

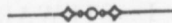
FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Toronto Prisoners' Aid Association,

FOR THE YEARS 1877-78,

WITH LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.



TORONTO:
DUDLEY & BURNS, PRINTERS,
1878.

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.



PRESIDENT :

VICE-CHANCELLOR BLAKE.

VICE-PRESIDENTS :

DR. HODGINS, | W. H. HOWLAND, Esq.,
JNO. MACDONALD, Esq., | JNO. HOSKIN, Esq.

TREASURER :

DR. ROSEBRUGH.

SECRETARY :

MR. HENRY ELLIS.

AGENT :

MR. HENRY SOFTLEY.

Superintendent of Central Prison Sunday School.

A. D. STEWART.

Superintendent of Toronto Jail Sunday School.

CHARLES JOSELIN.

Toronto

In presenting
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REPORT

OF THE

Toronto Prisoners' Aid Society.

In presenting the Fourth Annual Report of the Toronto Prisoners' Aid Association, the Board of Managers would gratefully acknowledge the liberality of the response with which their appeal for funds during the past year has been met, and with confidence, again ask the continuance during this year of a like support and sympathy.

The work of the Association has been steadily maintained during the past year both in the Central Prison and Toronto Jail; and the Managers have every reason to feel encouraged to go forward in their work, knowing that the blessing of God will rest upon His word, even though the good seed is sown in such apparently unpromising soil. There are many who feel it useless to attempt the reformation of habitual criminals, and are slow to believe in the genuineness of their professions when they claim to have experienced a change of heart, and are determined to live a new life. No one can so well understand the reasonableness of such a doubt as those immediately engaged in the work; hence, although none are neglected, it is to the younger prisoners who have not become hardened in crime, that the most earnest efforts of the Association are directed. It will be seen by the report of the Agent that some who have spent a considerable portion of their life in sin are now striving to do better. The managers have been careful in the following paragraphs to refer to the more hopeful cases who since their liberation from prison have shown themselves worthy of confidence and sympathy.

In order to fully understand the extent and importance of the work of the Association. The Managers respectfully refer all who have kindly aided in this good work, by their contributions or otherwise, to the following reports:

REPORT OF THE MISSIONARY AGENT.

Since presenting my last report, much has been done by God's help to reclaim the class of people among whom it has been my duty to labour, and I have much cause for thankfulness at the result of my humble efforts. Although in many cases, more particularly among the *old* offenders I have felt a little discouraged when I have found that all the good advice and instruction given during their stay in prison has been forgotten on their discharge at the sight of their old companions. I have spent from three to four hours every Sunday afternoon in visiting the prisoners at their cells, this gives me a good opportunity of finding out the cause of their incarceration and enables me how to advise in future. I invariably make an effort to have special conversation with those who are to be discharged during the week and impressing upon them the importance of becoming good Christian men. I have spent much time in visiting the sick at the Prison Hospital. Two men died there a short time ago and left the clearest evidence that they were truly converted, one exclaimed "Though I the chief of sinners am, yet Jesus died for me," a few hours before he died he joined in singing the beautiful hymn "Just as I am."

I keep a register of discharged prisoners and endeavour to visit them as often as possible at their homes in the city, to know what they are doing and feel this part of my work to be very important and much might be said on the subject. I receive many letters from others who reside in various parts of Ontario expressing their thankfulness for what was done for them during their imprisonment.

The depression of trade has caused many to suffer much on their discharge, not having any home to go to and in many cases scarcely sufficient clothing to cover them, I have appealed to the public for articles of cast off clothing, boots and shoes &c., through the daily papers and spent much time in going to boarding houses and other places soliciting these necessaries, but the supply has been small compared to the demand. I have had to provide more meals and lodgings than on previous years.

I hold one service and sometimes two at the Jail every Thursday and occasionally at the Central Prison and assist at the Sunday School at both places as often as possible. Through the

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liberality of the Bible and Tract Society I have been enabled to distribute about 500 tracts weekly at the Prisons and many Bibles and Testments, in various languages to suit the prisoners requiring them, and many value them as real treasures. Many aged prisoners are very thankful for the spectacles I have given them, through the kindness of Messrs. Morphy and Kent Bros., and others. Much of my time is occupied during the year in collecting funds for the mission and I am sorry to say this interferes greatly with my daily work which I am obliged to neglect during that time.

The following are a few extracts from a number of letters received from discharged prisoners.

