

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF
STATE PRISONS OF
THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

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Annual report of the Superintendent of State Prisons of the State of New York by Jr Baker

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JR BAKER

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT OF STATE PRISONS

OF THE

STATE OF NEW YORK.

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IN ASSEMBLY,

JANUARY 9, 1888.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF STATE PRISONS.

The Honorable, ALFRED C. CHAPIN,

Speaker of the Assembly:

SIR—In compliance with law I transmit herewith my annual report
for the year ending September 30, 1882.

Respectfully,

ISAAC V. BAKER, JR.,

Superintendent.

REPORT.

FOR YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1882.

The earnings and expenditures of the State Prisons for the year were as follows :

	Earnings.	Expenditures.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
Sing Sing.....	\$241,331 93	\$193,137 20	\$48,194 73	.....
Auburn.....	120,234 16	122,928 43	.....	\$2,692 27
Clinton.....	60,361 59	99,606 47	.....	\$39,244 88
	<u>\$421,917 68</u>	<u>\$415,660 10</u>	<u>\$48,194 73</u>	<u>\$41,937 15</u>

Showing surplus for the year of \$6,257.58.

During the last six months of the fiscal year the prisons were under the present management. The following tables will show the earnings and expenditures during that period, and during the first six months. The expenditures are necessarily larger during the first six months on account of fuel and lights :

FIRST SIX MONTHS.

	Earnings.	Expenditures.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
Sing Sing.....	\$118,611 89	\$100,498 44	\$18,113 45	.....
Auburn.....	57,868 29	62,806 09	.....	\$4,937 80
Clinton.....	25,788 64	55,990 98	.....	\$30,202 34
	<u>\$202,213 82</u>	<u>\$219,295 46</u>	<u>\$18,113 45</u>	<u>\$35,182 01</u>

Showing deficiency for first six months of \$17,081.64.

LAST SIX MONTHS.

	Earnings.	Expenditures.	Surplus.	Deficiency.
Sing Sing.....	\$132,710 04	\$92,628 76	\$30,081 28	.....
Auburn.....	62,365 87	60,120 84	2,245 03	.....
Clinton.....	34,627 95	43,615 54	.....	\$8,987 59
	<u>\$219,703 86</u>	<u>\$196,365 14</u>	<u>\$23,338 72</u>	<u>\$8,987 59</u>

Showing surplus for last six months of \$23,338.22.

It is gratifying to report that the State prisons are now fairly on a self-sustaining basis. The surplus earnings over expenditures for the past year, as shown by above table, are \$6,257.58; the surplus for year ending September 30, 1881, was \$564.35. The financial result this year is the best in the history of the prisons.

COMPARATIVE TABLES, 1881-1882.

Earnings.	1881.	1882.	Increase.	Decrease.
Sing Sing.....	\$229,254 14	\$241,321 93	\$12,067 79	.....
Auburn	112,658 63	120,234 16	6,575 53	.....
Clinton.....	61,443 14	60,381 59	.....	\$1,061 55
	<u>\$404,355 91</u>	<u>\$421,917 68</u>	<u>\$18,643 32</u>	<u>\$1,061 55</u>

Showing increase in earnings of \$17,561.77.

Expenditures.	1881.	1882.	Increase.
Sing Sing.....	\$187,127 20	\$193,127 20	\$6,000 00
Auburn	118,781 85	122,926 43	4,144 58
Clinton.....	97,882 51	99,606 47	1,723 96
	<u>\$403,791 56</u>	<u>\$415,660 10</u>	<u>\$11,868 54</u>

Showing increase in expenditures of \$11,868.54.

Salaries of officers.	1881.	1882.	Increase.	Decrease.
Sing Sing.....	\$72,306 82	\$72,878 12	\$571 30	.....
Auburn	57,160 53	58,726 05	.....	\$3,434 48
Clinton.....	44,915 39	45,252 26	336 87	.....
	<u>\$174,382 74</u>	<u>\$171,856 43</u>	<u>\$908 17</u>	<u>\$3,434 48</u>

Showing decrease of \$2,526.31.

Ordinary support.	1881.	1882.	Increase.
Sing Sing.....	\$112,197 35	\$119,932 85	\$6,735 50
Auburn	58,537 21	64,302 96	5,765 75
Clinton.....	52,668 67	54,344 87	1,581 20
	<u>\$324,308 23</u>	<u>\$338,480 68</u>	<u>\$14,082 45</u>

Showing increase of \$14,082.45.

REFORMING PRISON MANAGEMENT.

Only a few years ago the evils, abuses and costliness of prison administration of the State roused the people to make an earnest effort to secure reform. Two ends were then sought; one was purely economical—for the relief of the tax payers; the other was moral and social—the melioration of the convict class in prison and their

reformation and training for living after their discharge from prison. The transactions of the prisons for the last fiscal year, as fully set forth in this report, proves it is confidently believed that the first problem is in the way of most speedy and successful solution. And in the results, which have been achieved in the spirit and character of the conduct of these institutions, and in the methods of organization and discipline, promise is afforded to friends of prison reform that the consummation which they have so devoutly wished is taking more practical shape than it ever has before in this State.

WHAT IS GENUINE ECONOMY?

