


THIRD



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

New Jersey State Reform School

FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS,



FOR THE YEAR 1867.

New Jersey State Library

TRENTON, N. J.:

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OFFICERS.

BOARD OF CONTROL:

His Excellency, Governor MARCUS L. WARD,
Chancellor A. O. ZABRISKIE,
Chief Justice MERCER BEASLEY.

TRUSTEES:

SAMUEL ALLINSON, Term expires January 1, 1869.
NATHAN T. STRATTON, Term expires January 1, 1869.
DANIEL HAINES, Term expires January 1, 1870.
DAVID RIPLEY, Term expires January 1, 1870.
JOHN D. BUCKELEW, Term expires January 1, 1871.
ANTHONY RECKLESS, Term expires January 1, 1871.

SALARIED OFFICERS:

LUTHER H. SHELDON, *Superintendent*, . . . Salary, \$1,000 00
SARAH H. SHELDON, *Matron*, Salary, \$200 00
SARAH J. SHELDON, *Teacher*, Salary, \$200 00
CEPHAS W. AINSWORTH, *Teacher*, Salary, \$480 00
WILLIAM WILSON, *Farmer*, and Wife, Salary, \$600 00

HAMBURGH, December 14, 1867.

To His Excellency Marcus L. Ward, Governor of New Jersey :

SIR—With this I beg leave to submit to you the Annual Report of the Trustees of the State Reform School, together with the reports of the Superintendent and Treasurer, and the inventory of the personal property of the State in the buildings and on the farm, and a list of the salaried officers and their salaries, which, by the act establishing the Reform School, we are required to lay before you on or before the fifteenth of December in every year.

With great respect, I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,

DANIEL HAINES,

President of the Board of Trustees.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES.

To Marcus L. Ward, Governor of the State of New Jersey:

In compliance with the requirement of law, the Trustees of the State Reform School for Boys present to the Governor their third annual report, being for the year ending December 1, 1867.

At the date of their last report the main building for the Reform School was in course of erection by the Trustees, under the superintendence of a competent and faithful builder, the plan having been approved by the Board of Control. From various hindrances it did not progress so rapidly as we desired or expected. Early in the summer, however, the interior being completed, the house was furnished, the Superintendent and his family removed into it, and, by the proclamation of the Governor dated June 28, 1867, the school was declared ready for the reception of pupils. The first boy was admitted July 6th, and several others shortly after.

The Trustees preferred that the school should fill up slowly, believing that a small number of boys becoming trained to the discipline of the institution would facilitate the management of those subsequently admitted. This has proved to be the case. The earlier inmates desirous of pleasing the kind caretakers, who evinced what to these poor outcasts was such unwonted tenderness, were docile and obedient, and as additions were successively made, the new comers very soon fell into the established ways of the school.

The present number of scholars is twenty-six, but bedding, desks, &c., have been prepared for twenty-four (24) more, and the Justices of the Supreme Court have been notified that that number can now be admitted.

The school can be increased but little beyond this in the present building without overcrowding; but it is thought that in the spring a few boys may be accommodated in the ancient farm-house, should it then seem desirable.

The system which it is proposed to adopt is to have families of boys in separate houses, each family to be under the care of a suitable man and his wife. The advantages of this plan are, briefly, that such di-

vision awakens more of the interests and affections of *home* in the minds of the boys, and places them permanently under the notice and supervision of the *parents* of the house, who, devoting themselves to their own pupils, acquire a more perfect acquaintance with, and influence over them, than could be the case were they in congregate establishments like the refuges of metropolitan cities.

Many persons are entirely incredulous as to the possibility of keeping vagrant and criminal boys on an open farm, and believe they should be *punished* in prisons or workhouses for their misdemeanors. But they do not consider that to neglect in education, or to direct criminal training, the evil courses of these unfortunate lads are generally to be attributed, and that *reformation*—not *punishment*—should be the object of their treatment. The duty of the State is to look upon them with an eye of pity, not with a feeling of revenge, and to supplement the deficiencies of their natural guardians by removing them from their corrupt associations, throwing better influences around them, and leading them in the paths of knowledge, industry and virtue, to useful citizenship. Every one is interested, directly or indirectly, in the reclamation of these boys; for, if unrestrained, they are to be our future criminals. The discipline and disgrace of the prison, as we have amply seen, tend to harden them. At this early stage of the Reform School we can only say, its results thus far have exceeded our expectations, and we trust that its future success will justify its establishment.

For a gratifying statement of the conduct of the boys we refer to the accompanying report of our Superintendent. His conscientious efforts to establish among them a high standard of veracity and of honorable deportment, and in every way to promote their best welfare, have won our warm approval. Nor ought we to say less of our worthy matron and the teachers. That the time devoted to study in the school room has been profitably employed we have satisfactory evidence. Several boys who did not know their letters when admitted, now read in easy lessons, and others more advanced have progressed very creditably.

