# THIRD REPORT

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OF THE

# MAGDELEN ASYLUM,

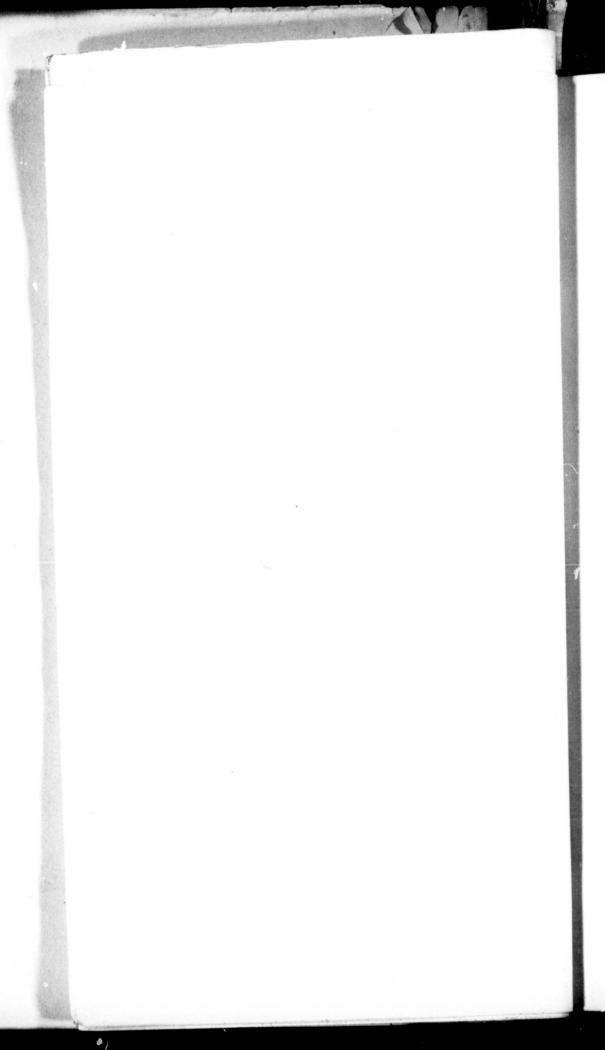
AND

## INDUSTRIAL HOUSE OF REFUGE FOR FEMALES,

TORONTO: AUGUST 22, 1857.

THOMPSON & CO., PRINTERS. COLONIST OFFICE, 52 KING STREET EAST.

1857.



#### OFFICE-BEARERS.

Directresses :

MRS. MCCUTCHEON, MRS. DUNLOP, MRS. J. BALDWIN.

Tréasurer : MRS. ARNOLD.

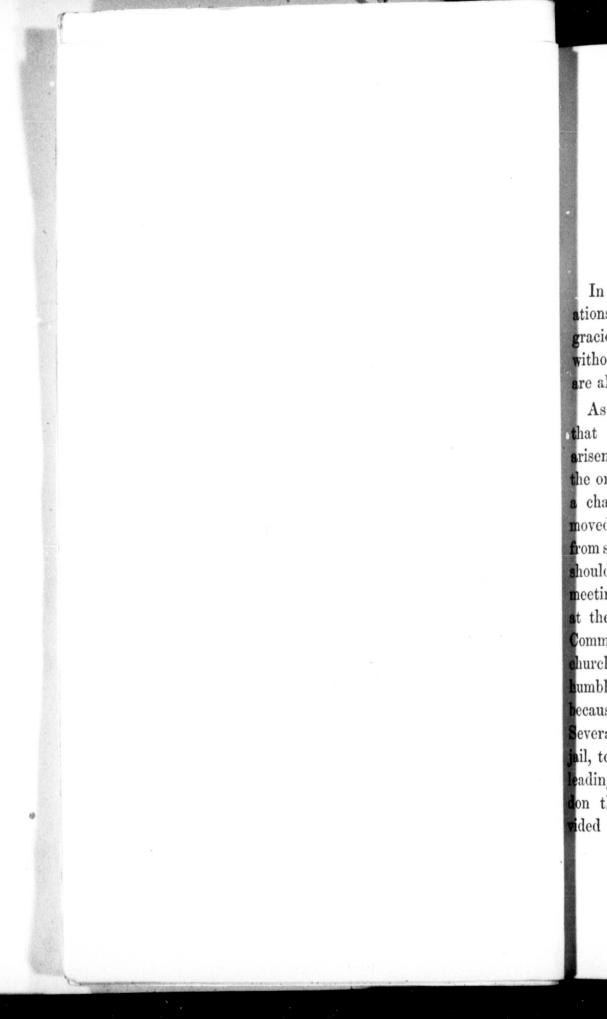
Cash Secretary : Mrs. T. Dick.

