

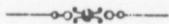
REPORT

OF THE

Toronto Prisoner's Aid Society,

FOR THE YEARS 1875-76,

WITH LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.



TORONTO:

DUDLEY & BURNS, PRINTERS.

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R E P O R T
OF THE
TORONTO PRISONER'S AID SOCIETY.

In the year 1867, a few Christian friends in Toronto formed themselves into an Association or Society for the purpose of establishing a Sunday School in the Toronto Jail. That Sunday School has been in successful operation ever since.

In the year 1873, the Association extended its labours to the then newly opened Central Prison under very encouraging auspices. Their work has been steadily maintained in both institutions during the past year, and the Managers have every reason to feel thankful to Almighty God for the measure of success which has, with His blessing, followed their humble labours.

The teaching staff in the Central Prison consists of a Superintendent and 25 teachers, and in the Toronto Jail of a Superintendent and 10 teachers.

The Managers know full well (as they expressed themselves last year) the force of character, and even correctness in many cases, of the popular objections against the genuineness of the profession of prisoners, that they are changed in heart, feeling, or practice. But they also know equally well that, while under punishment, some may act the hypocrite, yet in the case of a large number of the younger prisoners who have been convicted for thoughtless or sadder crimes, the sorrow or repentance of such is not the less sincere and genuine. The Managers have been careful to distinguish between the two classes of deliberate crime and of men "overtaken in a fault," and their references in the following paragraphs have been only to the more hopeful class, who, so far as evidence satisfactory to them goes, have shown themselves worthy of confidence and sympathy. The Managers would, therefore, earnestly solicit the continued confidence of those kind friends who have volun-

tarily supported the Mission with their contributions, on the ground that in practice, and, as a matter of fact, they have been and are as careful to discriminate wisely in these cases as the most fastidious objector could be.

The Managers trust that the perusal of the extracts from the following report will be read with interest by those who have so kindly aided them in this good work by their contributions.

REPORT OF THE MISSIONARY AGENT.

The Mission Agent writes: "I lay before you my annual report for the last year with feelings of gratitude to Almighty God, who has supported me in working among this unfortunate class of people, who are by many despised, without any effort to reclaim them. In a few cases it certainly seems like labour lost in trying to turn their sinful hearts, as they seem bent on returning to their wild career immediately after the termination of their sentence. A few others have expressed their determination to turn over a new leaf, but only trusted in their own strength, and have again allowed themselves to be carried away. With the majority this is not the case. A great number have expressed their thankfulness to God that they ever entered the prison. I spend about four hours visiting them at their cells every Sunday afternoon, which gives me an opportunity of speaking to each of them. Many have wept while telling me of the good advice they had turned a deaf ear to, from their mother or some friend, who cared more for them than they cared for themselves.

"The lessons received at the S. School, followed by the quietness of their lonely cell, has brought this to remembrance, and for the first time for many years have fallen on their knees, imploring God to forgive them. Thirty have given me a written testimony of their conversion while in their cells. Last winter, being a severe one, caused many to suffer for want of employment. During the year I have given 260 articles of clothing, which I have spent much time in collecting. Distributed 22,980 tracts in the prisons, on the road, and other places. Paid 550 visits on behalf of prisoners in both prisons; also 73 visits to those who have been discharged and reside in the city, in order that I might see what they are doing, and give a few

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more words of advice. Relieved 16 families, chiefly those of prisoners, which I have found while visiting. Found employment for 65, and boarding for 31. Given 290 meals and found lodgings for 101. Given 38 Bibles, and 62 New Testaments, also several Prayer Books, and 60 pairs of spectacles; 91 have signed the temperance pledge. Held 73 services in the Jail. I often visit the sick and dying in the General Hospital, and find some who have been in prison. I also visited the prison hospital during the time so many were suffering from typhoid fever; three poor fellows died, one of whom had given me a written testimony of his conversion a few months previous. Another had given his heart to God only about two weeks before. The third I could not learn any particulars of, only that he was fond of attending the S. S. A poor Indian also died of consumption, I believe, trusting in the Saviour. I visited him several times before he died; 69 have professed to have been converted in the Central Prison. I have received many interesting letters from prisoners who have left the city; the following extracts are from a few of them.