One writes from the East :

"I will with pleasure take my pen and write you a few lines, to tell you I feel still happy every day. The Lord is sending me new gifts, and why should I not be glad and thankful to Him for it. I have to work hard for small wages, but I will trust in God and I know that He will lead me for the best. Dear friend, I well remember the day when I cared not to hear the word of Jesus, but thanks be to Him that I am saved through His blood. I may well say this. I am so glad that Jesus loves me ; please write to me as soon as you get this letter."

Another writes from the North : "It is with pleasure that I write you these few lines. I feel grateful to you, when I reflect that you have by the blessing of God been the means of my conversion. I am no longer as before halting between two opinions, but I can safely say, I have given my heart to Him who is able to keep what I have committed to His trust. I would give my warmest thanks to you and the teachers of the S. school for their efforts to win the perishing souls of men, and I would bless some of the hours I have spent listening to their instructions. I would entreat them to persevere, as they may rest assured that their labours will not go unrewarded. I would ask to be remembered in your prayers, and I will never forget what you have done for me."

Another writes from the West : "I thought I would write and let you know how I was getting along. I came to this place about two weeks ago on a visit to my brother, there was a revival going on, and I sought and found saivation. I have had more enjoyment in the last two weeks of my life than I

ever saw before, and I am bound to strive on. I could not think there is the enjoyment in religion that there is, but I thank God, he has not cut me off in my sins, but has spared me to meet a dying mother's request. Will you be kind enough to tell my S. S. teacher this, as I know it will be a great relief to her mind, as she was anxious about me. I will be in Toronto in July and will call and see you. From a saved sinner." H. B.

Another writes from the East : " I am so thankful to the Lord for sparing me to get home to see my dear wife and children once more. I hope He will continue to watch over me and protect me as He has been doing for some time back, for I intend to do the best I can in doing His will and keeping His commandments, and my earnest prayer is that the Lord will help me to do so." His wife also writes to say : " I can say from my heart that I am not sorry that my husband was in the Central Prison, for he never bowed his knee to God before he went there, and now the change, he reads his Bible every night, and asks God to pardon his sins, so I feel thankful to you and all the rest who spoke kind words to him while he was in the Central Prison ; and now I beg an interest in your prayers for me as well as my husband, and be assured we send our feeble prayers to heaven for you."

Another writes from the East : " I have had many tempting snares set before me since I left Toronto, but I pass them by with a shudder ; and as far as whiskey drinking goes, I am very happy and proud to say I am a *total abstainer*. Dear Friend the C. P. made me over a new man, you can tell them poor unfortunate fellow creatures what I say ; the only way they will *never* get in there any more, is to give their heart to God, and do as I have done, quit all their old companions, and trust in God. It is far easier to live by loving God, and there is nothing like going to church ; there was a time I thought of nothing but going to the theatre ; but if you want to go to the best theatre go to church, it is the best on this earth ; and poor as I am to-day I would rather die than take what did not belong to me, in fact God has taken away all my appetite for any thing of the kind, for He never forsakes me."

Another writes from the West : " I hope you will never think that I have forgotten you and the good advice you gave me when I was in the Central Prison. It is with pleasure that

I tell you that Sir, I often think in that lonesome Saviour Jesus I thank God for a good lesson, and up there you and We are both in the chapter of God all our hearts did for me. taught me : be saved. We to convert man

Another writes from the Midland Railway make myself a to church. I me go back to service, and to It is better to house of God obliged to you and remember

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I tell you that I have married a kind and loving wife. Dear Sir, I often think of the days when you used to come to see me in that lonesome looking cell, and tell me of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, how I used to love to listen to you, and I thank God that He sent me to that place, for it learnt me a good lesson, and made a better man of me. I hope when you go up there you will talk to them all as serious as you did to me. We are both going to join the Church shortly; we read a chapter of God's word every day; we both sincerely hope with all our hearts that God will bless you for the good work you did for me. I often think of them blessed words that you taught me: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. We also hope and pray that God will enable you to convert many sinners and bring them to Jesus."

Another writes from the North: "I have got a job on the Midland Railroad; there are a rough lot of men here, but I make myself as content as I can. On Sunday I go seven miles to church. I met a friend at the church who would not let me go back until I had dinner, and then stay until evening service, and then he drives me back close to the railway shanty. It is better to spend the Sunday by going to the house of God, than with a lot of shanty men. I am greatly obliged to you for your kindness to me and often think of you and remember you in my prayers."

