

**BIENNIAL REPORT OF
THE COLORADO
PRISON ASSOCIATION**

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Biennial Report of the Colorado Prison Association by Various

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Colorado Prison Association

OF THE

COMPLIMENTS OF COLORADO PRISON ASSOCIATION

COLORADO SOCIETY FOR THE FRIENDLESS (INC.)
October 22, 1903, to December 8, 1905.

COLORADO PRISON ASSOCIATION (INC.)
December 8, 1905.

There is so much bad in the best of us;
There is so much good in the worst of us;
It hardly behooves any of us
To talk about the rest of us.



1910
THE SMITH-BROOKS PRINTING CO., STATE PRINTERS
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Biennial Report of the President
TO THE
Board of Directors, Patrons and Friends
OF THE
Colorado Prison Association

The absence of Judge Henry V. Johnson from the state has caused the Association the loss of his very valuable assistance. The interest which he took in the work and his generous services toward helping in it were of real worth and were fully appreciated by those associated with him.

The work of the Association, during the past two years, has gone along quite satisfactorily, when all conditions are taken into consideration. During that time, 889 ex-prisoners were assisted, an increase of 322, or over 50 per cent. over the previous biennial period. This very gratifying result, however, was only possible through the careful, earnest labor of our very competent officials. No organization anywhere is more favored in this respect than is the Colorado Prison Association.

As General Secretary, Mr. Collett continued his most valuable services actively until November 7, 1909, when the Associated Charities of Denver demanded his taking charge of the important work of that organization. However, that does not mean that we have completely lost his splendid assistance; instead, he still favors our organization as General Secretary, but without pay; and he devotes much time, thought and labor to the work. He continues his lectures at the state institutions, and throughout the state generally, in the effort to have the people more clearly comprehend the need for the Association, and a better understanding of the important questions it has to meet and solve.

In 1909 Mr. and Mrs. Collett attended the National Prison Congress at Seattle. Later, in company with other delegates, they visited San Quentin penitentiary and the city and county jails of Los Angeles; also the Annual Encampment on Catalina Island, of the girls from the State Industrial School at Whittier.

Mr. J. E. Wood, assistant to the General Secretary, has had much training for the work. For fourteen years he was a voluntary worker in the territorial prison of New Mexico. He virtually acted as Protestant chaplain of the penitentiary. He conducted religious services and a day school. He also assisted discharged and paroled prisoners in securing employment, and took such general interest in the welfare of the prisoners and ex-prisoners that his services were very valuable. Because of that interest and experience, he was called to his present position.

Mrs. Collett, who has spent years actively in the great work with her husband, continues with us, and never loses an opportunity to further the work and help some helpless fellow-being back to courage and usefulness to both himself and the community. Laboring without thought of self or limit of time, striving earnestly for the good of all concerned—a most devoted woman to a deserving cause.

Rev. R. A. Hoffman, who has so faithfully filled the position of Field Secretary, with headquarters at Pueblo, the past four and one-half years, will soon leave the State, because of the ill health of a daughter; and the Association will thereby lose a good official.

Rev. Walter H. Fawcett was for a number of years an unusually successful promoter of commercial enterprises. His experience as a clergyman during the last ten years has been equally gratifying. In his work as Field Secretary, the past four months, he has made a very favorable impression as a public speaker, in the presentation of the cause before church congregations and other gatherings. As a "chalk talker" he is giving brief addresses in the public schools which are highly appreciated by the teachers as well as the pupils. His practical work in handling discharged and paroled prisoners is winning the support of prominent men and women. With headquarters at Colorado Springs, he will continue his work as Field Secretary.

Do not fail to read carefully the General Secretary's detailed statement of the work accomplished during the past two years—a most interesting statement, that shows clearly what splendid work is being carried on by the Association through its devoted officials. Note especially that what has been done has been along the most sane and practical lines toward helping the needy and at the same time helping society as well; for, be it understood, that while primarily it is a work of charity and humanitarianism, nevertheless it is also an important factor in the work of police regulation and the prevention of crime. Every aid in the right direction to a discharged or paroled prisoner goes toward lessening the need of police action. In fact, the work is so essentially for the public welfare that the whole ex-

pense of carrying on the work might justly come from the public treasury.

We fear that the work of the Association is not fully understood and appreciated by the public generally. On the one hand we have the gushy sentimentalist, who thinks the convict, in prison or out, deserves just a little better treatment than the right-living man. He would have the work so carried on that public sentiment would soon become so antagonistic as to compel its complete cessation. On the other hand we have the hard-hearted, unsympathetic people, who are still controlled by the old, inhumane idea that the law-breaker, or even the paroled or discharged prisoner, only deserves to be unmercifully driven about and made an outcast from society, with its never-failing result of crime repeated over and over again. Between these two unwise extremes lies the only safe road to final good for the criminal and the community. Fortunately the work of the Association is directed along that road. With an abundance of sympathy and love for deserving humanity; devoid of senseless sentimentalism; fully realizing that the discharged or paroled convict should have another chance to become a man among men, our officials carry forward the important work.

So much for the past. What of the future? A continuance of the work constantly; and, in addition, there must be an ever-increasing efficiency—a never-ceasing effort to do better. Colorado stands well in the rapid march of real progress in penology, and the sane and practical handling of the criminal, in and out of prison. The working of convicts on the public roads has attracted the attention of the world, and fully demonstrated that it is feasible and highly beneficial to so handle the men. It would have been difficult some few years ago to believe that penitentiary convicts could be placed in camps, in the wild and rugged sections of our State; in the mountains, the most ideal situation for safe "get-aways," without a guard or gun in camp, and yet not have wholesale escapes. But penitentiary prisoners, upwards of 300 in number, have been so handled during the past three or four years, under just such conditions, with the most gratifying results—a long step, indeed, in the right direction. And this condition was brought about partly through the work and influence of this Association. However, to make such progress in these matters as ought to be, additional assistance is essential, mainly in the way of new laws. The most needful just now are: A law giving the trial judge the right to parole first offenders; an amendment to the present law regarding the feeding of jail prisoners, doing away with the possibility, if not the probability, of exorbitant and unnecessary expenses to the counties, to say the least; a law providing for working jail prisoners on the highways, and for the work, allowing them some little compensation to go toward the support of dependent ones. Measures to

cover these essential matters have been introduced in the present legislature, and we earnestly hope for their enactment into law.

Still in the future, but we trust not too far, Colorado should take the next important step and allow each penitentiary prisoner something for work done, so that it can either go toward assisting those depending on him, or be accumulated to his credit, in order that he may have at least a little with which to get out into the world of action and usefulness again. When that condition prevails, very much, if not all, of this Association's work will be accomplished; and its charitable force can be directed in some other channel of service.

It is most gratifying that we are privileged to live in this age when man has concern for, and is willing to work for his fellowman, regardless of his lot; when it is realized more fully than ever before that no one can hope to advance far unless all advance some; when the welfare of even the criminal concerns everyone, and so much is being done toward helping check crime and reform the criminal.

The favors shown by the railroads, to the Association's representatives in the discharge of their duties, has been of far-reaching assistance, the appreciation of which is hereby acknowledged.

Very Respectfully,

E. R. HARPER,
President.