Minute Secretary : Mrs. R. H. BRETT. –

Visiting Committee :

MRS. ARNOLD, MRS. MCCUTCHEON, MRS. DUNLOP, MRS. J. BALDWIN, MRS. T. DICK, MRS. R. H. BRETT, MRS. E. BALDWIN, MRS. BLAKE, MRS. WILSON, MRS. FREELAND, MRS. FREELAND, MRS. RICHARDSON, MRS. WATSON.

MRS. MULHOLLAND, MRS. JAS. SHAW, MRS. JAS. SHAW, MRS. MOWAT, MRS. ELLERBY, MRS. HAGARTY, MRS. HAGARTY, MRS. J. RIDOUT, MRS. WATSON, MRS. WATSON, MRS. M. GILMOR, MRS. S. E. TAYLOR, MRS. ALCORN, MRS. MATHERS, MISS WILSON.



#### R E P O R T.

In entering on the fourth year of this Society's operations, the Committee would acknowledge the hand of a gracious Providence, in that their labours have not been without good results, which, to an encouraging extent, are already apparent.

As the name of the institution has been changed from that originally given, and some misapprehension has srisen from this cause, it may be well to briefly refer to the origin of the Society, and to some of the reasons why a change of name was desirable. A benevolent lady, moved with pity for that class of women, who, outcasts from society, infest our streets, suggested that some means should be adopted for their reformation, and therefore a meeting of ladies and gentlemen was called in May, 1853, at the house of the Rev. Mr. Sanson, and a Board and Committee were selected from the various Protestant churches of the city, who commenced operations in an umble way in a house on one of the principal streets, because a more retired situation could not be obtained. Several ladies arranged a plan for statedly visiting the ail, to read, talk and pray with the inmates, in hopes of leading some to repentance, and inducing them to abanon their crimes, and to seek shelter in the home prowided for them. Many immediately expressed a desire

to reform; and the house soon became filled. Some of the overseers in the jail expressed surprise when they heard that certain persons, who were known to them as very violent and abandoned, had remained over a year quiet and industrious. The name first chosen was Magdalene Asylum; but at an annual meeting of the subscribers, held in the Mechanics' Institute, a year after the organization of the Society, "Industrial House of Refuge" was added, for the following reason, with others of less importance :

In visiting the juil, the ladies found many imprisoned for drunkenness, theft, and other crimes; who, though not considered the most abandoned, were lost to themselves and society : some hardened in vice, others young, but who had taken the first step to destruction. These could not with propriety be taken into a "Magdalene Asylum," yet they were degraded and unable to obtain situations of respectability. As the size of the city and the limited number of penitents would not warrant a separate institution the name was changed, so as to allow of more discretionary power being used by the Committee. It should be distinctly understood that the Institution is entirely *reformatory* in its character, and only for fallen and degraded women.