“One young man writes from Ottawa: ‘We have the family altar set up in our house since my return home, and we always remember you in our prayers. I am endeavouring to lead a new life. I am often tempted to do wrong, but I feel as if something draws me away. Do not forget me at your prayer-meetings. I have a hard trial to bear, but with God’s help I hope to stand it all. I often think of those in prison, and daily pray that the efforts put forth by you and the teachers may be crowned with success.’ Another writes from Leamington: ‘My son is quite a different man since his return home, and goes regular to church; he has also joined the temperance lodge.’ Another writes from Philadelphia: ‘I have the Bible you gave me, and God has helped me in a great many things; I pray that He will still keep me in the right way. Do not forget me at your meetings. I am going to see my aged mother for the last time, and to tell her what a friend I have found in Christ. I have not tasted one drop of liquor since I left Toronto.’ Another writes from Brantford: ‘I got a job at my trade for the winter the very day I got back. I firmly believe that God answered your prayer that day for me. I never was so glad for anything as for signing the pledge that day I came out of prison. I meet with many temptations, but I pray to God for strength to resist it, and He helps me. I earnestly hope

the C. P. will do them that come out as much good as it did me ; it learned me a lesson never to touch liquor again, with God's help, and hope the Lord will bless you in all your good works. I hope all that come out, will go and see you, and sign the pledge. I would like if you would remember me at your prayer-meetings, for I believe that your prayers will do me much good.' Another writes from Dartford : ' I have got a job out here at Dartford, it will last about 9 weeks, and then I intend going home to England to see my father and mother who are getting very old. Now, dear sir, wherever I go I shall hold fast to Christ Jesus, for without Him I can do nothing ; for without Christ this life is all a blank, but when we have Christ on our side it goes well with us, in this world and in the world to come. I thank you, dear sir, for your kindness to me in trouble. I will always let my lips and life express the Holy Gospel I profess, and let my works and virtue shine to prove the doctrine all divine. I thank God for all His goodness and mercy He has shown towards me.' Another writes from Dundas : ' I assure you, dear sir, it made my heart leap for joy when I heard my son Richard say he had consecrated his all to Jesus. I am better pleased than if he had given me the richest fortune.' Another writes from Port Hope : ' I write to inform you that I have kept the pledge, and have joined the Good Templars. I am a changed man altogether. I hope all the others have written to you. I am much obliged to you for the Bible you gave me, and am doing well. Please excuse me in not writing to you sooner.' Another writes from Guelph : ' I think my imprisonment has done me a great deal of good. May God reward you for all the good you have done for me, and be your constant friend and protector.'

" I am glad to say I have been successful in advising many young men to go direct home when liberated, who have been away from home in some cases for many years.

" In conclusion, let us all who are interested in this important work, take courage and persevere, prayerfully trusting in our Lord's gracious promise, ' Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, believing, ye shall receive.'

" Yours respectfully,

" HENRY SOFTLEY."

" P.S.—Many thanks are due to the Bible and Tract Society for their liberal supply of Bibles, New Testaments, and Tracts. Also to Messrs. Wilkes and Ashall for spectacles, and other

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kind friends for cast-off clothing, boots and shoes, &c. Any donations of this kind will be thankfully received at my residence, 514 Queen St. West, or Mr. Nasmith, baker, corner of Jarvis and Adelaide Sts., or Mr. Kinsinger, confectioner, corner of Bay and Adelaide Sts."

REPORTS OF TEACHERS.