The Trustees considered it desirable that the people of New Jersey should properly understand the character of the Reform School, in order that they might act intelligently in its support, and also in securing for proper objects, in their respective neighborhoods or within their knowledge, the benefits of the moral asylum provided by the Legislature for juvenile delinquents. A formal opening of the school, in the presence of the State officers, the judiciary, members of the Legislature and private citizens, was therefore resolved upon. The day selected for the occasion (October 29th) proved most unpropitious, a severe storm preventing the attendance of a large number of the invited guests; but a party of between forty and fifty gentlemen from this and other States assembled at the institution, examined the various apartments, received such explanations as they desired, and list-

ened to some exercises of the scholars. The very interesting address of Edward W. Scudder, Esq., and the proceedings of the organized gathering, will be found appended to this report.

Our farmer reports among the products of the farm the past season 1,300 bushels of ears of corn, 700 of potatoes, 200 of sweet potatoes, 532 of wheat, 1,000 of oats, 60 tons of hay, &c. The unusual amount of rain to which the seaboard States were subjected during the summer months, greatly lessened the expected productions of the farm—a disappointment which the Trustees the more regretted, as the appropriations of 1865 and 1866 were found in the autumn of the present year to be exhausted. At the date of our last report we could not accurately estimate the expenditure which would be required in the completion of the buildings and the various necessary improvements around them, nor the cost of household and school furniture, and of clothing and food for a family of boys. But we thought it would be improper to make any further demand upon the generous confidence the Legislature had reposed in us by asking an additional appropriation before the institution was in working order. The subsistence of the family, the completion of the water works, the accruing wages of employees, and the preparation for crops of next year, were expenses that it was necessary to provide for, and at a recent meeting of the Trustees the Treasurer was authorized to effect a temporary loan of twenty-five hundred dollars. We have aimed at the adoption of a moderate liberality in the scale of our expenditure for the institution, removed alike from parsimony and prodigality, which we trust the Governor and Legislature will approve.

Several thousand bushels of marl have been purchased for application to the clover ground this winter. It is intended to employ the boys in favorable weather in grubbing, and clearing some portions of the farm suitable for pasturage or tillage, but which have been allowed to grow up in bushes and run to waste. The peach and apple trees planted in 1866 have grown well, and it is proposed to extend the peach orchard in the early spring. We design also to devote considerable attention to the growth of various berries and to market gardening, the labor at our command being well adapted to the culture and gathering of such products. The knowledge thus acquired by the boys, as well as in the varied labors of the farm, will be useful to them through life, whilst the substitution of intelligent industry for vagrant idleness or criminal activity, and the new direction given to the current of their thoughts, will be of incalculable value.

In conclusion, we desire to commend the institution entrusted to us to the fostering care of the Legislature, and to invoke for it the continuous blessing of our Heavenly Father.

Signed by direction of the Board of Trustees.

DANIEL HAINES, *President.*
JOHN D. BUCKELEW, *Secretary.*

REPORT OF THE TREASURER.

JAMESBURG, December 10, 1867.

Hon. Daniel Haines, President of the Board of Trustees of the State Reform School.

DEAR SIR:—Below please find an abstract of my account as Treasurer, which includes all the receipts and expenditures for land, buildings, improvements, maintenance of the School, and operations of the farm, from the commencement of the institution, April, 1866, to the close of the fiscal year ending December 1st, 1867.

The State Reform School in acc't with John D. Buckelew, Treasurer.

DR.			CR.
For land purchased.	\$29,428 20	From State Treasurer,	
For buildings and improve-		1866,	\$49,428 20
ments,	32,159 14	From State Treasurer,	
For furniture,	3,519 46	1867,	25,142 05
For salaries,	1 579 79	From farm products sold,	3,355 22
For provisions, clothing, &c.,	1,818 41	From parents and guar-	
For farm stock,	2,455 03	dians,	125 00
For farm implements,	2,014 30	From loan from First Na-	
For farm expenses,	6,594 40	tional Bank of James-	
For incidental expenses,	524 26	burg,	2,500 00
In Treasurer's hands,	457 48		
	\$80,550 47		\$80,550 47

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN D. BUCKELEW, *Treasurer.*

Inventory of the Personal Property of the State in the buildings and on the farm of the Reform School, December 1st, 1867.

Furniture in school buildings,	\$3,197 25
Furniture in farm house,	306 48
Materials for clothing,	485 50
Groceries,	106 45
Books and stationery,	101 78
Farm stock,	2,682 00
Farm implements,	1,839 00
Farm products on hand,	3,562 50
	\$12,280 96

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT.

To the Trustees of the New Jersey State Reform School, situated at Jamesburg, New Jersey.

GENTLEMEN:—Entering upon the direct supervision of the interests of this institution on the tenth of April last, it becomes my duty, at this period, to present to you the history of its progress until the present time.

As this is the first report of its actual operation, and as our system is but imperfectly understood, I beg your indulgence, while I detail somewhat at length (and with unusual minuteness) the ground we have passed over and the position we now occupy.

