

QUEBEC, December 14.

It gives us pleasure to see that a Meeting has been called in Montreal for the 18th inst., to devise means in aid of establishing a steam communication between Quebec and Halifax. We are persuaded a line of steam boats in that trade would afford profitable pecuniary investment, and much increase the business and intercourse with our sister provinces. As means for communicating intelligence, the passage being regularly performed in from 6 to 8 days, it would be attended with benefit; with the regular Post-Office packets and a mercantile line to Halifax, it would divert a great portion of the very large sums now paid to the United States for postage and passage. It is astonishing that such an undertaking has not long ago been accomplished. If the Volantia steam packets were to go into operation, there can be no doubt that a boat to Quebec would give the whole trade in postage and passage to British interests, by which it ought to be enjoyed.

In addition to the bequest of £100 made to the British and Canadian School in St. Roc (not at St. John's gate, as stated by mistake) the late Mr. Stott bequeathed £100 to the Wesleyan Chapel, £100 to the Wesleyan School in Quebec, and £100 to the Wesleyan Chapel in the Township of New Ireland.—(Mercury.)

#### EXTRACTS

From the Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Boston Prison Discipline Society.

CONTINUED.

This Society, without thwarting the purposes of justice, calls into action the sympathetic and compassionate feelings of man towards his fellow.—Were it not for some such operation as this, it might not only be unfelt but unknown, that there are in the United States about 300 lunatics, 500 youth and children, 1000 females, 10,000 of all classes, in prison at the same time; and in the lapse of a single year, about 125 criminals, and 75,000 debtors, committed to prison. Much more would it be unfelt and unknown, how friendless are these lunatics in prison; how miserable their condition; how incurable they become, if they do not soon die, in consequence of their dreadful malady, when aggravated by imprisonment. Even with the operations of this Society, we know not how much time must elapse, before this wretched class of prisoners will excite so much commiseration as to cause other provision to be made for them. Five hundred youth and children too, might have remained for ages, in the old penitentiaries, subject to the brutal passions of old offenders, and no houses of refuge for juvenile delinquents have been provided for them, except for the publicity which has been given to the facts in regard to the unutterable abominations to which they have been exposed. 1000 females, also, among whom are daughters once promising, wives with husbands and children living, and mothers with infant children in their arms, might have remained in prison, and may still remain there a long time, before it shall be felt generally that female commiseration, prayer and corresponding effort, can find scope for its ever active spirit within the walls of prisons. This would not be because the same heart which was first at the sepulchre of Him, who was anointed to preach liberty to the captive, does not remain on earth; but because it has been so extensively unknown that there were so many females in prison. And 10,000 persons of all classes might have remained in prison, and every year 125,000 criminals, and 75,000 debtors might be committed to prison, and still this might remain a subject so unimportant, and uninteresting, as not to excite the commiseration of the public, were no publicity to be given to the facts concerning it. We believe therefore, that this Society, without thwarting the purposes of justice, calls into action, to some extent, the sympathetic and compassionate feelings of man towards his fellow.

Thus it appears that the indirect influence of the Society may have been or may be of some use to the world.

#### THE PHYSICIAN OF THE CONNECTICUT STATE PRISON REPORTS,

That uncommon health has prevailed in the institution during the past year. Not a death has occurred within that period; and only one since the prison was first tenanted in June, 1827.

This degree of healthfulness and exemption from fatality is, it is presumed, unexampled in the history of prisons.

In Europe, one death in 30 or 35 is considered common healthiness.

Auburn prison, with 570 convicts, has lost but nine the past year.

The Connecticut prison, with an average of 120 convicts, has had but one death in nearly two years, and not one for sixteen months. These facts speak well for these institutions. No other prisons have ever been so healthy. This may be ascribed to the three following causes, principally, viz.

1st. Regular and uniform diet, and strict temperance of the prisoners.

2d. Thorough ventilation, and uniform temperature of the shops and night rooms.

3d. Constant and regular employment during the day.

DIET.—In the Connecticut prison, the food and drink of the convicts are the same as last year; and, with little variation, the same throughout the year. The diet established by the directors, on opening the institution, is found not only to be wholesome and sufficiently nutritious, but generally very satisfactory to the prisoners. In health, no prisoner is allowed any other drink than water. Coffee, tea, milk, and other proper food and drink, are furnished to the sick and indisposed. The opinion which has so long and so extensively prevailed, that spirituous liquors could not be suddenly abandoned with safety, has, in the experience of this institution, been completely refuted.

