



ROYAL GAZETTE.

[SUPPLEMENT]

FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1842.

By Authority.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

THE following Despatch from the Right Honorable Secretary of State for the Colonies is published for general information.
By order of the Lieutenant Governor.

WM. F. ODELL.

Secretary's Office, 18th Nov. 1842.

(Copy.)

Downing Street, 3d November, 1842.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch, No. 96, of the 14th of October, with its inclosures, representing the importance on account of the approaching lumbering season in New Brunswick, of an early promulgation of the decision of Her Majesty's Government, in regard to the treaty lately concluded with the United States, on the subject of the Boundary between the State of Maine and the adjoining British North American Provinces; and I take the first opportunity of informing you that the Ratifications of that Treaty were exchanged in London on the 13th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

STANLEY.

Lt. Governor Sir W. Colebrooke.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

Extract from the second Report of the Inspectors of Prisons.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

The treatment and disposal of juvenile offenders, a subject on which Your Lordship was pleased to direct us to report at an early period of our labors, has continued to receive much of our attention. The nature of the evil, and the remedies which appear to be best calculated to arrest its progress, were so fully entered upon in our last Report, that we deem it necessary to say but little more on the present occasion, than that subsequent inquiry has confirmed the statements and views which we have already laid before Your Lordship, in reference to this interesting and important class of delinquents.

We regret to find that there has been in the past year an increase in the numbers of commitments of boys to the Metropolitan Gaol.

The mischievous effects of imprisoning boys in the Metropolitan Gaols, and for the most part in all other prisons, is now so generally admitted, that we refrain from offering any further remarks upon the subject. Whatever measures may be adopted by the Legislature for the more speedy trial and ultimate disposal of criminal boys, we trust that arrangements may be made for committing them no longer to ordinary Gaols. The mere sight of, and occasional intercourse with other prisoners, render a youth familiar with scenes and impressions most unfavorable to his morals and character; and we believe that it is rarely that a boy enters a Gaol, however slightly he may be tainted by crime, without deep and permanent injury.

Among the remedies which have been suggested for the suppression of juvenile delinquency, there are none of greater importance than the establishment of a Reformatory of this description of offenders.

We rejoice that Her Majesty's Government has determined upon this wise and benevolent measure. The success of this Institution will, however, in a great measure, depend on its internal regulations, the estimation in which it is held by those classes of society in which the juvenile depredator is mostly to be found, the duration of the imprisonment to which the boys will be subjected, and the manner in which they may ultimately be disposed of.

We are of opinion that but little if any permanent benefit will be produced, if the boys are committed to this prison for short periods.

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The imprisonment should be sufficiently long to wean the offender from his vicious habits, and give scope to the employment of those means which experience has proved to be indispensable for the correction of reform of criminal youth. Short periods of imprisonment, however frequently they may be repeated, produce no regenerating and lasting effects upon the mind and character. In the cases in which the nature of the specific crime does not apparently justify a long sentence, we submit whether the repetition of such acts should not constitute an aggravated offence, and be visited by lengthened imprisonment and subsequent banishment.

The discipline of the Reformatory should be adapted to the habits of youth, and moral and religious instruction should form in it a very prominent place. But although whatever is essential to the real welfare of the boys should invariably be attended to, the Institution should be decidedly of a penal character, and in every sense of the word a prison. The criminal boy is doubtless an object of great commiseration, but he must not be placed in a position superior to that of the honest and industrious classes of the rising generation. In the discipline therefore of the Reformatory, he must be made to feel the penalties which attach to guilt and the consequences which attend the violation of the laws. This consideration is of the more importance, if we regard the injurious effect which the Institution would be calculated to produce upon the minds of many parents, if conducted upon milder principles. There are in this metropolis alone, hundreds among the indigent classes who are ever seeking for means by which they can throw off from themselves the burthen of supporting their children.

In the constitution therefore of the boys person, abuses arising from this propensity must be carefully guarded against, otherwise parents will be encouraged to relax in the most sacred of all obligations, and a premium will be afforded to idleness and crime. It is therefore necessary not only that the Reformatory should be corrective, but that its general aspect should be of a severe and uninviting character.

With a view of avoiding any abuse which would be likely to arise from this source, and also of securing in every other respect the success of the Institution, we deem it of great importance that during the detention of a boy, he should not be permitted to hold any intercourse, except under very special circumstances, with his friends.

We have already expressed our opinion that the imprisonment should be followed by banishment, to a non-penal Colony; and further reflection convinces us, that this is the most advantageous mode of disposing of the offender. Those only who have been thus engaged can be aware of the extreme difficulty which exists in procuring suitable employment for boys discharged destitute from Prison. The loss of character, and the fact of having been the inmate of a London Gaol, are almost insurmountable barriers to any favourable settlement in this country; and even when employment can be obtained, the boy is constantly exposed to the seductions of former associates. The Committee of the "Refuge for the Destitute" have had much experience on this subject, and the difficulties with which they have had to contend, in this respect, have compelled them to have recourse to Emigration, as the channel by which they can best dispose of the objects of their care. New scenes of life are thus opened to a boy in a country in which there exist but few inducements to do wrong, and many strong motives to do right. What the Committee of the "Refuge" have effected on a small scale, and under many disadvantages, may, we are persuaded, be carried into effect by Her Majesty's Government, upon an extended plan, and with the most beneficial results. Care will doubtless be taken in the Reformatory to give to the education of the boys such a direction, as shall qualify them to be useful apprentices in the Colony to which they may be sent. Nor will the banishment of the boy be without its salutary effect on the mind of his parent, with whom the fear of parting from him for ever, will not fail to operate in preventing imposition, and obviating abuses to which Institutions of this nature, not guarded by adequate checks, would inevitably lead.

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