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IOWA PRISONERS' AID ASSOCIATION.

Early in the year 1883 a number of the citizens of Iowa who were deeply interested in the welfare of the commonwealth, and who had become painfully conscious of the fact that crime was greatly increasing within our borders, determined to make an organized and persistent effort to prevent crime in this state.

In the study of the subject, and in observing the working of our penal system, we very soon discovered that many of the worst crimes committed in the state could be traced more or less directly to persons who had previously been confined in some of our institutions designed for the detention or reformation of such persons as had been tried and found guilty of less serious offenses.

We found, too, that ex-convicts, persons who had served time in prison, were exposed to severe trials and temptations immediately on being released from confinement. Such persons were assailed by parties who had prepared plans for the commission of fresh crimes, advantage being taken of the necessities of the ex-prisoner to force him to the utterance of crime, though the man had formed resolutions to lead the life of an honest citizen, and so avoid a repetition of his punishment.

Our sympathies were excited by the helpless condition of these persons. Coming out of prison after a term of from one to ten years' confinement, more or less disqualified, by their prison life, for the actual duties of citizenship; unused to thinking or planning for themselves; being without honorable character; often without honor, friends or money.

So it seemed that the work nearest our hand, and that needed immediate attention, was the relief of these persons. This gave to our society its name: The Iowa Prisoners' Aid Association, although the sole purpose of our organization was, as expressed in our charter,

TO PREVENT CRIME.

Great unanimity has always obtained among our members as to the purpose of the society. There was some difference of opinion about the advisability of asking the legislature of the state for means to carry on our work. Part of our number held that in case we received money from the state there would be danger of our society falling into the hands of political tricksters or being used by them for political purposes.

But the major part of our members were poor in purse, though large in purpose, and it was found to be quite impossible for us to do the work laid upon us unless one or more persons could devote their entire time to

the service. Such persons must be paid for their work. Then came postage and printing bills, with board bills and doctor bills of those we were trying to aid, until at last it was determined to ask state aid.

The legislature of 1884 appropriated the sum of \$2,000 to our use. This was a much needed boon, and with the liberal contributions of various churches and individuals, without regard to political or denominational lines, has enabled us to do a vast amount of work.

It must not be forgotten that the most of the work done has been without compensation of a pecuniary sort, by the members of our society. Meetings have been held, addresses delivered, articles written for the newspapers, members have traveled from distant parts of the state, paying their own railroad fare and hotel bills, to attend the numerous meetings of the executive committee, all without pay or hopes of preferment of any sort. Besides this we have employed a field secretary much of the time to execute the behests of the executive committee, which requires his entire time.

Our constitution provides that two or more secretaries shall be employed, who are not members of the society, on salary; also that no member of the society shall receive any compensation for personal services. This last clause was designed to prevent any person joining the society for mercenary purposes, or if such person did come among us he would be unable to gain thereby.

A membership fee of one dollar is required of any person joining the society, which entitles him to a vote in the election of the executive members. The executive committee consists of twenty members, five of whom are officers of the society.

Five members of the executive committee are elected each year, at the annual meeting, for a term of three years.

The entire management of the affairs of the society is placed, by the charter, in the hands of the executive committee, of which the governor of the state is *ex officio* a member.

A committee on finance, one on prisoners, and several other minor committees are appointed by the executive committee, to carry on the various departments of the work, as will more fully appear by reading the constitution subjoined, which is printed with a short account of the

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIETY.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION.

A number of people, philanthropically disposed, congregated at the First Baptist Church, Des Moines, October 31st. Rev. F. L. Kenyon, of Iowa City, was made chairman, and Rev. S. J. Beach, secretary. E. H. Ely, of Iowa City, Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Des Moines, and Dr. J. M. Sturtevant, of Grinnell, were appointed a committee, subsequently reported, and the constitution adopted, as set forth below.

Rev. C. F. Williams, of Keokuk, a former chaplain of the penitentiary, addressed the meeting, in an interesting manner, on "Some Sources of Crime."

In the evening the convention met as the Prisoners' Aid Association of Iowa, and listened to addresses by Dr. Sturtevant on "The Duty of a Christian State to its Criminals;" and one by Dr. Stewart on the topic, "How far can Purely Secular Education be Relied upon to Prevent Crime and Promote Good Morals?" Chaplain Gunn, of the penitentiary of the state at Ft. Madison, also delivered an address on "The Need and Possible Work of the Proposed Association," and Mrs. A. E. Merrill, chaplain of the additional penitentiary, read a paper on "The Possibility of Reforming Criminals." Gov. Sherman, being present, and called upon, he expressed his hearty sympathy with the object of the association.

