

## PROBATION FOR DRUNKARDS.

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*[Excerpts from the Report of an Advisory Committee appointed by the Hon. Josiah Quincy, Mayor of Boston in 1899, on the Penal Aspects of Drunkenness.]*

No aspect of the present methods of dealing with drunkenness is so hopeful in its results as the work of probation officers. Fortunately, also, none is more universally commended, or more capable of immediate improvement and extension.

The probation officer, it will be observed, is a direct appointee of the court, and responsible solely to the court. His functions may be described as essentially twofold; he may be regarded as the confidential agent and advisor of the court, on the one hand, and of the prisoner on the other.

The probation officer thus stands for leniency, for another opportunity to escape the personal disgrace and the vicarious suffering of family and friends which imprisonment or fine or both must often involve; he stands for another chance at reformation under the powerful stimulus of the personal, friendly guardianship of an officer of the law; for another chance to strengthen the will and develop the power of self-control, aided by the most effective deterrent yet devised—conditional and suspended punishment. For experience shows conclusively that a paternal solicitude which is invested with the dignity of the law and the authority of the courts often has weight and influence where the ordinary and unofficial forms of moral suasion are of no avail.

In the midst of such conflict of opinion and apparent contradiction in fact, it is a source of profound satisfaction to find on all sides a cordial agreement in regard to a matter of fundamental importance. Such agreement it is the satisfaction of this committee to report in regard to what is known as the probation system.

The venerable Chief Justice of the Municipal Court has