

Appendix
(G. G.)
8th Nov'r.

A third says:—"I have learnt much since I came in—to work, to make rope—have read my Bible twice through—and hope to shew that I have been improved by my confinement."

It must be admitted that our fairest prospects are sometimes blasted in the re-commitment of once hopeful Convicts. Whilst this will ever be a subject of deep regret, it ought not to be one of astonishment. The difficulties which meet a liberated Convict on his return to Society are neither few nor trifling. To be known, is to be shunned by the respectable portion of society! No one will employ a man who has been in the Penitentiary; and I believe it to be in no way improbable, that some have no alternative besides a re-commitment or starvation.

To remedy a defect of this magnitude should be the grand effort of the benevolent. Something has been done in the United States. The Chaplain of the House of Correction at Boston, writes:—

"Those of fair, and those of even tolerable promise are sent to families in the country, on handing from the Chaplain a card of introduction, to the Secretary of the Society of the Friends of Virtue. Through the maternal care of this lady and the Treasurer, of kindred spirit, the women are supplied with whatever may appear deficient in their apparel; so that none pass from their hands but are decently clad." He adds—"It will be gratifying to learn, that of *seventeen* individuals thus highly favored, *four* only have within the knowledge of the ladies forfeited their solemn pledge, and returned to their former wretched course." (See Prison Discipline Society's Report, 1842.)

The Agent of the Prison at Sing Sing asks, in reference to the liberated: "Cannot something be done to better their condition and elevate their character and fit them for respectable places in the society from which they have fallen?" He replies: "Allow me to suggest the propriety of employing a suitable man to take charge of, and carry on the State Farm, for, and on account of the State; allow him to employ, at a fixed rate of wages, such discharged Convicts as are disposed to work, and such as have no friends willing to receive them.

"Here they can learn the art of husbandry and gardening, and in a well regulated family, under religious and moral instruction, may establish a character that will recommend them to such as are in want of help, and save them from the contaminating influence of their vicious associates."

The Chaplain of the Prison says:—"The suggestions contained in the Agent's Report receive my hearty approbation;" and adds—"That this should be done, or that a Society should be formed consisting of benevolent individuals, living in different parts of the States, who should, in an unostentatious manner, take the supervision of the morals and employment of such of these men as can be recommended when discharged, appears to me to be very important."—(P. D. S. Rep. 1842, pp. 164-5.)

I have already entered into correspondence with the Secretary of the Prison Discipline Society, and hope, hereafter, to report some plan for the consideration of those interested in our Schools of Moral Reform.

It must be plain, however, to all, that without removing the obstacles from the path of the reformed, to his perseverance in virtue, the Penitentiary system, must, in a great degree, fail of its end.

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On the other hand, a plan, which sustained the feeble child of morality in his first efforts to walk; still held out the hand, 'till his senses, exercised by use, had attained their needed vigour, and many would be the monuments to God's grace, honouring the Penitentiary system.

Allow me to recommend that more time be given for the School; be held daily, and not thrice a week, as now: this might be accomplished by trespassing a little on the hour of labor. And surely for such an object as Education, some sacrifice should be made. Two points, however, seem to urge my plea:

First—The degraded state of the mind of the Convicts on entrance.

Second—The shortness of the opportunity for raising it to respectability—consisting of the period of their imprisonment only.

Not less than one hour, daily, can do anything worthy of the design of the Institution.

The School is much valued by the Convicts.—Within a few weeks, one, on taking leave, thanked me, again and again, for the blessing which he had gained in the Penitentiary of being able to read.

The relative value of the School, to the whole moral machinery, will appear at once, if it be considered, that without an acquaintance with letters, the Bible remains, in a great degree, a sealed book; and the Convict is debarred from all private means of self-improvement. And it must never be forgotten—"No other book, nor all other books together, can supply the place of the Bible in Prisons."—See Pris. Dis.—See Rep. for 1829, pp. 66-7.

Here I would call your attention to the Report of the Penitentiary School for the year ending 1843:

	Whites.	Colored.	Total.
Average attendance	37	11	48
Ages from	12 to 27	18 to 57	
Number who have learned to read	25		
Do. not attending School	12	37	
Do. reading the New Testament	27		

The result of the labour bestowed in the School, appears to be very encouraging, and the progress of the Convicts in reading is satisfactory. There have been more frequent applications, by the adult Convicts latterly, for admission into the School, which indicates an increased desire, on their part, to learn to read.

Allow me to plead most earnestly for the speedy erection of a Room suitable to the worship of Almighty God.

That the Dining Hall is not an eligible place, will appear to every reflecting mind. I need not specify the many points, which, from the laws of association, render the Refectory an inconvenient Chapel.

By careful and judicious arrangement, the Chapel might be used as the School Room, and thus admit of the better conducting of the School, as well as remove a hindrance to the discipline of the Prison, inseparable from the noise our mode of teaching produces.

In concluding the Report, may I be permitted to say, even at the expense of being charged with an undue respect for the office, that the Chaplaincy sustains a most important bearing on the well being of the whole Institution.