On Thursday morning the following officers were elected: F. L. Kenyon, of Iowa City, president; E. C. McMillan, Ft. Madison, vice-president; S. J. Beach, Farragut, secretary; Hon. John L. Brown, Des Moines, treasurer. The executive committee is as follows, with the addition of the governor of the state, who is by virtue of his office a member: Rev. C. M. Brink, Des Moines; Mrs. Lovina B. Benedict, Decorah; Rev. J. B. Ward, Clinton; Rev. Dr. J. B. Stewart, Des Moines; Rev. J. M. Sturtevant, Jr., Grinnell; A. E. Martin, Anamosa; E. H. Ely, Iowa City; J. J. Powell, Cedar Rapids; G. T. Carpenter, Drake University; Rev. M. E. Dwight, Fairfield; Hon. H. Scott Howell, Keokuk; Hon. John F. Duncombe, Ft. Dodge; Rev. J. F. Childs, Des Moines; and Rev. S. S. Rice, Council Bluffs.

The constitution was again considered and adopted; and the by-laws and articles of incorporation were adopted. After which the association adjourned.

The following are the fundamental laws of the association:

CONSTITUTION.

I. The name of this organization shall be the Prisoners' Aid Association of Iowa.

II. The objects of the association shall be to help discharged prisoners to an honorable life, and to prevent crime.

III. The general management of the association shall be vested in an executive committee of fifteen. The members of this committee shall be elected by the association by ballot, five for one year, five for two years, five for three years, and five for each year thereafter, and they shall serve until their successors are chosen.

The governor of the state and the officers of the association shall be members of this committee, in addition to the above.

IV. The officers of this association shall be a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. They shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting and shall hold their offices for one year or until their successors are elected. Vacancies in such offices may be filled by the executive committee.

V. The annual meeting shall be held on the last Thursday in October, unless the executive committee shall find special reason for changing that date, and at such place as the executive committee shall appoint.

VI. The executive committee shall keep records of their proceedings and shall report to each annual meeting of the association.

VII. Any person contributing annually to the fund of the association not less than \$1 shall be a member of the same. A contribution of \$50 shall constitute a life-membership. A contribution of \$100 shall constitute an honorary membership for life. A contribution of \$500 shall constitute a life patron.

VIII. This constitution may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, notice of the proposed amendment having been given in the call for the meeting.

BY-LAWS.

I. At any meeting of the executive committee five members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum.

II. It shall be the duty of the executive committee to choose two standing committees, one on finance and one on prisoners. These committees shall report to the executive committee.

III. It shall be the duty of the finance committee :

1. To devise ways and means for obtaining funds necessary to carry on the work of the association.

2. To audit all bills against the association ; and no bills shall be paid by the treasurer unless approved by the committee and countersigned by chairman of finance committee.

3. To audit and report upon the treasurer's accounts annually.

4. To invest and control the surplus moneys of the association, under the authority of the executive committee.

IV. It shall be the duty of the committee on prisoners :

1. To correspond with prison wardens and chaplains, and visit the prisons with a view to becoming acquainted with the character and trades of prisoners, and to ascertaining previous to the discharge of the prisoner his feelings, views and capabilities, so that the best arrangements for his future employment may be made.

2. To keep a record of all persons who will employ discharged prisoners, and of their several occupations ; to procure such employment for prisoners as seems best adapted to the capacity of each ; to hold correspondence with employers ; to keep a record of the conduct and prospects of those for whom places have been obtained, that they may be sustained and encouraged with the idea that a continued friendly interest is felt for them.

V. One or more secretaries may be appointed by the executive committee to assist the standing committees in the performance of their duty.

VI. Amendments may be made to these by-laws at any annual meeting of the association.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

STATE OF IOWA, }
COUNTY OF POLK. } ss.

To the Secretary of State of the State of Iowa: We, the undersigned, F. L. Kenyon, J. B. Stewart, G. G. Rice, E. H. Ely, M. E. Dwight, J. F. Childs, Mrs. Lovina B. Benedict, and S. J. Beach, citizens of the United States, propose to form a corporation under the statutes of the state of Iowa (not for pecuniary profit), and that for the purpose of such organization we hereby state as follows, to-wit:

1. The name of such corporation is the Prisoners' Aid Association of Iowa.

2. The objects for which said corporation is formed are (a) "to help discharged prisoners to an honest life (b), to prevent crimes." No dividends shall be made to the members of said corporation, but all profits or gains that may arise from its business or operations shall be used to promote the charitable purposes of said corporation.