While I found the main building nearly in a state of completion, there was still a great amount of labor necessary to prepare the different apartments for their designed use. Everything was to be arranged, as far as practicable, in the sleeping apartments, schoolroom, eating-room, wash and bath rooms, kitchen, and laundry, so as to secure most expeditiously and perfectly the design of each.

The securing, introduction, and distribution of water for all purposes of health and cleanliness and culinary operations, was a matter of great importance to the prosperity of the school, and caused no small amount of anxiety and labor. The thorough drainage and removal of all the waste of the building, to be suitably composted for agricultural purposes; the removal of unnecessary, and erection of necessary outbuildings; the laying out of the grounds, planting of trees, building of roads, and grading of the soil about the premises, has thrown an amount of care and labor upon the hands of the Superintendent, which can only be understood and appreciated by yourselves, who have frequently aided in this work, by your counsel and approval.

All this was so far accomplished by the sixth of June, as to warrant the occupancy of the building, and the issuing of a notice of our readiness to receive twenty boys, on and after the twentieth.

It will thus be seen that the *actual opening* of the school was at the earliest moment practicable.

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The first commitment, however, was not until the sixth of July, and the limited number was complete by the fourteenth of October.

After sufficient time had elapsed to prove the feasibility and wisdom of the plan adopted by the Trustees, and to insure confidence in the successful administration of the principles involved, the School was formally opened on the twenty-ninth of October, in the presence of the Honorable Board of Trustees, and a number of distinguished guests from this and other States.

The Superintendent was then directed immediately to prepare the institution for the accommodation of fifty boys, and so soon as ready, to notify the judges to this effect, which has been done.

THE CONDITION OF BOYS WHEN ADMITTED.

Ten out of twenty-six boys, now here, were brought to the institution with shackles on their wrists. Most of them were extremely ragged and filthy; some afflicted with cutaneous eruptions, and nameless troubles incident to such lives; many were untruthful and deceptive, profane and reckless, with no correct knowledge of God or His word. Many could neither read nor write, yet, almost without an exception, they were unusually bright and shrewd, active and capable; still with minds and hearts poisoned by association with older and more hardened criminals, either in the street or in the cell.

THEIR TREATMENT WHEN FIRST RECEIVED.

Their bonds are stricken off. They are thoroughly washed and combed; decently, but not expensively clothed, and are at once sent to the school-room, or to the open field for labor.

Thus they are put upon their sense of honor and obligation; and I am happy to say, have but in a single instance, betrayed this trust. No especial police or prison restraint, or weapon of offence or defence constrains any new comer. He goes to his companions without lectures or threats, and is entirely free to develop his disposition and intentions. He is thus given to understand that he alone is responsible for the character he sustains.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE BOYS.

They rise at five in the summer and six in the winter. They are given time for private devotions in their sleeping room, morning and evening. They are allowed half an hour for ablution, and a neat and careful preparation of their persons for the duties of the day; after which they repair to the chapel for devotional services, and at seven

are called to their morning meal, at the close of which they are detailed to their respective employment.

As your system recognizes the farm as a part of the institution, and the farm work as a very necessary auxiliary in the education and discipline of the boys, the labor of the farm must be regulated and adapted to this end. Hence the boys are assigned to the general employment of farm hands, according to the demand of the season; the Superintendent so far controlling this as to secure the most profitable adaptation of such labor to the planting and raising of vegetables, small fruits, and general garden and field culture. Some procure fuel, others remove gravel for building roads and grading about the premises, while the sleeping apartments, laundry, kitchen, dining-room, and out-buildings have each their own busy quota.

They dine at twelve o'clock; enjoy an interval of recreation; go to the school-room at one, and spend from three to four hours in the usual studies of our public schools. Before supper they are allowed an hour for play or work, as they may elect, quite often the latter. At half past five they are called in to their evening meal, after which they retire in order to the school-room, where they report their conduct during the day, and are instructed and counseled, and receive their "*credits*" or "*demerit marks*," as they may deserve. Thus, every night each boy is made to see his standing, and knows whether he is improving or not, and is kindly stimulated to exercise self-reliance, and self-respect, and to seek and lead a better life. Public devotions, and miscellaneous exercises fill up the evening, until about eight, when the boys retire for the night.

On Sabbath morning the exercises for the Sabbath School are learned, suitable books from the library are read, and at eleven the boys are called together for familiar religious instruction for one hour. At three in the afternoon, public chapel services are held, which are attended quite generally by the surrounding community. The singing is performed by the boys, and their attention and demeanor is all that can be desired.

DISCIPLINE OF THE INSTITUTION.

In the treatment of those committed to the care of the State Reform School, the grand design and aim of its founders is constantly kept in view. Hence, physical force, as a means of restraint and correction, is not known. The christian idea of a well regulated family, with the steady pressure of kind moral and social influence, governs all its discipline.

This is found in our system of grading, which puts the character of each boy in his own hands, and causes him to see and feel each day, that all his attempts to enter upon a better life are rewarded, and shorten his stay here, and all his evil deeds stand against him and retard his time of release. This system demands one year of uni-

form good behaviour before any boy can be conditionally discharged. He advances from grade eight to one, and then to the "trust" and "honor" grades, which carry him through the year.

The influence of this method of discipline is most wonderfully successful. The results are gratifying and surprising to those who daily witness the improvement of most of the boys. Not an instance of an open quarrel among the boys, not a pert, angry, or saucy word to any of the officers, has been known since the school received its first lad. No boy has escaped from the farm, though some of them are sent miles away, unaccompanied by any officer of the institution, to attend to the common errands of the family. In fact there has been but one *attempt* to escape, and that was unsuccessful. The present teacher, Mr. Ainsworth, has had much to do in securing such pleasing results. The kind feeling, and manifest attachment of the boys to the officers of the institution, is a gratifying fact.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE BOYS.

For a few weeks after entering the institution the boys cling to their old habits, but soon begin to drop such peculiarities as are displeasing to the officers, and manifest a disposition to gratify the wishes of those who have the control of them.

They are cheerful, affectionate and confiding, and, generally, industrious. They willingly yield to one of their own number, appointed to the position of monitor, and for the most part, attend promptly to the duties assigned them. They are ambitious to multiply their "*credits*," and thus advance in their "grade." Their deportment will compare favorably with the conduct of boys in our best boarding schools.

Many of them appear to be as trustworthy as any boy of the same age and intelligence. This is apparent in their quiet and steady labor under the care of one of their own number, while the officers are absent; and also in the promptness with which they perform their duties when sent alone to different places in this or other towns.

The officers have been greatly encouraged in their work, and their faith in this system has constantly strengthened while witnessing these results, unlooked for at so early a period in the history of the Institution.

DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME.

We do not wish to be understood as saying that the conduct of every boy is uniformly what it ought to be. Their former habits are strong, and frequently get the mastery of their better judgment, and we are disappointed in our premature hopes; but patience and perseverance seldom fail to effect a radical change. We do not expect that no one will ever take advantage of the almost unlimited freedom

of this "Open Farm System," and abuse the confidence reposed in the inmates of the Institution. We cannot confine the unwilling laborer with bolts and bars or within high walls; neither can we subdue the unruly temper by the infliction of severe personal chastisement, and thus hold the ill disposed in check, by fear of the uplifted rod.

The whole system of discipline demands of all the officers, the firm, kind and Christian treatment of every boy, without distinction. The confidence and affection of each must be secured, or there is no power here to hold and reform.

But we are assured, gentlemen, that we have your most fervent prayers for our success in this noble Christian enterprise, of saving so many of these dear youth from lives of vice and crime, and in taking from your jails and prisons, so many sons of weeping parents, to lead them into a life of honest enterprise—heavenly virtue.

We would gratefully acknowledge the gift of a beautiful cabinet organ, and also some thirty dollars worth of books from various donors, as the nucleus of a library for the boys. The proprietor of the "Practical Farmer," and also the editor of the "American Educational Monthly," have kindly furnished us with their valuable and interesting monthly periodicals as a gratuity.

The following statistics will enable you to understand more fully the progress and present condition of the Institution:

Whole number of boys committed,	26
Committed in July,	3
Committed in August,	1
Committed in September,	13
Committed in October,	7
Committed in November,	2
	— 26
Committed from Passaic county,	6
Committed from Essex county,	11
Committed from Mercer county,	4
Committed from Hudson county,	1
Committed from Middlesex county,	2
Committed from Burlington county,	1
	—
Committed for larceny,	12
Committed for insubordination and vagrancy,	11
Committed for setting fires,	3
	— 26
Boys now in grade 8,	1
Boys now in grade 7,	13
Boys now in grade 6,	10
Boys now in grade 4,	2
	— 26

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AGES OF BOYS WHEN COMMITTED.

One,	18
Two,	16
Four,	14
Three,	13
Four,	12
Five,	11
Four,	10
Two,	9

Seven hundred and eighty-two days work have been performed by the boys up to the first of December. This includes general house-work, the preparation of fuel, planting and weeding, and carting of thousands of loads of gravel for the purpose of grading and making roads. This work, though it does not show as so much income from the farm, has been an actual saving of expense to the State to the amount of the cost of this labor; and though it may need a year or two to plant and grow small fruits, so as to realize a handsome income from the labor of the boys, I do not see why the farm may not after a few years mainly support the institution. There must needs be considerable expense in preparing the farm for the most remunerative outlay of such labor, but soon this will be greatly lessened by the fruits that will be gathered. The farm crops the present season have been damaged and lessened by the almost constant rain of the summer.

There has been no severe case of sickness in the institution.

It gives me pleasure to state that the attention of other States about to establish Reform Schools is now being turned to this "open farm and family system," and prominent gentlemen engaged in these philanthropic enterprises are visiting your school, and speak in the highest terms of praise of your plan.

Thanking you, gentlemen, for your kind indulgence and most faithful counsel and coöperation, I remain

Yours respectfully,

L. H. SHELDON, *Sup't.*

STATE REFORM SCHOOL, *Jamesburg, N. J.,* }
 December 10, 1867. }

APPENDIX.