A. F., a teacher, writes: "I have continued steadily to take an active part in the Sabbath school labor in the Central Prison with varied success. My duties have not been confined to one particular class, and therefore I cannot speak so definitely of the apparent fruits as otherwise I might have done; however, I can say, that by God's blessing, I have been greatly cheered and encouraged by manifest signs of repentance, contrition and regret for the past, and in a number of instances by (I believe) a sincere determination on the part of those to whom I have spoken, to lead a new life and, with God's help, a Christian one. Some cases have come before me of men hardened in sin and callous to all outward influences, but I am not without hope, that to even those 'the word in season may have been spoken,' and sooner or later, my humble efforts may redound to God's glory in their ultimate conversion. In the class I am now teaching I have good reason to hope that several men had really been converted. I put the question to them personally, and five or six of them intimated to me, that they would lead a new life. Some of these men are again in the world, and their subsequent conduct is known only to the Searcher of hearts. Others again have taken their places in the class, and with similar results; on the whole, I am greatly encouraged to persevere, more especially as my heart is thoroughly in the work, and my only desire is (by God's grace) to see His great name glorified in the conversion of many precious souls within those prison walls."

R. S., a teacher, writes: "In my class I have experienced a number of conversions, and great benefit and encouragement to all connected therewith."

T. M., a teacher, writes: I have taught in the Central Prison for the past two years, have found the prisoners always

respectful, and the majority of those who have attended my class have given serious attention to the instructions I have endeavoured to impart. Some who seemed careless, trivial and indifferent on entering the class, have, after a few Sabbaths, become interested, marked their lessons for next Sabbath, gave some attention to them in their cells, and returned prepared to listen with more attention, intelligence and profit. They freely asked questions which enabled them the better to understand the meaning of the lesson, and me to understand the state and working of their minds. Several have, upon leaving the prison, expressed to me their thanks for the instructions received, the benefit derived by them, and their determination, by the aid of God's grace, to follow these instructions, by leading lives for the future more in accordance with God's word and will."

J. H. W., a teacher, writes: "I commenced in the Central Prison about one year ago, and have been regular in attendance, without exception, and I thank God that I have been enabled to do so. In looking back over the past year, I can see much to encourage me in continuing my labours there. I feel safe in saying at least ten souls are the fruits of my labours, through Christ, who strengtheneth me. I find many who make profession without possession, and many other things that look to us like discouragements at first sight, but when applied rightly go to increase our faith and make us stronger for the work. I feel satisfied that God will, in His own good time, make the seed there sown in faith to grow."

C. A., a teacher, writes: "Out of 12 in my class, there are 4 sound conversions, 2 very anxious, 3 awakened to their state as sinners, balance very attentive. We have great cause for thankfulness for the good work going on in the Prison."

W. S., a teacher, writes: "I have been a teacher in the Central Prison for the last year, and I have witnessed some good being done in pointing these poor sinners to the Lamb of God. On the whole, I think it has been a profitable year, and I think at the great harvest home we shall see the fruit of our humble labours."

A. M. T., a teacher, writes: "The Lord has blessed my soul very much while endeavouring, in a weak way, to point those poor imprisoned souls to the Saviour; there have been seven who confessed to have found the Saviour, to the joy

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and satisfaction of their hearts ; and my earnest prayer to God is that He will give them grace and strength to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, and prove faithful to the end. I feel beyond the power of a doubt that the Lord, by His holy Spirit, is doing a great work in the Prison."

T. R. K., a teacher, writes : " I have never met with my class but found expressions from one or more of a desire to flee from the wrath to come. Nearly all such attribute their conversion, in most instances, to Bible-class teachings. There are very few infidels, and few scoffers. A very large number attribute their condition to the effects of intoxicating liquors. Some have made good resolutions, have sown and asked God's blessing upon both seed and ground, that the harvest might be abundant. Consider the Central Prison one of the richest corners of the Lord's vineyard in Toronto to work in."

M. P., a lady teacher, writes : " Ever since I began to teach in the Central Prison Sabbath-school I have found the blessed work peculiarly interesting. The prisoners, without an exception, have been respectful and attentive, and I have met with far more readiness to receive than to reject the Friend of sinners. Making all due allowance for momentary and easily forgotten resolutions, I have good reason to believe that some have found, and others are seeking, salvation through Jesus Christ. I may just add, that I never engaged in any Christian work, in the performance of which my own soul has been so much blessed."