3. The management of the aforesaid corporation shall be vested in an executive committee of twenty.

4. The following named persons are selected as executive committee to control and manage said corporation for the first year of its corporate existence, viz.: F. L. Kenyon, E. C. McMillan, S. J. Beach, J. L. Brown, C. M. Brink, Lovina B. Benedict, J. B. Ward, J. B. Stewart, A. E. Martin, J. M. Sturtevant, Jr., E. H. Ely, J. J. Powell, G. T. Carpenter, M. E. Dwight, H. Scott Howell, John F. Duncombe, J. F. Childs, G. G. Rice, W. C. Gunn, and the governor of the state of Iowa.

5. The location of the principal offices of said corporation shall be in the city of Des Moines, in the county of Polk.

F. L. KENYON.
G. G. RICE.
M. E. DWIGHT.
MRS. LOVINA B. BENEDICT.
J. B. STEWART
E. H. ELY.
J. F. CHILDS.
S. J. BEACH.

STATE OF IOWA, }
COUNTY OF POLK. } ss.

I, Lowry W. Goode, a notary public in and for the county and state aforesaid, do hereby certify that on the 1st day of November, 1883, personally appeared before me F. L. Kenyon, J. B. Stewart, G. G. Rice, E. H. Ely, M. E. Dwight, J. F. Childs, Mrs. Lovina B. Benedict and S. J. Beach, to me personally known to be the same persons who executed the foregoing statement, and severally acknowledged that they had executed the same for the purposes therein set forth.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and notarial seal the day and year above written.

LOWRY W. GOODE,
Notary Public, Polk County, Iowa.

Here follows a short outline of some of the meetings of the executive committee and of the first annual meeting of the society, including the report of the secretary made to the annual meeting.

AID ASSOCIATION.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE IOWA PRISONERS' AID ASSOCIATION.

In compliance with the desire of the association expressed at its last meeting the executive committee proceeded to have the association incorporated. This was done under the laws of Iowa, then in force, relating to such matters, in the county of Polk, state of Iowa, November 1, 1883. On the 21st day of November, 1883, the executive committee perfected its own formal organization and elected Rev. J. B. Stewart, D. D., of Des Moines, chairman, and E. H. Ely, of Iowa City, secretary. As provided by the constitution, the executive committee appointed two sub-committees as follows: *On Finance*—Rev. J. A. Ward, Clinton, Iowa; Hon. H. Scott Howell, Keokuk, Iowa; and J. F. Childs, of Des Moines, Iowa. *On Prisoners*—A. E. Martin, Anamosa, Iowa; W. C. Gunn and E. C. McMillin, of Fort Madison, Iowa. E. H. Ely, of Iowa City, and Hon. J. L. Brown, of Des Moines, were appointed committee on legislation and directed to secure such legislation, if possible, as is needed to carry out the purposes of this association.

On the 23d day of January, 1884, the executive committee met at Des Moines. The committee on legislation reported a bill asking the legislature to appropriate \$2,000 for the use of the association in its efforts to prevent crime. At this meeting the National Board of Charities was informally represented by Mr. L. D. Lewelling, of Mitchellville, Iowa. A very pleasing address was received from Mr. Sloan, general secretary for Iowa, of the Y. M. C. A. A delegation of ladies representing the Women's Christian Temperance Union was present and encouraged your committee by words of approval and predictions of success. Mrs. Lovina Benedict, representing the "Home for Fallen Women," assured us of the hearty co-operation of that institution in caring for ex-female convicts. The committee decided to add the two reform schools to the objects of the work of the P. A. A., and appointed a committee to visit those institutions. This committee was E. H. Ely, of Iowa City, Dr. G. T. Carpenter, of Des Moines, and A. E. Martin, of Anamosa.

On the 8th day of April, 1884, the executive committee met at Grinnell. The resignation of Mr. Howell, of Keokuk, on account of absence from the state, was received and accepted. The Rev. J. M. Sturtevant, D.D., of Grinnell, Hon. L. D. Lewelling, of Mitchellville, and Hon. B. J. Miles, of Eldora, were elected to fill vacancies in the executive committee. Rev. J. A. Ward, of Clinton, Rev. J. F. Childs, Des Moines, Rev. J. M. Sturtevant, D.D., of Grinnell, and Hon. J. L. Brown, of Des Moines, were

appointed a committee to employ an assistant secretary. Hon. L. D. Lewelling, of Mitchellville, Hon. J. L. Brown, of Des Moines, and Rev. J. Childs, of Des Moines, were appointed a committee to draft plans for organizing auxiliary associations. Rev. F. L. Kenyon, of Iowa City, and Rev. G. T. Carpenter, D.D., of Des Moines, were appointed a committee to see that the P. A. A. is represented at the annual meetings of the various religious bodies of Iowa. The secretary of the executive committee of the P. A. A. was ordered to procure such stationery as may be needed for his office, and to call meetings of the executive committee at such time and place as should be ordered by the chairman or three members of the committee.

