

on Main Street. As I walked along leisurely a well dressed man walking between two little boys passed me; as he did so he turned in the dim light and looked closely at me, then went on to the next street crossing. Sending the boys on, he returned to speak with me; asked if I remembered him. I replied I yes, the face but not the name, and asked where we had met. Said he, my name is, I was one of your boys, have you forgotten me? Having had many boys in my classes in the Sunday schools of St. Andrew's churches in Guelph and Toronto, and in many cases confounded the young men who have been my wards here with them, I asked where he had been one of my boys. He said "It was in the prison, and I have so often wished to write and tell you how often I think of what you did for me. I was months under you ten years ago. When arrested I was on the road to ruin; and it was what you said and did for me that saved me; but for you I would have been a wreck and a criminal," and he repeated what I had quite forgotten in his case. He told me he held a good position in the house where employed, had the confidence of his employers, a good salary, a comfortable and happy home, and to the few months spent in the Central Prison he attributed it all. After a pleasant chat, he joined his boys, while I returned to the hotel with the pleasing reflection, that if there are many disappointments with those who promise reform while under my charge and on leaving the prison, but fail sadly, there are some, though I cannot say how many, who like this man, do well, and look back with grateful remembrance to the turning point of their lives, and its commencement in the Central Prison.

Practical Work of our Association.

Minutes of practical work of the Association for twelve months ending September 30th, 1892 :

Total number discharged from city prisons, 1,935.

The number assisted by the Association 506.

Employment found for 128.
Provisions given to 75 families.
Rent paid for 15.
Articles of clothing given 183.
Assisted with tools 36.
Railway fares to homes or where employment could be obtained, 51.
Articles of furniture given 81.
Loans to discharged prisoners, \$166.83.
Repaid during the year, \$114.92.
The Agent and Bible-woman have made 227 visits to the prisons, and 520 visits outside in the interests of the prisoners and their families.

Money Needed.

Very few have an opportunity to visit the prisoner either in prison or out of prison, but all may by proxy visit those "sick and in prison," by contributing to the funds of the Prisoners' Aid Association. The Treasurer's address is 137 Church St., Toronto.

Ontario Prison Reform Commissioners Report.—Excerpts.

(Continued from page 3.)

Mr. Pettigrove, secretary of the State Board of Prisons, describing the probation system, said: "A boy is taken into the court and adjudged guilty of a certain offence, and instead of committing him to any institution where he can come in contact with other offenders or to prison, he puts him under charge of a probation officer. In that case his liberty is not restrained, but it is required that he shall keep out of bad company, that he shall not be out late at night, that he shall report himself once or twice a month as the case may be. Sometimes this simply means keeping a boy in his old home, in his old surroundings, but not necessarily, because in many cases when the home is unsuitable the boy is taken away and a home is found for him, where he is employed under the supervision of the probation officer, who watches him for six or twelve months as the case may be. Last year, in the central district, Mr. Savage took under his care nearly 1,200 cases, and only sixty of these were reported as having violated the terms of their probation. Of these fifty surrendered to the court and ten ran away." This method of dealing with juvenile offenders Mr. Pettigrove regards as the best that can be devised if it is thoroughly carried out. He said: "I have great faith in probation—more than anything else, for this reason, that you do not associate the boys together, you have not the contaminating influence of bad boys nor their pernicious communication." He would not send more than one offender to board in a family, and great care, he said, is taken to select suitable families. The congregate system, he thinks, has a bad effect and brings out all the bad qualities of a boy. One bad boy soon contaminates a whole class, and may contaminate a whole school.

The Australian System.—In Australia the systems for dealing with destitute and neglected children and with juvenile offenders, which found favor in Great Britain, were generally adopted, but they have been materially modified, and in his report for 1888 the secretary of the department which has charge of such institutions in the Colony of Victoria, asserts that the acts relating to juvenile offenders and to neglected children, which passed in the previous session, embody the most advanced legislation that has been enacted by any of the colonial legislatures. Their system includes private denominational reformatories, assisted by the State, as in England; Government reformatories, wholly sustained and managed by the State, in which the religious rights of the inmates are carefully guarded and the importance of religious instruction is fully recognized; industrial schools and receiving depots for neglected children awaiting the action of the courts. Children found associating or dwelling with criminal persons may now be apprehended, and if the charge be sustained the guardianship of such children may be transferred to respectable relatives or others, who will be protected from the interference of objectionable relatives. The boarding out of very young children, and the licensing out of those who behave well in the schools, are regarded as important means of saving and reforming those who need the help of the State.