I. A., a lady teacher, writes : " Since I taught in the Prison I have been much encouraged by the attention of the prisoners and by the earnest questions they sometimes ask. One young lad came and saw me last Tuesday, and seemed anxious to lead a better life. There is an old man, who has been two Sundays in my class, upon whom deep impression seems to be made, and who said ' he hoped just to get inside the door.' "

M. T., a lady teacher, writes : " I have four in my class ; three of them have lately professed to have found peace in believing. One, who was in my class for the first time last Sabbath, told me he was converted two months since. To all my questions he gave very satisfactory answers, and, as far as I could judge, has indeed become a new creature in Christ. For my own part, I feel it a privilege to labor there. While

trying to break to others the Bread of Life, my own soul has been abundantly blessed."

H. T., a teacher, writes: "I have much pleasure in reporting that I believe the Lord is graciously owning the labors of His servants in the Prison. As to my experience of those in my own class, I beg to state I have invariably found them exceedingly attentive and respectful. It has been my constant and prayerful endeavour to bring each personally to the Saviour, seeking to impress upon them, though rejected by society, yet Jesus loves them and has promised He will in no wise cast out him that cometh unto Him. It is a work for the Master in which I take great delight, always making it a point to be present; and though I am unable to state positively any under my care has decided for Christ, yet I am not dismayed, believing the Lord will bless His own Word, and that to me may be given to sow the seed and to another to reap."

W. S., a teacher, writes: "I have been going to the school at the Central Prison for more than twelve months. I have seen some very hard cases there, but thank God I have seen many a tear fall. I have had many promises from the poor fellows that they would lead a better life, and, thank God, I believe that many of them have kept to their promise. Some I know are now walking in the narrow path. I often meet with some of them, and they bless the day that they heard of Jesus in the Central Prison."

A. N. W., a teacher, writes: "My experience is that the majority are willing to serve God and save souls, except one, who said that he had been a good man for 50 years, and wrongfully imprisoned, and now from this out he would do all the harm he could. One young man said when he got out he would go home and do better, and become a good man. How many are converted I can not tell; only one thing I can say, I know that my labours among the prisoners have not been in vain, for I feel blessed in that work, and the attention that I have received from them gives me the assurance that my labour is not in vain. I thank God that while I am dealing out the Bread of Life to others, I am fed by the same."

W. B., a teacher, writes: "During the past year I have seen many of the prisoners, whom I had the opportunity of teaching, under deep penitence for sins, and determining, by God's help,

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J. M., a teacher, writes: "I have been very pleased with the marked attention of the prisoners, and I firmly believe that the seed that has been sown has taken deep root; for many of my pupils have promised me they will lead a very different life, if spared. I have many times seen the tears of penitence start from their eyes. In my Sunday afternoon visits to the Prison, I found a Jew from Joppa, who told me he had found the Lord Jesus Christ, and he was now determined to give up his old Hebrew faith and serve the Lord's Christ, and would do all in his power to persuade his friends to accept the Saviour. I believe this was a genuine conversion. I have witnessed men who have thanked God that they were brought to the Central Prison. I believe there is a glorious work going on among the prisoners, and that we shall not know all the good that has been done until the day when the secrets of all hearts will be revealed."

E. C., a lady teacher, writes: "I rejoice to say that four young men told me they had found Jesus to the saving of their souls in the Prison. I have strong hope that they will leave that Prison free men in Christ Jesus. I found others anxious about their souls. I feel greatly encouraged in the work. My own soul was blest while speaking to them of a Saviour's love."

S. J., a teacher, writes: "I believe at least five who are, or have been, in my class, are serving the Lord. I have never been so deeply interested or richly blest in any work for Christ before. I have tried to teach them the Word of the Lord, and it has not returned to Him void; and while a few have been apparently sceptical or indifferent, my success has been greater than any opposition I have met with."