FORMAL OPENING OF THE NEW JERSEY REFORM
SCHOOL, OCTOBER 29, 1867.

A large number of invitations was issued, but owing to the severe storm only about fifty persons, including several ladies, were present.

At 12 o'clock the guests assembled in the school-room. The meeting was called to order by ex-Governor Haines, President of the Board of Trustees, who made a brief speech of welcome. The meeting was then organized by the appointment of Hon. Benjamin Buckley, Chairman, and James S. Yard, Secretary.

The Chairman said that in commencing enterprises such as this it was proper to invoke the Divine blessing; he therefore called upon Rev. Mr. Canfield, who offered a fervent prayer for the success of the institution.

The following letter from ex-Governor Parker was then read :

FREEHOLD, October 29, 1867.

Hon. Daniel Haines and Others, Trustees, &c. :

GENTLEMEN :—I regret that an engagement made before I received your invitation, will prevent me from attending the opening exercises of the Reform School.

I am glad to learn that the School promises to realize the fondest hopes of the friends of Juvenile Reform. I have watched with interest its progress, and am satisfied that the Trustees have acted wisely in the adoption of a plan, the choice of a location, and the selection of a Superintendent. The fostering care of the State and the sympathy of the people are now required to sustain this long needed institution. And shall not these be given? Is it not the duty of the State to rescue unfortunate children from a life of crime, and so educate them as to make those a blessing who would otherwise be a curse? Self-interest as well as humanity teaches this to be a *public* duty; and I cannot doubt that the people of New Jersey will extend to the Reform School their aid and sympathy.

In reviewing the measures of my administration as Executive of the State, nothing gives me greater pleasure than my participation in the inauguration of this enterprise. I rejoice that I had the

opportunity to do something for the reformation of friendless youth, whom poverty and misfortune cast upon the world.

Be assured, gentlemen, that it will be extremely gratifying to me to learn that your opening exercises of this day give assurance of permanent success to the institution—to establish which you have disinterestedly devoted so much time and earnest labor.

I am, &c., yours,

JOEL PARKER.

Hon. E. W. Scudder, was then introduced and delivered the following address :

We are invited here to-day to take part in the formal opening of the New Jersey State Reform School for Boys. Our time can be profitably passed in witnessing the progress made by the school; in learning more of its workings; in consulting for its greater efficiency, and in strengthening our purpose to labor for the advancement of the objects of its institution.

My part in addressing you is accidental, as I have no official connection with the school; and in the presence of gentlemen of such enlarged experience, who have made this and kindred subjects the study of their lives, I feel that I am misplaced. From the beginning of this institution, however, my heart has been touched, and my mind quickened by its noble charity, its philanthropic seekings after the erring, neglected, and much wronged children of our State, who suffer as criminals the stern rigors of the law, when the influence of home affections, and restraints might school them to virtue.

Some years ago while sitting in the court room of our county, a bright looking boy of about twelve years, was convicted of grand larceny. The presiding judge, perplexed with the sentence of the law, and the gushing sympathy of his kind heart, appealing to the members of the bar from his seat on the bench, said: "What shall I do with this boy?" What could he do, but doom him to a felon's cell, and probable ruin, from association with older, and more hardened offenders! There was no Reform School, not even a House of Refuge for this poor erring boy. The State—his State—in all her wide domain, with her bright, happy homes and teeming wealth, had no fit home for this little, weak, sinning child. It seemed cruel: I thought of the tender compassion of Him who said "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not," and felt the reproach as a heavy load on my spirit. As a man I was rebuked; as a Jerseyman I was ashamed, and resolved to do my part to right this great wrong.

Have you, who are here present to-day, whose business and official positions make you familiar with the proceedings of our courts, witnessed no such scenes as this? Is it not to-day, as we look about us at this school, now an accomplished fact, a wonder to ourselves, that

in our apathy we have suffered this omission in our State institutions so long? The hearts of our people were not so cold, they are not so penurious and narrow, that if we who had knowledge of this great defect in the administration of justice had spoken, they would have refused to listen and generously respond.

Some years ago, February 23d, 1850, an act was passed by our Legislature to erect a House of Refuge, in which might be kept, employed, and instructed such minors as were convicted of crimes by the courts, or who were arrested as vagrants, or whose parents or guardians might desire them to be committed to the institution therein authorized to be erected. After the land had been purchased near Kingston, and the foundations of the building laid, on March 26th, 1852, an act to discontinue the building, sell and convey the land, and settle with the contractors, was passed, leaving us with nothing but our State Prison and County Jails for young offenders; so it continued until the present time. The reasons for this repeal were always, in my judgment, insufficient, and perhaps stronger language might justly be applied. We would all gladly, in the light of our present experience, let them be forgotten. Possibly it was supposed that it would be better to leave such institutions to municipal action, as was done in the earlier Houses of Refuge in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, or to voluntary agency, as on the continent of Europe in many cases, and in England until the comparatively recent statutes of 17 and 18, Victoria, 1854 (credited to Lord Palmerston and called the Reformatory School act), by which appropriations were made from the public Treasury, and counties and boroughs might furnish money from their funds to aid in the establishment of reformatory schools. But as neither cities, towns, nor individuals, have established such schools, the demand for action by the State has become imperative.

Out of all our years of humiliation, however, in which we have lagged behind many other States of our country, good has come in the improvements made in schools of this kind, both here and in Europe, in new ideas that have been started, systems that have been tried and perfected, and in the good results of reformatory schools that have been fully attested, until now we may start with the benefit of the examples of those that have been most successful.

As instances of reformatory schools that have attained the greatest celebrity, I will especially mention the Reformatory Institution at Mettrai, near Tours, in France, established in the year 1840; the Ruhe House, at Horn, near Hamburg; the Agricultural School of Red Hill, at Reigate, Surrey, England; and in our own country, the Ohio Reform School, near Lancaster; the State Reform School of Massachusetts, at Westboro'. Others similar in character and almost equal in their advancement invite our imitation, and offer incentives to noble emulation.

The yearly reports of these institutions in Ohio and Massachusetts

I have found very interesting and instructive repositories of facts and suggestions, showing the good results of the course of training pursued by them. All of those named, excepting the school at Westboro', which has a partial method, have adopted what is known as the home or family system, and of them it has been beautifully said: "God setteth the solitary in families; and the nearer we imitate the Divine plan, the more success we shall obtain."

This system differs from the penitentiary, as it is not penal, nor is there prison discipline or garb. It differs also from the refuge, in that walls, cells and turnkeys are not used for restraint; but as one says of Mettrai, "Here is a wonderful prison, where there is no key, but the clefs des champs (keys of the fields). If your children remain captive, it is proved you have discovered the key of their hearts."

Again, speaking of the Ruhe House, another says: "The purpose of its creation was to restore a family to the children, place them within the sphere of relations, duties and affections calculated to change their habits, to reform their characters, and to elevate their souls; the organization has therefore been modeled upon that of the natural family."

These two short extracts give the characteristics of the schools so clearly and graphically that little can be added.

The general plan of the buildings is to arrange them about a quadrangle, the main building standing at one end, with the entrance to the grounds at the other opposite to it. On each side are smaller houses for colonies of twenty or thirty children. The main building is used for the gathering of all in school, at religious exercises, and other general assemblies of the children. The smaller houses are the homes, where, under the charge of a teacher called the elder brother, and his family, each colony finds a home separated from the others, and acts the part of children in a well-governed Christian household.

If practicable, no one will question the correctness of this plan of training for our young delinquents. The best discipline is in the well-regulated family, and a mother's influence is the best of all. This kind control, these ties of affection that bind us to members of the same household, this "love that casts out fear," this influence so gentle and yet so strong, are most needed to restrain the waywardness of youth, and develop the nobler qualities of our nature.

"If practicable" did I say? We are all at first skeptical when we think of applying this system to our convict and vagrant boys—the old ideas of walls, cells, bolts and keys, as essential for the security of such, cling to us; these little city Arabs, we say, are not to be trusted unless tight bars are placed between them and mischief.

A few days since an officer from Hudson county came here with several small boys handcuffed. When he saw the manacles stricken off, and no enclosures to confine them, he said they were bad boys, and would be back in Jersey City as soon as he. This was a natural expression from his experience; but the boys are here still, and will

remain, because they have found—what, perhaps, they never had before—kind friends and a home. Many, we believe, would not willingly leave these for the wants, the distresses and temptations that lead to vice, self-reproach, and punishment in the end as criminals.

Look at the records of the schools I have named, and see how few have escaped. Some have gone, and returned confessing their fault, seeking the place where kindness has ever been shown, and where shelter is offered without grudging or bitterness.

The great advantage, however, is found in the more direct and individual training of every child, whose peculiarities may by this intimate association be better known, controlled and guided, than is possible in the congregate system. It is the difference between the faithful and observant father as he watches the little flock he calls his own, and the master of a large school, who is obliged to divide his attention and diffuse his influence. For this work every teacher must be a kind and true man, having the missionary spirit, that seeks the good of others often at great sacrifice of comfort, and finds his reward in well doing.

More is, however, included in this system than the home; there is also the school and industrial training.

Pestolozzi, that good and wise man, who has done more for the cause of popular education perhaps than any other, had in his little school at Neuhof, as far back as 1775, these germs of our best modern institutions. He lived with his pupils, taught them, and trained them to industry. Our later schools are only amplifications of this system. As he taught, so must we; the instruction must be rudimental and thorough, and, in a greater degree than is usual, objective in character, so as to attract the senses while the mind is being trained. This class of pupils will above all others be most benefitted by this method of instruction. They have never before been taught to think—they are impressed by what is obvious, and led by what they see and feel. By a kind of inductive process, therefore, they must be brought through their impulses into the hidden things of the mind and heart, which are more subtle and difficult in their development. For this purpose musical exercises have always been found beneficial in these schools. There is in every human breast a chord which vibrates as it is struck by the sweet harmony of sound. We know not how the youthful David, that sweetest of Israel's psalmists, charmed the demon in the heart of Saul as he struck the harp; but that there is such power in music we know, and we should be blind leaders of the blind did we fail to use it where its influence has been most strongly shown.

