

This suggestion to the County Council was warmly seconded by many of the local Newspapers. Extracts from two of them are inserted herewith:—

The London (Upper Canada) *Herald* of the 7th of February, 1856, on the subject of Prison Libraries, remarks:—

"We gladly copy from the *Old Countryman* the following paragraph on the above subject: A most timely Letter has been addressed to the York Council by Mr. J. George Hodgins, Deputy Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, on the lamentable state of ignorance of the inmates of the Counties' Jail, and suggesting that a Library should be established of appropriate and instructive Books for such as could read. The appeal to the Council has been answered by a grant for a Library and appendages of Twenty-five pounds\* (£25)."

On this subject the *Niagara Mail* of the 27th of February, 1856, also remarks:

1. The County Council of York and Peel has set an example of enlightened humanity which ought to be followed by every other County Council in the Province. Much has been said and written, and very truly too, about the corrupting influences of a number of Prisoners confined together in a Gaol, where men only guilty of misfortune are associated with men guilty of crime. But little or nothing has been done to lessen the influences arising from this close and continued communication of Prisoners, which tends so strongly to make all of them worse men when they come out of, than when they enter, prison.

2. It is gratifying to be able to state that, on application having been made by the York and Peel County Council to the City Council of Toronto, that Body also appropriated the sum of Twenty-five pounds (£25) to this benevolent object.

3. It is with much pleasure that we refer to this, the first successful effort which has been made in Upper Canada towards the establishment of a Public Library in connection with the County Prison.

4. It is gratifying to know that the Municipal Council of the Metropolitan Counties of Peel and York have, at the suggestion of the Deputy Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, appropriated the sum of Twenty-five pounds (£25) towards establishing a Prison Library in the County Jail, and that the Warden has written to the Toronto City Council to induce them to aid in the same benevolent object. It is also gratifying to know that the subject of Prison Discipline and Reformatory Education will shortly engage the attention of the Legislature, as indicated by the following paragraph in His Excellency's speech on opening the present Session of Parliament:—

"Your zeal in the cause of Education is known and appreciated by all the world. It is important to consider whether we cannot combine the reform of the juvenile offenders with the punishment of their crimes. At the very least, it is incumbent upon us to take care that such punishment does not in itself afford fresh opportunities for debasing the criminals and instructing them in vice."

#### LETTER FROM MR. SHERIFF THOMAS TO THE REVEREND EGERTON RYERSON.

I have at length prevailed upon the County Council of Wentworth to appropriate the sum of Fifty dollars (\$50) to the purchase of Books for the County Gaol, and referring to a Circular from your Department under date of the 17th January, 1859, I have reason to hope that it may be in your power to aid the purchase of a Library for the Prisoners by a grant from the Educational Fund.

HAMILTON. November 14th, 1862.

E. CARTWRIGHT THOMAS, Sheriff.

\*See the pertinent remarks on the evils of the prevalent use of promiscuous Literature, by President Eliot, of Harvard University, on page 294 of the Eleventh Volume of the Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada.