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12-6-1848

Letter from William Blynn to James B. Finley

William Blynn

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Father Finley

Our School has changed but little during the past year; ~~It~~ One of its primary objects, viz. the teaching of the most ignorant, has been carefully attended to, and many now in the Prison, as well as many now mingling again in Society, can testify as to the benefits of our school, having there first learned to read & write, & ^{also} the names & uses of figures. There are those now in the school, who read their Bibles with ease, correctness & a degree of understanding, who when first placed in confinement, did not know the first letter of the Alphabet, we believe that the information thus gained by them, will be of essential & lasting benefit.

While we have endeavoured to instruct them in the rudiments of Education, we also have used what effort we could, to show them the need & importance of the Gospel, & the true use of life here, as bearing upon life hereafter, - & we trust the efforts are not in vain.

We have been crippled ~~because~~ in our efforts because of the want of a sufficient number of Teachers, classes often coming to the care of one individual, greater in number than he can profitably attend to; we have used effort to ~~increase~~ our numbers, and have now a prospect of a new supply, that will in some measure be adequate to our wants.

Our attention has been directed time after time to the numbers of youth between the ages of 14, & 18 years who are in the Penitentiary, many of whom come up to our school, their youth & position excite our sympathy, and while we endeavour to impart counsel that if followed

William May
Templeman of Mass
Jan 29

will
profit them, yet we fear the influences of examples in
such a character will harden, scar their feelings so
that ruinous consequences may ensue. - we feel
that some other system of punishment should
be devised for such persons.

We believe our school a blessing to the Peniten-
tiary at large, & especially so to those who are in the habit
of attending ~~there~~ it, we believe that impressions are
made upon some there, that will be of lasting ~~infl-~~
influence for good, we believe that our efforts will
not, at any rate, be detrimental to the interests of society.
consequently we believe that enterprise should be
sustained, & the difficulties as arise, we mean to
persevere, believing that the ~~efforts we make~~ will
blessings of Almighty God, will be added to our efforts.

— These are a few of the facts in regard to our
Pen. School, you perhaps can take some of them
& add or include in your report, more might
be added, but other engagements do not permit
I write hurriedly, late at night, after the fatigues
of the days business

Yours &c Wm Blynn

Dec 6, 1848