On the 5th day of September, 1884, the executive committee of the P. A. A. held a meeting at Des Moines. The committee appointed to employ an assistant secretary reported that they had succeeded in securing the services of Rev. Asa Sleeth, of Des Moines, for that position. The secretary of the executive committee was instructed to petition his Excellency, the governor of Iowa, to appoint Rev. F. L. Kenyon, of Iowa City, and Rev. Asa Sleeth, of Des Moines, as delegates to represent the state of Iowa at the meeting of the eleventh national conference of charities and correction, at St. Louis, Missouri, October 13, 1884. It was determined to hold the annual meeting of the Prisoners' Aid Association of 1884, at Marshalltown, Iowa, Wednesday, October 29th. The committee on programme for the annual meeting report as follows: Wednesday evening, October 29th, at 8 o'clock, an address by E. H. Ely, of Iowa City. Thursday, October 30th, at 10 o'clock A. M., meeting of the executive committee. Thursday evening at 8 o'clock, president's address, Rev. F. L. Kenyon; report of work by Rev. Asa Sleeth, and election of officers.

E. H. ELY, *Sec. Executive Committee.*

The first field secretary having resigned, a meeting of the executive committee was called for the purpose of engaging another. The following is a brief report of the proceedings:

PRISONERS' AID ASSOCIATION.

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN DES MOINES—A FIELD OFFICER ELECTED AND AUXILIARY ASSOCIATIONS PROVIDED FOR.

The executive committee of the Iowa Prisoners' Aid Association held a meeting at the Kirkwood house at 10 o'clock A. M. March 28. Among those present were: Rev. F. L. Kenyon, Iowa City; Dr. G. T. Carpenter, Des Moines; Prof. L. F. Parker, Iowa City; E. H. Ely, W. A. Work, Dr. S. S. Hunting, Dr. J. B. Stewart, Rev. J. F. Childs, A. W. Naylor, Des Moines.

A committee on nomination of field secretary and treasurer, consisting of Dr. Stewart, Dr. Carpenter and Dr. Hunting, reported in favor of the

appointment of Mr. W. B. Stewart, of Dubuque, as field secretary, at a salary of \$100 per month and necessary traveling expenses, and Mr. A. W. Naylor, of Des Moines, as treasurer of the association, in place of J. L. Brown, whose resignation as treasurer had been received and accepted.

The report of the committee was adopted.

The action of the executive committee at Marshalltown and Iowa City was approved and adopted.

W. A. Work, Dr. S. S. Hunting and E. H. Ely were appointed a committee on printing and publication.

Senator Bloom and J. C. Brœcksmith were appointed committee on transportation.

Dr. Carpenter, Rev. J. F. Childs and A. W. Naylor were appointed a committee on annual meeting, including time, place and programme.

Dr. Hunting and W. A. Work were appointed a committee to visit state superintendent of public instruction, J. W. Akers, in regard to juvenile criminals.

AUXILIARY ASSOCIATIONS.

The following was prepared as a substantial form for the constitution of county auxiliary societies, viz. :

1. This organization shall be called —— county Prisoners' Aid Association, and shall be auxiliary to the Iowa Prisoners' Aid Association.

2. Its objects shall be to aid discharged prisoners in finding honorable employment and to prevent crime.

3. The officers of this association shall be a president, secretary and treasurer; also an executive committee, consisting of the above named and the sheriff of the county *ex-officio*.

4. Any person who contributes one dollar or more annually to the funds of this association may become a member of it by signing the constitution of the association.

5. Membership in this association constitutes one a member of the (parent society) state association.

6. The duties of the president shall be such as usually pertain to such offices. The secretary and treasurer shall discharge the duties generally belonging to such offices. He shall remit to the treasurer of the state association quarterly, on the first days of January, April, July and October, such funds of the association as he may have in his hands, also record the names and sentences of all persons sent to the penitentiary or reform schools from his county, with names of prominent persons for reference, and anything calculated to throw light on the character of the prisoner. He shall also keep a record of places in his county where discharged prisoners may be employed.

7. The officers of this association shall be elected annually on —— day and month.

Adjourned.