The general instruction also should be carried so far as to enable each one to conduct the ordinary business of life with ease and correctness. "An old English commoner, at an educational feast, proposed as his toast 'the three R's'—reading, riting and rithmetic." Though his orthography was bad, his good sense hit the mark, and

comprehended the most important branches of practical education. With those attained, as the pupils advance they should also have the advantages of a good library, carefully selected, to interest and expand the mind with useful knowledge and food for thought.

Above all, there should be judicious, moral and religious instruction. I mean by this, teaching the simple truths of our religion, those most catholic, most earnest, most needful—in a word, the simple story of the cross and the chief commandments of love to God, and love to our fellow man, inculcating with them the moral virtues which are the fruit of these great doctrines. For all this, the home is the best sphere; the father of the family, the best teacher.

Next, as a further means of reformation, there must be industrial training by constant employment. The inmates of these schools are generally of active dispositions. It is not the sluggish, but the more energetic who are early tempted to vice. Idleness is not laziness. It often hides the curbed passion, waiting for the opportunity to burst with wild and ungoverned impulse upon its object.

“Absence of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed.”

And if distressed, then seeking relief in what is most attractive and most easily attained. Surrounded by vicious associations, without moral restraints, these restless minds are soon busy with evil, and fall naturally into the first temptation that offers. Active bodily exercise has ever been promotive of virtue in the heart. The laborious man, with a home always pleasant and attractive to him, is not usually found ready to commit crime or given to excess. Labor is both a security from evil and a necessity of our nature. It engages the mind and body, it supplies our wants—those wants that are common to all. Every child should be trained to work. The old Jews taught their children trades, and Paul we know, while he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in the law, was by trade a tent maker. There has been some difference among those having charge of juvenile delinquents, whether trades or farm labor is the better for present occupation, future usefulness and more corrective. This matter will be necessarily controlled in a great degree by the general plan of correction adopted. If the Refuge system be chosen then trades are more conveniently taught, and will be preferred; if the Reformatory system by the family is taken then out-door labor will appear the better.

I think that in this choice of occupation is found one of the greatest merits of the reformatory system. Trades lead to the over-crowded cities, and thus draw to vice. A boy sent from the school to a city to follow a trade is in great danger of falling back to former evil habits and associations. Out-door labor leads to the country, where men are more scattered, and temptations to wickedness are fewer. The result of the experience of the wisest reformers has been that rural occupa-

tions are regarded as the situations most favorable for the future morals and usefulness of the class of pupils trained in reform schools. Hence while a few are always employed in necessary trades, as bakers, shoemakers and tailors, about the institutions, the greater number are daily occupied as farmers, gardeners and nurserymen at the appropriate seasons of the year, while in the winter such occupations as chair-seating, shoemaking, carpentering, knitting, and the manufacture of combs or light articles of large consumption are followed. In some of the schools of Europe (I refer particularly to the Ruhe House) the boys have aided in building their houses, giving them picturesque names.

Rural occupations are also more conducive to health, which is a needful care with those in charge of these children, many of whom have been debilitated by want, exposure and early vice, and need the restoration which the air and sunlight give to disordered bodies. Our wide territory is an open field for those who are discharged from the school, and the demands for agricultural labor in our country are almost unlimited. It is always at least the means of obtaining a livelihood, and those that are filled will not steal to satisfy their hunger.

I have thus briefly sketched the general ideas and methods of the farming system practiced in Reformatory schools, with the home, the school, and industrial training as the main features. It is obvious that to accomplish such great results as are contemplated there must be time given. It is almost an useless expense to the State and an injustice to the teacher to send a boy for a short term to the school. It is not merely to punish, but to prevent crime and reform the criminal that he is committed. A longer term at the school, with the power to hire to others, followed by a system of patronage and continued assistance after leaving the institution will be found most effective of good. The discharged pupil should be encouraged to correspond with those who have had care of him, and when convenient to visit the place where the seeds of good thoughts and emotions were first planted in his mind and heart. He should not feel that he has been a convict but a child. It is said the Mettrai colonists are proud that they have been there, and a recommendation from the head of the school is a passport to positions of trust and emolument.

For the purpose of applying these principles in our State, a gentleman whose zeal has never tired in the good cause, and to whom we all owe a debt of deepest obligation; whose great reward will be in the many who shall in the future rise up here to call him blessed, commended the subject to the attention of Governor Parker, who in his annual message of January, 1864, spoke as follows:—

“Some other place than the State Prison should be provided for the incarceration of youth. In many instances the disgrace of confinement in the penitentiary and the evil communications which unavoidably attend the least contact with hardened offenders, prevent

reformation. The object of imprisonment is to reform as well as punish, and the State owes it to the youthful criminal to place him in circumstances that will tend to soften his pliant nature, rather than render him more obdurate."