The number of inmates for the past year has been 40; 11 have gone to service, 10 have been sent to friends, 6 expelled, 4 have left of their own accord, 1 was sent to the Lunatic Asylum, 2 were sent to the Poor House, because the Refuge was crowded, and 7 remain in the institution. A

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Although some of the following accounts of individual cases have been already published, they may not have been seen by the subscribers generally, and are now extracted from the records to shew the nature and some of the Society's labours, as well as the manifest duty of a christian community, to afford every facility for the penitent's return to virtue and happiness. Two of the inmates landed a year before from their native countries, Scotland and Ireland, with irreproachable character. But alas! for what follows. The Scotch girl had been a monitress in a Sabbath school in Scotland for two years. After arriving in Canada, she went to service where she had the unrestrained care of the liquors in the house. Feeling very lonely she was tempted to indulge in them, until she was known as a drunkard. Although the famly offered to keep her on promise of amendment, a feeling of shame induced her to leave. She came to Toronto, where she found acquaintances who joined her in drinking. Being awakened to a sense of the danger of her course, with a feeling of horror at the sinful end awaing her, she arose one morning and asked God to guide her That morning she sought admission at the aright. Refuge ; and after several months she was sent to service in a minister's family in the city, where she continued

a valuable servant until her marriage to a respectable man, with whom she is now living comfortably. The other girl went to service in a tavern, in ——; there she learned to drink to excess, and had to leave her place. Alone, she arrived in the city, at 5 o'clock, p.m., in the winter, and being unable to find a place for the night, at 9 o'clock she was found by a lady and gentleman, crying in the street,-they took her to a police station, in the morning she went to a "Registry office," a woman engaged her and took her home; she seemed very kind and gave her whiskey freely; in the evening the house became filled with disreputable characters, and she fled into the street. A policeman met her, and, being the worse for liquor, she was taken to a station and in the morning sent to jail. For a month she associated with the most abandoned, and when discharged, The matron said she did not care what became of her. of the jail advised her to go to the "Refuge." She was admitted, and after staying long enough to gain the confidence of the Committee, was sent to service in the country, where she lived in a farmer's family for seven months.

The "Refuge" has afforded a home for a child of 12 years of age. She had lived for a year with her sisters, who kept a house of ill fame: they brought her from her home in the State of New York, after her mother's death. The police here broke up the house, and sent the sisters to jail. Not wishing to send a girl so young there, the chief Magistrate requested the Committee to receive her in the "Refuge;" and they have found her to be a dutiful, affectionate, clever, and well-disposed child, who although attached to her sisters, who appeared kind to her, abhors their manner of life, and wishes to learn to work and become respectable. After the first week in the "Refuge," she became happy and contented, and

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My 19th, the k meet theirs at present is at service in the country, far from the influence of her sisters, where she has been eight months. Her mistress speaks very highly of her.

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One of the present inmates whose constant home formerly was in the jail for being drunk and disorderly has been in the "Refuge" for two years; her health will not allow her to go to service. When received she was totally ignorant of true religion, but her mind is much enlightened on this subject, and her conduct, as well as profession, evince a change of heart. Last winter she was very sick, and in danger of losing her eyesight; during this time she was very patient and resigned to God's will, saying, she did not care what her body suffered if her soul was saved. She said she was not afraid to die if it were God's will, for through Christ she had perfect peace. Her health is much better and her sight restored. She is industrious, thankful, and happy. Another of the inmates, who, because of epiliptic fits and consequent inability to work, was sent to the poor house; was drunken and frequently in jail before being received into the institution; while in there she was rentle, obedient, and thankful, working as much as her Her father, in Ireland, was strength would allow. written to, and the following is an extract of the answer received :---

MY EVER DEAR J.---I received your welcome letter of May 9th, 1856, and am happy to her from you, and being under he kind good ladies whom you have had the good luck to ek in neet with-may God eternally bless and protect them and heirs for their kind protection of you, my poor afflicted dear and

I don't know what would have become of you in a child. strange country only that you met with them good ladies. But my dear J. always put your trust in the great God ; love, fear, and serve Him with your whole heart and soul, and mind and strength, and bless His holy will in all things, and He will always watch over you and raise up friends for your help and protection. Then follows a long affectionate letter, closing with, I never lie down at night without praying to the great God to bless and protect my poor and ever dear J. Wishing you good health and every blessing, I remain, my dear child, JOHN H. your loving father,

