

52 The Association of Friends for visiting the Convicts of the Maryland Penitentiary have ascertained thro their visiting committees that there is great need for good books among the prisoners. There is only a small fragment of a worn out library in the House which now contains between four and five hundred prisoners.

We are told by the Warden that among them are men, varying in their capacities, from mediocrity to a high grade of intellect. Many of these manifest a desire for reading, after their appointed task is done; and being supplied with light in their cells, would have ample opportunity for doing so, but owing to their limited supply of books, this means of moral improvement is much abridged.

For more than a year past, they have been supplied by the Maryland Tract Society with a monthly allowance of tracts, but these are insufficient for their wants and with a view of promoting their moral and religious welfare; by giving them access to instructive reading, we are endeavoring to collect a library of useful volumes for their benefit.

53 We ask the aid of the Christian public in furtherance of this design, and will gladly receive contributions of suitable works. It often occurs in families that books accumulate, which will not be re-perused. Such is especially the case when children have been educated, and reading books which have been compiled for the use of schools, or any other volumes containing useful information whether new or old will be very acceptable.

It was proposed that no committee be appointed to make collections of books but that each member should feel individually responsible to do what she can amongst her friends towards promoting this object.

It was also recommended that a double catalogue of books should be made — one of which should be presented to the Warden — the other retained by the association who have, in a measure made themselves responsible for the safety of the books.

Through the application of our Friend Francis T. King — a donation of two dozen Testaments was granted the Association at the last monthly meeting of the Maryland Bible Society. The Committee of last month was continued.

Then adjourned H. Lytle Secy