Of the 106 convicts committed to this prison since its establishment, 90 have acknowledged themselves to have been intemperate, or are known to have been so. Some of these were veteran drinkers; and one, in addition to spirits, had for 17 years used large quantities of opium. These prisoners were deprived of spirits at once without a substitute. Those individuals in whom the habit was long confirmed, suffered a temporary loss of appetite and almost overwhelming anguish for the want of their accustomed stimulus, which seemed, for the time, to supersede every other evil connected with their confinement. But by attentive watching, the use of coffee and nutritious and wholesome diet, the appetite was soon improved, and after a while greatly increased—the craving for spirits gradually subsided; and after some time had elapsed, they acknowledged an improvement in their feelings, increase of bodily strength and vigor of mind. These facts are important; and it is hoped will have an influence in correcting a very general mistake that is prevailing, that the peculiar diseases of drunkards are liable to come on suddenly, if spirits be suddenly abandoned. With this erroneous impression many have resorted to substitutes and preventives, which only changed the stimulus without removing the habit.

VENTILATION.—In addition to the former expedients for ventilation, a furnace has been constructed for the double object of regulating the temperature of the prison, and still more important purpose of forcing a constant supply of pure air into the great Hall.

EMPLOYMENT.—The subject of employment was adverted to in the Report of last year, and also in the report of the directors. Another year's experience has confirmed all our former opinions on the subject, and satisfied us of the importance of labor both to health and discipline.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE FOURTH REPORT OF THE MANAGERS OF THE HOUSE OF REFUGE IN NEW-YORK.

Previously to the establishment of the house of refuge, there were more than five hundred young persons annually committed, in the city of New-York, either as criminals or vagrants. Now the officers of justice do not find that number, of these descriptions; so that the effects of the institution are not only felt by those who are committed to its care, but the community at large feels its benign influence in the diminution of crime.

If there could, at this time, be a question as to the humanity and justice of the institution, the condition of the objects of its care, previously to and after they are received into the house of refuge, might be exhibited.—It has happened that when one has been questioned as to his former course of life, and asked how he obtained means of subsistence, he has answered, 'by begging and stealing,' with apparently as little consciousness that he was making a dis-

graceful confession, as if he had said that he had found a support from some honest employment.

In almost every case—we do not say in all cases—the discipline of the institution works a reformation. The moral faculties are awakened, the thoughts of the young offender are turned, often with regret, upon his past life, and he is led to resolve on a better course.—The transition is of a being from a life of want, ignorance, idleness, corruption, and hopelessness, to the enjoyments in the refuge of comfort, to the relief which is afforded to the mind, by constant and useful employment, to the knowledge of good and evil, to the hope of obtaining an honest living, and to the consolations of religion.

It is worthy of remark, that several of those who appeared the most depraved, when they came into the refuge, and for some time afterward appeared incorrigible, have subsequently given the best hope of their entire reformation.

Since the establishment was opened, on the first of January, 1825, to the commencement of the present year, five hundred and twenty-seven subjects have been received; of these, two hundred and seventy-five have been bound out, and of the latter only twenty-two have been returned on account of their having given dissatisfaction to those to whom they were apprenticed.

In several instances reformed youths, after an absence, which they were conscious they had advantageously employed, have presented themselves to greet those to whom they were indebted, with filial affection, and with full hearts to express their gratitude.

It will be seen, that though the managers chiefly rely on a system of moral discipline, yet, moderate corporeal chastisement is not prohibited.—It rarely happens, but there are some natures who can be made to feel only through their corporeal senses; and the managers have not been willing to suffer these to be sacrificed to notions of ultra-humanity, which would abolish all punishments.

The introduction of the supervision of a committee of ladies, for the female department, is an improvement, the benefits of which are constantly felt.

There have been in the house of refuge, during the last year, including those who were left there the preceding year, three hundred and thirty-seven boys and girls, of whom one hundred and forty-eight have been bound out, and one hundred and sixty-one remained at the close of the year.

It is to be regretted that this report cannot be closed without adverting to a subject which is very far from affording any grounds of satisfaction: it is the state of the funds and the revenue of the institution.—This establishment must be considered as an integral part of the penitentiary system which has been adopted by the State; it may be said to be the foundation on which the whole superstructure rests; and there can be no more reason to believe that the Legislature will withhold from it an adequate support, than there is to believe that they will abandon the principles of a penal code, which marks the advancement of mankind in knowledge, civilization, and humanity.

The managers, while on this subject, beg leave to present some extracts from a report of a committee of the Senate, which introduced the law of 1826.

The committee say, "There is hardly a child who will be condemned to the house of refuge, who, if left to the course which will bring him there, would not finally become a charge to the State as a convict.—One person, in particular, who is now confined in the prison at Auburn, was first convicted when he was only ten years old, and has since, at different times, been twenty-eight years a convict, supported by the State at an expense of not less than two thousand dollars."

"Since the house of refuge was opened," continues the same report, "the number of children who have been brought to the bar of the criminal courts in New York, has lessened in the proportion of four to one."

In conclusion, the managers have only to say, that they desire nothing more than the moderate means necessary to support the institution; and, relying on the disposition which has been heretofore manifested by the Legislature, to support an establishment which, the managers believe, was justly characterized by the late Governor, as "the best penitentiary institution ever devised by the wit, and established by the beneficence of man."