The rest of the inmates are attentive and industrious, promising well. The following instance is particularly encouraging :--- A woman from the United States who had been brought up religiously and with some education in a respectable situation in life, had been living in sin for some years past; but she had been long convinced of the evil of her course, and several times she obtained situations of respectability, but as often tidings of her former character would reach her employers, and she had given up in despair of ever being any better. But after having been for two weeks in the city, she heard of the "Refuge," and at once sought admission, saying that her only wish was to reform. Although addicted to the excessive use of opium, she cheerfully relinquished Uppe The ladies strengthened and encouraged her to per comm it. severe, and after a few months with joy they saw those evidence of a change of heart. She was sent away to mitte service, and the following letter to the matron was writthe s ten some time after :---

November 28th, 1856.

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MY DEAR FRIEND,-I received your welcome letter to-day, dmi and was so overjoyed I could not help shedding tears, and

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1856.r to-day, 11

when I found you had not got but one letter I was very sorry, for I had sent three, and did not know what could be the reason you did not write me before. I am so haypy to hear This is the greatest earthly pleasure I have from you all enjoyed since I have been here. I liked Mr. S.'s family very much, but had to take a nurse's situation at Mr. B.'s, because the salt-rheum in my hands is so bad when I have them much in water.. Since I have been nursing and sewing, my hands have got better. I like the family I am with very well, although I often wish I could hear some words of consolntion from your own lips. I will never forget the pleasant Sabbath I spent at the "Refuge" before I left. I often think of the beautiful discourse on religion from Mrs. B. on that day, and how often I have wished I could hear a few words from her again. I should like to hear a few consoling words from the Rev. Mr. O. and Dr. R., as I feel deeply indebted to them for their kindness to me, I can never forget them; and return my sincere thanks to Mrs. McC. for getting me in such a good place. I cannot express the deep feeling of love I hold in my heart for the ladies and gentlemen of that institution. I cannot express the deep feeling of love to you, for being so kind a friend, but I hope your reward will be in heaven. In the depths of my trials and troubles I go to my precious Bible that you gave me, and then take fresh courage and rely on the precious promises of our blessed Saviour, and there I find that peace that the world cannot give nor take away.

I remain, your affectionate friend.

M. W.

The bible referred to is one of those granted by the uished Upper Canada Bible Society, to the institution at its to per commencement, all of which have been given away to ey saw hose who have left respectably for service. The Comway to mittee desire gratefully to acknowledge the kindness of as writ the same society, in granting twenty-four Bibles in May

ast for the use of the "Refuge."

The following letter was received from one who sought ars, and dmission under feelings of shame and disgrace. She

was from a distant town from the Western part of the Province, is very young and engaging in manners and countenance, and an orphan. Under promise of marriag she became the victim of her seducer, and the self remorse, as well as gratitude for kindness shown, assur the Committee that their confidence in her futur She has gone to service uprightness is not misplaced. and is discharging her duties faithfully and cheerfully:

## To the Committee and Visiting Ladies of the House Refuge :

My DEAR AND GENEROUS FRIENDS,-Permit me to retur my sincere and grateful thanks for your great kindness tom whilst an inmate of the Refuge. Believe me I shall ever he you in grateful remembrance as long as God gives me lifear reason, for surely yours is a work of Christian love and kind ness to the poor unfortunate female who, having forfeited th respect of her friends, is thrown on the world, but who find in the "Refuge" a home; and particularly those who appr ciate, as I do, your great self-denial in coming and labourn for our good, both spiritual and temporal. Great is the change in me to what I felt before I first went into the "Refuge Friendless and alone, I knew not where to turn, and almost in despair, when kind Providence directed me to your caref shelter, and now I am going into the world afresh, and by t help of God, I will so conduct myself as to meet your app I would thank the ministers and pious gentlem who were in the habit of visiting us, and for their faith dealings and for their wish to save our souls, especially N M. B-n, Mr. O-s, Dr. R-n, and I hope and trust th they will still continue their work of love to the good of ma souls; and I would thank our kind matron for her kind atta tion to our welfare, for she was ever ready with a kind wa of encouragement when we most needed it, and I owe mu to all the ladies for their continued kindness to me, and I he I am sure your reward will be oblig shall always merit it.