E. H. ELY, *Secretary*.

The above outlines are but a meager representation of the many meetings held in various places and at different times. It would require a large outlay of money to publish all that has been said or written by the earnest and persistent workers engaged in this cause. The relation to

other societies of like sort, in this and other countries, with the correspondence, addresses, sermons and other efforts that have been made to secure our common purpose, would require volumes. Our address, designed for the people of our own state, is subjoined as showing the spirit and purpose of the association and the fact that some of the most prominent and reliable of our citizens are interested in this cause.

A NEW STATE CHARITY.

THE PRISONERS' AID ASSOCIATION OF IOWA.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF IOWA.—The undersigned, officers of the state, and officers and friends of the Prisoners' Aid Association of Iowa, make this appeal to the law-abiding and tax-paying citizens of the state, to aid in carrying out the purposes of the above named association. The objects of the association and the importance of the work undertaken may be briefly stated. As a state we annually dismiss from our penitentiaries and other penal institutions of the state some six hundred or more of those who have been imprisoned for crime. These ex-prisoners are turned out of our prisons upon society, usually without money or character or friends or means of self-support; and, with the reproach of the convict resting upon them, find it almost impossible to obtain honorable employment. Moreover, they are met by a class of professional criminals who lie in wait for them, and who take advantage of their disgrace and necessities to press them into the commission of other crimes. So that an alarming proportion of our ex-prisoners are led back into lives of crime, and become an element of danger and a source of vast expense to our commonwealth. We believe it to be the duty of the state to exercise over these ex-prisoners, a limited guardianship beyond the term of their imprisonment; to find for such as are willing to accept it, a place of useful employment, upon which they may enter immediately upon the expiration of their sentence. And to make it possible for such as seek to reform, to win their way back to respectability and honorable citizenship. Reformation is cheaper than punishment. And if any considerable proportion of these men can be influenced to lives of honest industry, and saved from re-entering the ranks of the criminal and dangerous classes, it will greatly lessen the criminal expenses of the state, aside from all considerations of moral obligation. The success which has attended the efforts of similar organizations in other states, encourages us to believe that the successful carrying out of the purposes of this association will not only reduce our criminal expenses but also add largely to the peace and security of society. Our last general assembly, convinced of the practical importance of this work, appropriated the sum of \$2,000 of the public funds of the state to aid in accomplishing the objects of this association. This will need to be largely supplemented by generous donations of the people, and it will be still more necessary that the

people of all parts of the state co-operate with the officers of the association in their efforts to secure employment for the imprisoned, as their term of imprisonment expires; and to organize local auxiliary societies to assist in carrying out the purposes of the association. The association has secured the services of H. D. Williams, of Des Moines, as its personal representative, who has entered upon his duty as field secretary of the association. Correspondence from those who are willing to assist in the work should be addressed to him. Contributions should be sent to A. W. Naylor, of Des Moines, who is treasurer of the association.

Let it be remembered that this association cherishes no false sentimentality toward the criminal classes. Its chief object is to prevent crime and to encourage those who wish to reform; and, incidentally, to furnish such information respecting the residence, character and associations of ex-prisoners as may lead to the detection and arrest of such as return to criminal pursuits.

Believing that it is of great public importance that some such judicious oversight be had over those who go out from our prison walls, we make this appeal, and commend to you the work of this association, and ask that you extend to the personal representative of this organization such assistance as may be necessary to accomplish the objects of the association.

B. R. SHERMAN, *Governor.*
FRANK D. JACKSON, *Secretary of State.*
V. P. TWOMBLY, *Treasurer of State.*
J. W. AKERS, *State Supt. Public Instruction.*
PARK C. WILSON, *State Mine Inspector.*
E. H. CONGER, *Member of Congress.*
S. MCPHERSON, *Ex-Attorney General.*
J. A. T. HULL, *Ex-Secretary of State.*
JAMES H. ROTHROCK, *Chief Justice.*
AUSTIN ADAMS, *Judge Supreme Court.*
J. M. BECK, *Judge Supreme Court.*
W. H. SEEVERS, *Judge Supreme Court.*
JOSEPH R. REED, *Judge Supreme Court.*
GENERAL JOSIAH GIVEN.
F. L. KENYON, *President of the Association.*
A. W. NAYLOR, *Treasurer of the Association.*
PROF. L. F. PARKER.
HON. J. C. BROECKSMITH.
D. J. BURRILL, D. D.
E. H. ELY, *Secretary Executive Committee.*
G. T. CARPENTER, }
J. F. CHILDS, } *Committee.*
L. D. LEWELLING, }

E. H. ELY, *Secretary.*

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