One writes from the West: "I hardly know how to thank you for the kindness you have shown to an out-cast from society like myself, and I thank God that there is somebody who think it worth their while to rescue a poor fallen sinner from the depths into which he has fallen. I have read your letter and found a great deal in it to help me along in the path I am trying to tread. It cheered me to know that there is hope for such as me. I acknowledge that I have led a wild and reckless life, and have lived for this world only, but I am trying to repair the errors of the past and lead a better life. Sometimes it is very hard to keep in the right path, I go wrong very often and I sometimes think I cannot get any better, but since I have received your letter, I feel more encouraged to go on. I thank you gratefully for writing to me and hope you will write again. Many thanks also for the tracts."

One in the city writes: "I write these few lines to thank you for your kindness to me when I was in the C. P. I did

not think the men who visited that place could do men so much good. You asked me to sign the pledge, I did so, I have kept it ever since, and by God's help I will keep it as long as I live. I must say that I am a better man. My wife says she never had happier days than she has now. I never had better health than I have now by keeping from intoxicating liquors. I can save my money. I go to church instead of visiting taverns. May God bless you and all the teachers who visit that place."

I have received forty written testimonies of conversion, besides many verbal ones. Three hundred and eighty have signed the temperance pledge.

It is with feelings of thankfulness to Almighty God for permitting me to be an instrument in His hands to reclaim many of these poor outcasts of society for His own. Ever bearing in mind our blessed Lord's own words "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Yours respectfully,

HENRY SOFTLEY,

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THE CENTRAL PRISON MISSION.

Since the last annual meeting of this association, I have been elected to the office of Superintendent of the Central Prison Sabbath School, a position rendered vacant by the resignation of its former incumbent Dr. Hodgins.

I am in a position therefore, to judge even more so than when I was simply a teacher in the school, of the efficacy of the good work going on in this department, and I am glad to be able to say that a number of cases have come under my especial notice, where a complete change of heart has taken place, and the teachers have intimated to me that there are many more in their classes who are seeking most earnestly to know the love of God. Indeed, while in many instances we have been grossly deceived by men who have professed for a time to have set their faces Zionward, we cannot be discouraged seeing that our labour is prosecuted amongst a class of men whom the world has refused to countenance or care for; but on the contrary we bless and praise God's holy name that we have such positive evidence of the working of His Holy Spirit in the Prison School.

A great change for the better took place early in the present year, when, through the kindness of Mr. Langmuir, and at the urgent request of both teachers and prisoners, it was resolved to hold our School every Sabbath instead of every alternate Sabbath, as had previously been the custom.

I cannot speak too highly of the Band of Teachers who aid me in the work. They number all told 67 and never fail to attend the school, except in cases of grave emergency. The Government has also very kindly placed at our disposal an extra conveyance, which makes in all five carriages, but two more are sadly needed and must be had before the year is out if the regular attendance of the teachers is to continue.

A grant also from the Government of 400 Bibles, and a corresponding number of hymn books, has much aided us, and as a press has been provided by the prison authorities, in which to keep them, and as each teacher is now provided with and is responsible for the safety of a certain number of these books, it will be seen that another call for such necessaries will not require to be made for some time to come.

Our best thanks are due to Mr. Logan, the Deputy Warden, who has always done and still continues to do all he possibly

can to help the work, and to carry out the suggestions made to him, through me by the teachers.

The choir, composed solely of prisoners, has been found to be of good service, and the hymns used (Songs and Solos by Sankey), are much liked by the men. I take this opportunity of tendering my best thanks to our organist, Mr. Edward Kinzinger, to whose efforts is attributable the success of this portion of the work, and also to Mr. Armstrong, who has occupied his place when Mr. Kinzinger has been unavoidably absent.

The school is also greatly indebted to my assistant, Mr. Farley, for his active and untiring exertions for its welfare.

I may also mention the formation, under the guidance of Mr. Wexelberg, of a German class, which is eagerly attended by the foreigners, who happen from time to time to be incarcerated.

Another interesting branch may be spoken of in the shape of a Bible Class, held every Thursday evening in a room given for the purpose, by the board of directors of Shaftesbury Hall, and presided over by the Rev. S. W. Young. This class has been formed with the intention of preparing the lesson for the coming Sabbath, and is well attended and much enjoyed.

I cannot conclude these remarks without making a final appeal to our well wishers and friends.