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Heaven, but may the Lord encourage you here by making you more and more useful is the sincere prayer of your truly grateful servant. M. P. G.

#### Toronto, August 20th, 1857.

Were these proofs wanting of good having been done, (and others might be added but space forbids), the Committee would still find it their duty to persevere, so that this class of persons should be without excuse, but they are a cause of encouragement and thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to whom alone be all the praise.

The difficulties under which the Committee have labored should not be overlooked; they have not been few, of which the following may be mentioned: the power of evil habits of vice, especially drunkenness, the defective state of the jail, where the young criminal is allowed unrestrained association with the most hardened, and where the inmates are not obliged to labor hard, unless their conduct is particularly outrageous, instead of imprisonment being a punishment, it is well known to the Committee that some have purposely committed offences that would send them to jail, as they found it more pleasant to be there than to suffer from want, or to labour for their own support.

The confined and exposed situation of the premises which had to be taken because no other more suitable could be found; there is no space for recreation or variety of occupation, and the Committee have been obliged to send some to situations, who needed a much longer probation to strengthen their moral principles, undo bad habits, and form those of regularity and industry.

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The lack of the experience of similar institutions has been greatly felt in forming the constitution and by-laws; these have had to be altered as circumstances required.

The difficulty of obtaining suitable persons to conduct the institution has been a hindrance, but the last year has been very encouraging, from the order and industry, as well as high tone of moral and religious feeling which prevails in the institution.

A regular plan of ministrations on the Lord's day is kept up by the ministers of the several evangelical churches in the city.

An important good has been accomplished in the appointment of a matron in the Jail, which was done at the request of the Ladies' Committee.

Collections have thrice been made, partially through the city, and the community have willingly and liberally contributed towards its support.

But the principal hindrance to success is the want of a suitable house and grounds.

The Committee gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the City Corporation in having granted four acres of land from the portion set apart for an Industrial Farm so that it now only remains for the necessary sum to be subscribed in order to build a suitable house.

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In must diffe ward supp --no bene welland man But of th the c as g lies i this ever due To accomplish this, a Building Committee of gentlemen was formed last spring, who commenced collecting. They made an encouraging beginning, but owing to the absence of many from the city during the summer months, the matter was postponed.

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They still intend to prosecute the object, and it remains with the public to say, whether Toronto shall be provided with an institution of this character, commensurate with the growing prosperity of the city, to reclaim the abandoned, and prevent further increase in crime.

In judging of the success of such an institution, it must be kept in mind, that its character is altogether different from those intended merely to supply the outward and temporary wants of the body; these are easily supplied, but the seat of depraved habits is in the heart, -nothing but the renewal of this will prove a lasting benefit, and enable the unhappy subjects to persevere in well-begun efforts to reform. This requires patience and time to effect; and with every facility for doing this, many will fail in their efforts to overcome evil habits. But as Christians are called upon to sow the good seed of the "Word" beside all waters, in the morning and in the evening, for they know not which shall prosper; and as guilt would lie at their door if they did not do all that lies in their power to reclaim the erring, the founders of this society have been encouraged to persevere under every discouragement, trusting in the promise that "in due season they shall reap if they faint not."

## SUBSCRIPTION LIST.

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• 3			Value of donations received from matries, £53 19s. 8d.; besides ince market, and many articles	me	at from the bu	tchers in a	st. 1	∟aw-
1 0		03	ance market, and many articles	11.01	in memoers of			

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