of the great arts reserved for peculiar genius; and the noblest to which genius can be dedicated. It is the work of God, but it is done by instruments specially adapted to their work.—There have been as yet but few instances of the development of this peculiar genius,

but there are many men in whom Divine love might develop it, if their minds were but directed to so noble a calling.—*New York Examiner*.

III. SCHOOLS IN GAOLS.

Even these are not without fruit, however unpromising the soil into which the seed is cast. Here is an instance. A gentleman who visited the gaols of Dublin, some years ago, to teach the inmates, says:

"One youth I gave up as a hopeless case; he pretended he could not read, but I discovered he read better than any of the prisoners. He endeavoured to pick my pockets, and to pull my coat whenever I happened to turn round, and pierced me with pins more than once. I bore all this foul treatment patiently, and instead of causing him to be punished, I expostulated with him on the folly and wickedness of his ways, and gave him two or three suitable tracts, which he promised to read.

"Cold weather coming on, he had no coat or shoes,—a common thing in the prison, where some, indeed, were almost naked. I promised him an old coat and a pair of shoes, if he would become more attentive. The bribe was too tempting to be refused; and, after two or three weeks' trial I sent him the coat and shoes. He continued promising for some time, but there was nothing in his conduct which could induce a person to hope for an entire reformation. It is the duty of teachers, when they meet with such a scholar, to present him in fervent prayer before the throne of grace; yet at the same time, to watch over him, and to lose no opportunity of communicating suitable advice. This was the method adopted on the occasion, and I trust it was not unavailing. However, the term of his confinement expired, and he was released. Shortly afterwards, I had occasion to leave town; and, on my return, having been reading the whole of the day, I went out in the evening to enjoy a walk. My spirits were unusually low. I proceeded along one of the public roads for some time; but the noise and bustle not suiting my feelings, I turned up a narrow private road, shaded by trees on both sides, and interspersed here and there with neat whitewashed cottages. On passing one of them, I heard the clicking noise of a busy loom, and the singing of a light-hearted weaver. When I had passed about fifty paces, the door opened, and a neatly-dressed young man called after me by name. Not recognising him, I did not reply, but proceeded. He ran after me, and stopped me. I looked at him. 'Do you not know me, sir?' said he. 'No indeed I do not.' 'Do you not recollect your scholar at Newgate, James—?' I looked at him from head to foot; but the neatly combed hair, the clean face, new shirt, and plain and comfortable suit of clothes, had so metamorphosed him, that it was with difficulty I could recognise him. Taking me most affectionately by the hand, and with tears in his eyes he said, 'Sir, I saw you passing by, and could not refrain from coming out to ask your pardon for all my unkindness to you, and to thank you for all that you and the other young gentlemen said to me while in Newgate. It was a sad place, but I thank God that ever I was put into it; I shall count that day the happiest in my life. I should have been now, perhaps, living in wickedness, and should probably have come to the gallows at last. When I came out I was friendless, and without a home; but reflecting on what was often told me in Newgate, that Christ is the friend of sinners, and ever willing to receive the vilest, I prayed him to support and assist me. I shuddered at the idea of going to rob and pilfer again, and determined to work. I got some work, and some clothes too; and I have now employment enough at this cottage; and I pass away my time very happily.'—*English Sunday School Teachers' Magazine and Journal of Education*.

IV. Papers on Public Libraries.

1. FREE BOOKS, FREE SCHOOLS, AND A FREE PEOPLE.

My visits to the Cincinnati Free Library, in which I frequently spend an interesting hour in observing those who come to draw from that well of knowledge, have moved me to say a word or two in its favor.

The circulation of books during the month of May, was 6,304 volumes, classified as follows, viz: 697 volumes, Lives; 604, Poetry; 698, Scientific; 530, Novels and Tales; 1,687, Miscellaneous; 1,550, Travels; 543. The number of subscribers to the Library is 4,237. Increase since November, 1,348.

But the most hopeful feature of all, is the character of the readers. The Free Library has drawn to itself some thousands of readers whom our other very excellent institution, the Young Men's Mercantile, has failed to reach. Though these embrace portions of all classes of our citizens, yet I judge the far greater part to be labouring men; and most of them are young men, and lads. On this ground we claim the Free Library to be a great moral institution. It is not to be conceived that the young men who drudge through the long weary