We need your prayers. Will you not give us this at least!

We are working among the very men for whom the blessed Jesus died, and they are doubly entitled to our care and sympathy on that account.

Pray for them that they may be led out of darkness into His marvellous light, and for us, that we may be strengthened and blessed in all we do to advance His Kingdom and Glory.

A. D. STEWART,

SUPERINTENDENT,

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REPORTS OF TEACHERS OF CENTRAL PRISON SUNDAY SCHOOL.

E. Y. S., a lady teacher, writes—"My present class numbers five, all of whom I think are seriously impressed with the thought of their individual responsibility to Almighty God. One man in particular, I believe to be truly a child of God, and another, I am watching very anxiously, he said to me lately "Oh, miss, I do try so hard to believe."

H. H., a lady teacher, writes—"I have been teaching here for the last six months, and have found the prisoners very attentive and glad to hear the word of God. With one especially I am much interested, he was converted lately and now is most anxious to do good to his fellow prisoners. I consider this to be a splendid field to work in."

J. R. C., a teacher, writes—"I am glad I ever began to teach here, a sharp appetite is manifested in the school for the Bread and Water of Eternal Life, which filleth with the power of God unto salvation all who partake thereof."

J. S., a teacher, writes—"I have taught here a long time, now and have much cause to be encouraged, If only the men in my class have been *sincere* in their professions, I should imagine a better future lay before them. God help us and them to love Him more and more."

J. H. J. a teacher writes, "I have five prisoners in my class the attention they pay is wonderful, they have all told me they were going to try to lead new lives and I believe them to be thoroughly in earnest."

M. M. a lady teacher writes, "I have found the men in my class most attentive and very willing to ask questions about the lesson which I consider to be a great point. Altho I have often been disappointed in some of the men who have turned out different to what I expected, I have on the whole been much blessed and I feel that if we go to the prison as ambassadors for Christ we can safely leave the result with God."

E. M. O., a lady teacher, writes—"The short time in which I laboured in the prison will not soon be forgotten by me, I cannot say that I saw the fruits of my work but I did my best for His dear sake who loves us all and I know of some men even there who are longing to realize "the peace which passeth understanding."

H. H. E., a teacher, writes—"Having had a different class to teach each Sunday I cannot tell in what measure it has pleased the Lord to bless my humble efforts to win precious souls into His kingdom. But I have found the men most attentive and I pray that God may give me strength and wisdom from above that I may be able to go on with this most interesting work."

S. R., a lady teacher, writes—"My nearly two years experience in this work has always given me great delight. I have two or three now in my class that are most earnestly seeking salvation. Oh! that God may own and bless our labours."

M. T., a lady teacher, writes,—“This work has been a great blessing to my own soul. Last week I parted with the last of a class I have endeavoured to teach the love of God to, and am glad to say that two at least out of the five are walking in the way of life everlasting.”

L. F. L., a lady teacher, writes,—“I have every reason to believe that the blessing of Almighty God has rested on my labours in this school, and that many are trying with His aid to bring forth fruit meet for repentance.”

K. F. H., a lady teacher, writes—"A class of eight was assigned to me on my becoming a teacher. I have tried to teach them faithfully the truths of the Bible. One poor fellow I found to be resting on Christ. Others have told me they were anxious about their souls. May God help them all and lead them out of darkness into His marvellous light."

W. H. H., a teacher, writes,—“I have been greatly encouraged by the attention paid to my remarks, and I feel sure that great good is being done in rescuing souls from destruction.”

J. J. M., a teacher, writes,—“I have not been teaching long in this school, and yet I feel that my efforts have not been in vain, at least if I may believe what seems to be the sincerest truth from some of my class.”

W. A., a teacher, writes,—“I know of no special case (so far) of conversion in my class, but I have found many to be penitent and anxious. I pray God to bless my efforts for His dear Son's sake.”

H. S., a teacher, writes,—“I have met with great encouragement in this work. Many of my class have promised faithfully

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M. A. B., a lady teacher, writes,—“I have not been long enough with the same class to judge of the results of my teaching; but the men pay marked attention, and many of them long to lead better lives.”

R. C., a lady teacher, writes,—“I am trying as carefully and prayerfully as I can to point my dear class to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, may my teaching not fall on stony ground for Christ's sake. I find the men kind and attentive.”

T. S. C., a teacher, writes,—“My class is very attentive, and I feel that I, as well as the prisoners, am being greatly blessed.”