One reformatory and one industrial school for girls are under the management of Protestants; one reformatory and two industrial schools for girls are under the management of Catholics, and the State manages directly a reformatory for boys, a reformatory for girls, an industrial school for boys and an industrial school for girls.

Reformatory for Boys, Penetanguishene.—A great mistake was made in the selection of the site of the Reformatory for Boys at Penetanguishene. When the Government found it necessary to establish this reformatory they thought it would be economical to use for the purpose a barracks which had been unoccupied since the war of 1812. This will not seem surprising when we remember that in those days the prevailing idea respecting reformatories was that they should be little else than prisons. For a place of confinement or for an asylum in which the imbecile or the incurable insane may spend their days the situation is in many respects unobjectionable. The air is bracing and

salubrious, the water is pure and abundant, the facilities for drainage are excellent, and the outlook is grandly beautiful; but the soil is so light and sandy, and so thickly covered with boulders, that successful farming is impossible, and the place is so far away from all the great centres of population that industries which could be carried on with advantage to the boys and with some profit if the school were within easy distance of a large city, would entail heavy loss if introduced here. A still greater disadvantage is that the public almost forget that such an institution exists, and application is scarcely ever made by farmers or others for the services of boys whose term is about to expire. There is no official machinery to provide good homes and suitable employment for the boys when they return to the outer world, or to control, direct or guide them in any way, and no voluntary association has yet attempted to make amends for the law's neglect in this respect.

The superintendent, when under examination, was asked what is done to give the boys an industrial training? He said: "We have endeavored to employ the boys as best we can, but not to their benefit as it should be. . . . So far as the teaching of a particular trade goes I cannot say that it is of much benefit to them, and when they go out it frequently follows that they have a very imperfect knowledge of any trade. . . . Geographically we are so situated that were we to employ the boys at skilled labor we could not put our produce upon the market except at great cost. Technological instruction could be given if the proper means and appliances were furnished by the Government." The superintendent seemed to understand fully the importance of active productive employment as a means of reformation.

Any attempt to ascertain the percentage of the boys discharged who lead honest lives would be useless under the present system, and any statement on that point must be mere conjecture, as no care is taken of the boys after they have left, nor is there any attempt at supervision of them.

The present state of the law is undoubtedly a great obstacle to the successful working of this reformatory. All authorities agree that the reformation of any prisoner, young or old, is impossible unless the prisoner himself be brought to desire his own reformation. This, all modern authorities agree, can only be done by kind and judicious management, and the hope of earning by good conduct a remission of some part of the penalty where that has been fixed by the sentence, or an early discharge under a parole system. The difficulty that is found almost insuperable in practice seems to arise from the doubts which exist as to the powers of the Provincial Legislature and the Canadian Parliament and the consequent necessity for concurrent legislation; and from the extreme views as to the importance of maintaining the prerogative right to pardon or to commute sentences which are held by the Canadian Government.

It has happened more than once that a boy for a remission of a part of whose sentence application was duly made, served out his full term before the Minister of Justice arrived at a decision in his case. The delays and disappointments often have a most injurious effect on a boy who has striven earnestly to deserve a commutation of his sentence.

Without such regulations as the tenth section provides for, or proper authority of law obtained in some other way, the adoption of the probation or parole system as contemplated by the Provincial Act is impossible.

Until full power to license deserving boys or place them out on probation be vested in a local authority, the reformatory cannot do all the good it ought to do. This was strongly represented by the superintendent in his report for the year 1882, but his representations were disregarded. To the question, "Do you think that this institution can ever be made an effective reformatory under the present system?" put by the commissioners, the superintendent answered, "No, never; it is handicapped day by day."

Collections or Subscriptions for the Prisoners' Aid Association should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. A. M. Rosebrugh, 137 Church Street, Toronto.