This portion of the message was referred to a joint committee of the two houses, which reported resolutions authorizing the appointment of three commissioners to inquire and report facts, and prepare laws necessary for the establishment of a similar school or schools. The resolutions were unanimously adopted, and Messrs. George T. Cobb, Phineas B. Kennedy and Samuel Allinson, were appointed by the Governor commissioners under the resolutions. These commissioners visited reformatory institutions in other states, collected statistics of juvenile offenders in our State, from the prison, the jails, and court records, and presented the results to the Legislature in a report at the session of 1865, so complete and satisfactory that the act recommended by them at the same time was passed without opposition. Thus April 6, 1865, "An act to establish and organize the State Reform School for Juvenile Offenders," was approved. April 3, 1867, a supplement was passed amendatory of the former act, by which the classes of offenders were more distinctly defined, and the methods of commitments prescribed.

The three classes of boys to be received are—

1. Convicts under the age of sixteen years.
2. Boys arrested upon complaint of crime or of being disorderly.
3. Boys habitually vagrant, disorderly or incorrigible, on complaint of parent or guardian.

All commitments are made by justices of the Supreme Court only, for the purpose of preventing confusion and overcrowding the institution, and to secure the exercise of a better judgment in the selection of proper subjects for the school, and the saving thereby of needless expense. The Governor, Chancellor and Chief Justice, constitute a board of control, and appoint six trustees, who have general supervisory powers, and choose the superintendent.

The act authorized the establishment of a Reform Farm School, thus adopting the method of reform described in my preceding remarks.

Acting under this authority, the trustees have purchased a farm of four hundred and ninety acres near Jamesburg, convenient of access, yet sufficiently aside from the route of ordinary travel, to make escape quite difficult, and have erected a suitable main building, reserving the former farm house for a colony of boys when required, and as the means are furnished. Twenty-five boys are already enjoying the benefits of the institution, and room for sixty is about the present capacity of the buildings.

Rev. Luther H. Sheldon, whose experience at the school at Westboro, Massachusetts, had fitted him for the position, has been appointed superintendent, and has aided the trustees in preparing the

school for the reception of inmates. He is now in charge, with his family, giving entire satisfaction to the Board, and promising great efficiency in the future.

It remains for us now as citizens, whether acting individually or officially, to aid in advancing the interests of this school which so nobly illustrates the beneficent action of our State as the fostering parent of the weak and erring, the neglected and vicious. It is working in the true spirit of Christian charity, which suffers long and is kind. Not in weak sympathy for the undeserving, but with wise judgment do we use the constraining power of love to warm the hearts and control the spirits of those who are to be guided in the path to virtue, usefulness and happiness.

Let us remember that each one reclaimed adds to the aggregate wealth and peace of the State, while the outcast and the criminal are a heavy burden and a disgrace.

Mr. Sheldon, the Superintendent, was then called out. He gave a history of schools in different parts of the country, and showed by contrasting the effect of the different systems of government, the superiority of the family system. He also gave a minute detail of the discipline administered in this school, by which boys were stimulated to good behaviour and advanced to positions of honor and trust in the school, or degraded in rank if they fail to do right.

The Chairman then invited remarks from any of the guests present.

The meeting was then addressed by Rev. Mr. Brown, Mayor Peddie, and Dr. Campfield, of Newark, Mr. Lathrop, of Burlington, Dr. Parrish, Superintendent of the Asylum for Idiots, at Media, Pa., B. F. Randolph, Esq., of Jersey City, Hon. John Hill, of Morris county, Mr. Talcott, Superintendent of the Rhode Island Reform School, Dr. Griscom, of New York, and the venerable J. J. Barclay, of Philadelphia. These gentlemen earnestly sympathised with efforts for the reformation of juvenile offenders, instead of incarcerating them in our prisons. Their remarks contained so much of practical wisdom and sound philanthropy that we regret we cannot reproduce them.

A committee, composed of Messrs. Brown, B. F. Randolph, and J. Hill, reported the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, 1st, That our thanks and the thanks of the citizens of New Jersey are due and are hereby tendered to our State Judiciary, to our Governors, to our Legislators, and to the Board of Trustees, for the interest they have taken and the labor they have performed in suggesting, devising, and establishing the State Reform School of New Jersey; and that we appreciate the practical judgment of the Trustees in selecting so eligible a situation for the School, and in erecting a building so commodious and every way suited to the object for which it is erected.

Resolved, 2d, That we heartily endorse the open form and reformatory principle and plan on which the Institution is, and is to be con-

ducted, and that from the expositions which have been made to-day by its able and efficient Superintendent and others, of its operations thus far, and plans for the future, we are confident that it will in the future, by the reform of juvenile delinquents, and by its example to other States and Institutions, achieve all that its most sanguine friends can anticipate.

Resolved, 3d, That the Trustees be requested to publish the proceedings of this day, and especially the able and timely address of Hon. E. W. Scudder; and further, that earnest application be made to the Legislature the coming winter for an additional appropriation, so that the original plan and pressing wants of the Institution may be accomplished, and the great ends of its organization be secured.

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