A. N. W., a teacher writes,—“I am glad indeed to labour in such a cause, some of my men are most thankful for being spoken to, others do not seem glad, but all are attentive. I look forward to meeting in glory many from this prison who during their confinement have been washed in the precious blood of Christ.”

H. T., a teacher, writes,—“The constant change of faces renders it quite impossible to say much about my own work, but I know great good is being done in the school.”

J. A., a lady teacher, writes,—“I am delighted with my class, and feel towards them as a sister, many are determined to know nothing but Jesus and Him crucified.”

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF JAIL MISSION SCHOOL.

In accordance with our usual practice, I have now the pleasure of handing you the annual report of the Toronto Jail Mission. Through the year the work has been steadily maintained, the usual service have been held every Sunday, and the attendance of the ladies and gentlemen who have engaged in this work has been diligent and satisfactory.

The best thanks are due to those students from Knox College who very ably seconded the efforts of the teachers while the College was in session.

It has always been the aim of those connected with this work to avoid any approach to a sectarian spirit, and the lessons have consequently been designed to set before our fellow-sinners the Fatherhood of God as he is revealed to us in the face of Jesus Christ. We record with thankfulness, that during the year many tokens for good have been vouchsafed to us. We can speak of many instances in which prisoners have been assisted in their efforts to regain their social position, and of these several have succeeded, and others have been removed to a distance from the scene of their former temptations, although a real change of heart can only come by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, yet, even in this respect, we have evidence that earnest work has been blessed and owned by Him who promised that his word shall not return unto him void. We have found this year, as in former years, that we have been able to make a deeper impression upon those who are prisoners for the first time. The class of prisoners with whom it is most difficult to deal, are those who, by frequent committals for short periods, have become habituated to prison life, for these, the prison does little else than give an opportunity for indulging in the morbid inertia which seems always to arise when self respect is lost, and the moral sense is blunted.

One great want of this mission is a regular means of conveyance for the teachers to and from the jail. Hitherto we have, with very great reluctance, provided this for the use of the ladies only, charging the cost of the same to the funds of the Association, but we feel that we may justly expect the City or the County Council to provide this for us seeing that such a provision is already made for those who labor in the Central Prison.

I think I may safely say, that I have never engaged in any Christian work in which I have felt a deeper interest or a warmer sympathy, and I gratefully remember the kind support, and hearty co-operation, which has been extended towards me by the friends with whom I have been associated during the past seven years.

Respectfully,

S. E. ROBERTS,

Sup. Jail S. S.

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TREASURER'S REPORT.

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To Subscriptions... ..	706 00
To Interest on Deposit.....	3 05
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By Conveyance to Toronto Jail for one year.	\$ 82 00
By Rent of Agent's Office.....	30 00
By Sundry disbursments on account of dis- charged prisoners.....	47 85
By Sundries.....	5 50
By Agent's salary.....	600 00
	\$765 35
Cash balance.....	\$145 21
Amount due Agent July 1st..... :	150 00
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A. M. ROSEBURGH, M.D.
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SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Robert Baldwin.....\$	10 00	E. Fitzgerald.....	4 00
Blake, Kerr & Boyd.....	10 00	James Metcalf.....	4 00
Chief Justice Hagerty.....	10 00	Judge Patterson.....	4 00
Hon. O. Mowat.....	10 00	Henry Rowsell.....	4 00
John Macdonald.....	10 00	Rev. Dr. Wood.....	4 00
J. D. Nasmith.....	10 00	Jno. Wickson.....	4 00
Mrs. Nixon.....	10 00	Alexander & Stark.....	3 00
Mrs. Pollard.....	10 00	Aikenhead & Crombie.....	3 00
Thos. M. Thompson.....	10 00	Hon. Mr. Blain.....	3 00
Rev. Provost Whitaker....	10 00	Rob't. Carrie.....	3 00
C. Woodward.....	10 00	J. A. Dobbie.....	3 00
Bethune, Osler & Moss....	5 00	Dun, Wiman & Co.....	3 00
Vice-Chancellor Blake.....	5 00	George Verrall.....	3 00
F. A. Ball.....	5 00	Hon. G. W. Allan.....	2 00
Christopher Robinson.....	5 00	Wm. Brown.....	2 00
P. G. Close.....	5 00	Brown Bros.....	2 00
Cramp, Torrance & Co....	5 00	H. J. Brine.....	2 00
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