A. S., a teacher, writes: "I never laboured in a Sabbath school with as much encouragement as I have done in the Central Prison. A great many of the prisoners have been brought under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit through the teaching of the Word and of prayer. Several in my class have professed salvation through faith in Christ. Last Sabbath, one in particular was very deeply affected; the tears ran down his cheeks, I believe, of true repentance. It is a blessed

work to try to lead those poor prisoners to Christ; and when I go to God in prayer and ask Him to pour out His spirit upon the Word and apply it to their hearts, I praise the Lord; I know He hears and answers prayer. Not long ago, when I was visiting the Prison and giving tracts on a Sabbath afternoon, one poor prisoner wept bitterly, and asked me to pray for him. I told him to kneel down inside his cell while I knelt outside, and I prayed with him, and got him to engage in prayer. His prayer was indeed the publican's—'God be merciful to me, a sinner'—and as he cried earnestly to God with all his heart, God heard and answered his prayer, and blessed his soul before I left. I believe God has honoured this Sabbath school during the past year by His divine presence."

W. A., a teacher, writes: "So far as I have attended the school, I find the class very attentive to instructions given, although, as yet, I see no marked change in any of them. But I trust, with God's blessing, they may yet be brought to a knowledge of the truth."

A. R., a teacher, writes: "During the time I have been a teacher I have met with some hardened in sin, and others that have changed greatly and are desirous of getting to heaven. I can say for myself, I feel richly blessed, from time to time, when speaking to those young men of their soul's salvation."

TORONTO CITY JAIL MISSION.

The Toronto City Jail Mission, which was commenced nine years ago, has been continued by the Association, and has been successfully maintained last year by Mr. S. Roberts, the painstaking and indefatigable Superintendent of the Mission. He has been ably assisted by a number of Christian friends, who volunteer their services as teachers. Mr. Roberts' report we append herewith.

It has been urged that, with all of this expenditure of Christian labor in our jails and prisons, crime is on the increase. True; but not as a rule among those who have received instruction in these establishments. There are exceptions, we fear, but the large increase of crime is among those who have never been in our jails and prisons. It seems as though a

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wave or epidemic of crime had swept over the land. The efforts of the Mission has been to reach this class of persons, when they are suffering the penalty of their crimes, and softened by reflection. Experience has shown us that, as a rule, except for drunkenness, we do not again come in contact with persons a second time after their discharge. There is no doubt but that in very many cases the seed sown has borne fruit; and that in the majority of cases there has, with God's grace, been a restraining influence upon all classes of the prisoners in the Sunday Schools of both institutions.

The soil is indeed unpromising; and the "raw material" of sin and wickedness is in abundance; but still we do not feel discouraged or weary in well doing, for we are assured that in due time we shall reap if we faint not.

TORONTO COUNTY JAIL MISSION.

This work has been steadily carried on every Sunday during the year in the County Jail. The labors of the teachers have been characterized by a patient perseverance and devotion which is worthy of all praise, and they have been worthily assisted by the students from Knox College during its session.

The average number of prisoners in attendance at the regular service is thirty-six, besides those for whom a separate service is provided in the corridors. The lessons have been from the miracles and parables of our Lord alternately. If we may judge by the marked interest, the devout and reverent attention which has been paid, these living pictures of gospel truth seem to be peculiarly fitted to the class of persons with whom we have to do.

We have been fortunate in securing and maintaining the cordial co-operation of all the officers in the jail.

From moneys collected by the teachers for that especial purpose, a breakfast was given to the prisoners on Christmas morning, when addresses, fraught with wise counsel and Christian sympathy, were given by John Macdonald, Esq., M.P., Mr. H. J. Clark, and Mr. George Hague.

In other departments of the work—caring for prisoners after their discharge, providing temporary shelter, forwarding them to their homes in the country, and corresponding with their friends, there is much cause for thankfulness and encouragement.