If the aim to make the prisons self-supporting is recognized as especially and distinctively the economical one in the reform of prison administration, the other one is perhaps of even greater consequence and ultimate value. If the first saves the people from large deficits in the prison accounts, the reformation of the criminal class, and the rescue of youthful and adult first offenders, even to a considerable extent, will save the people from making large expenditures, from the burden of policing and judicial trials, from the maintenance of unproductive jails and penitentiaries, and further, by the diminution of the loss that is caused by the unlawful acts of the criminal class. Beside the saving in this wasteful kind of expenditure, a great number of vigorous and active men who are below the meridian of age will be changed from consumers and destroyers into producers, and probably become more than self-supporting citizens. Hence reformation in prison management and prison convicts is also economical. What some men are wont to look upon as the sentimental vagaries of benevolent men is at the bottom a thoroughly practical affair, and is an economical question in a broad but true sense of possibly greater significance than the mere support of the prisoner, as it is certainly a matter of most vital concern to society.

EXPERIENCE THE BEST GUIDE.

No intelligent and prudent citizen would sustain the managers of the State prisons in making rash experiments in their administration. Fortunately experience furnishes the best counsel for those who will study it and accept and apply its demonstrated practical wisdom. It is especially satisfactory that there is no antagonism between the two ends proposed. The methods which most effectively promote the first most conduce to the best results in reaching the other. Earning money and saving it in prison management go hand and hand with the benevolent aim and effort to save men from evil courses and to convert weak men into industrious and law-respecting citizens.

The ripest experience of the most successful prison managers in our country, as well as in others, make positive affirmations upon this point. The prisons of the world in which the most profitable financial results have been attained are those in which the highest reformatory benefits have been realized. The constant labor and diversified industry, judiciously regulated and adapted to the condition of the convicts, which makes prisons more than self-supporting, most contribute to the melioration and permanent improvement of prisoners.

It is equally true that intellectual and moral training of the convicts in prisons, instruction in trades, the strengthening of their wills, teaching them self-dependence, awakening in them real self-respect, coupled with appeals to their personal interest by marks for good conduct or by commutation of the term of sentence, or by share in the wages earned, or by other fair and desirable equivalents, prove their utility in greater service of better quality rendered by the prisoners.

SOME CONCLUSIVE TESTIMONY.

In his report to Governor Dix on the International Penitentiary Congress, General Amos Pillsbury stated as the final conclusion of his personal experience, "that in those prisons where pecuniary profits are neglected, the moral care and conditions of the prisoners are also inferior."

The experiment of Colonel Montesinos, at Valencia, Spain, is one of the most successful and notable in the history of prison administration. Montesinos concurs with General Pillsbury. He said: "I have sought by every means and at every cost to extirpate in my prisoners the lamentable germ of idleness, and to inspire them instead with a love of labor, seeking to impress this beneficial sentiment ever more and more on their hearts. But as unproductive work in the prisons could by no means effect this, I made it a rule whenever one showed a disposition to labor but had no occupation which could contribute after his discharge to maintain him honestly, to endeavor to procure him such."

This prison manager introduced over forty trades in the prison. He rebuilt and enlarged the prison buildings. He never asked for the help of outside mechanics to do the work, and never asked for one farthing of appropriation from the government to support the prison or do any of these things, while he paid his way, making the prison self-supporting, the reformatory influences were proportionately successful. After the first two years, recommitments began to decline, and averaged but one per cent for ten years, and during the last three years of his time there were absolutely none. Similar management

under Obermaier at Munich, under Captain Maconochie at Norfolk Island, Count Sullohub at Moscow and under the Crofton system in the Irish prisons have wrought similar results.

CHIEF CAUSE OF CRIME. ITS REMOVAL.

Prison statistics show uniformly that the great majority of criminal acts are committed against property: Idleness is the chief and primary cause of most criminality. The man or woman who fails to work and be self-supporting must have sustenance, to get which they resort to unlawful means. They break penal laws and fall under penalties which society in self-defense enforces against them.

But much the largest part of the offenders sentenced to prison are but for short terms, two years to five, certainly less than ten, so the State looks forward to their return to society to "liberty and the pursuit of happiness," for they resume these inalienable rights. To the State and the released prisoner it is a matter of the most vital consequence what equipment the prisoner discharged has for self-support, what power of self-restraint, what degree of self-respect, and what disposition to work. If the prisoner has been taught a trade, if his feeling of self-dependence has been braced up by wise discipline, if a manly independence has been inspired and nurtured in him, the future course of that man is safe. He will become and remain a producer of values and a good citizen, instead of relapsing into a mere consumer and destroyer. This is not a dogmatic opinion. It is the demonstration repeatedly made in prison management.

To make prisons self-supporting as they always should be labor is requisite. To maintain reformatory discipline in prisons easily, labor by convicts is one of the most salutary of all agencies. Industrial training and mental and moral instruction united with regular labor are the most efficient means for moulding character, and for developing self-restraint and self-reliance in these men. These are things that most completely fit them to meet successfully the trials and dangers which they must encounter in life, with a trade and habits of industry and self-control, with practical experience that labor will bring, the discharged prisoner is prepared for self-support, and for improvement too, if society will not refuse to give him a fair chance.

CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS SALUTARY.

It is obvious that there should be some discrimination in congregating prisoners and a systematic classification of them in association. It is inevitable that a percentage of convicts shall be hardened, perhaps habitual criminals. The influence of such men upon others not so vicious and callous is baneful. So long as we look on the reform of