From the fact that there is a constant change among the prisoners, who are for the most part committed for short periods, it is not to be expected that we can see all the results of the work done, and it is absolutely necessary to depend upon the faithfulness of Him who has promised that His "word shall not return unto Him void." We claim for this work the practical help, and the prayerful sympathy, of *all* those who emulate the example of Him who came to seek and save that which was lost.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

GEO HAGUE, Treasurer, in Account with the Toronto Prisoner's Aid Association. Cr.

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TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

Dr. **GEO. HAGUE, Treasurer, in Account with the Toronto Prisoner's Aid Association.** Cr.

To sundry Receipts, as follows:

1875.	June 30—Balance on hand at this date.....	\$ 253 23
1876.	Oct. 6—Sundry amounts received from Mr. Softley, collected by him to date ..	698 58
"	—Sundry amounts received direct from subscribers.....	41 00
"	—St. James' Cathedral Sunday-school.	66 14
"	—Knox Church Sunday-school.....	12 25
"	—Bank interest.....	6 75
	Total.....	<u>\$1077 95</u>

*By sundry Disbursements to date—viz., from 30th June,
1875, to 6th October, 1876.*

1876.	Oct. 6—H. Softley, on acct. salary and arrears..	\$ 790 26
	Sundry disbursements on account of discharged prisoners, &c., per do..	101 18
	Cab hire to and from jail.....	126 00
	Lovell Bros., on acct. hymn books....	40 00
	Dudley & Burns, printing.....	16 65
	Globe, advertising	2 00
	Balance on hand.....	1 86
	Total.....	<u>\$1077 95</u>
	To balance.....	\$ 1 86

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1882.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Hon. W. Cayley.....	\$10 00	W. Williamson	\$ 2 00
Chief Justice Hagarty	10 00	J. W. Mason	2 00
Blake, Kerr & Boyd.....	10 00	William Davies	2 00
John Clements	5 00	A. S. Nordheimer	2 00
E. Leadlay	5 00	E. Morphy	2 00
P. G. Close	5 00	John Holmes	2 00
Perkins, Ince & Co	5 00	A Friend	2 00
D. McLean	5 00	G. N. Yarker	2 00
A Friend	5 00	R. Hay & Co	2 00
A. Farley & Son.....	5 00	C. Witmer	2 00
Rev. Provost Whittaker	5 00	John Riddell	2 00
John Nasmith.....	5 00	H. H. Clark	2 00
Lyman Bros.....	5 00	W. T. Mason	2 00
Robt. Baldwin.....	5 00	Hunter, Rose & Co	2 00
R. Carswell	5 00	A. H. Campbell	2 00
John Macdonald.....	5 00	C. Page & Sons	2 00
Goderham & Worts	5 00	Fred. Perkins	2 00
Dr. A. M. Rosebrugh	5 00	Mrs. Pollard	2 00
Bishop of Toronto.....	5 00	Dr. McConnell	2 00
Rev. Dean Grasett.....	5 00	R. Wilkes.....	2 00
B. Homer Dixon.....	5 00	Ridout, Aikenhead & Crombie	2 00
Hon. Wm. McMaster.....	5 00	Samuel Scarlett	2 00
J. Gillespie & Co	5 00	W. H. Knowlton	2 00
B. Walton	5 00	Jas. H. Rogers	3 00
G. Crombie	5 00	Elisha Palmer	2 00
S. C. Duncan-Clark	5 00	Bronsdon & Paton	2 00
C. S. Gzowski	5 00	Rev. J. D. Cayley	2 00
John Green	5 00	E. Front	2 00
B. J	5 00	Mason, Risch & Newcombe.....	2 00
Angus Morrison.....	5 00	D. Cowan.....	2 00
James Leslie	5 00	H. Wickson.....	2 00
John Kerr	5 00	Wm. Galbraith	2 00
Cramp Torrance.....	5 00	T. Dixon Craig	2 00
Thomas A. Thomson.....	5 00	Jas. Proctor	2 00
Taylor & West.....	5 00	Gray, Rennie & Co	2 00
Harrison, Osler & Moss	5 00	W. Edwards.....	2 00
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