

Benedict I. Semmes, Esquires; a committee to investigate the state and condition of the Penitentiary; to examine into the accounts and general police of that institution; and to recommend such amendments in the Penitentiary law, as they may consider necessary and proper," &c. And we, herewith, submit to you their report, which, in our opinion, does them great credit, and is entitled to your very deliberate consideration. We also submit, herewith, the annual report from the directors, exhibiting the state and condition of the institution and all its concerns on the 1st instant, which shews that they are managed with great prudence and propriety, and that the institution is in as prosperous a state, as under its present organization, could be expected.

That the Penitentiary system, as ours is at present organized, has failed in a great degree, as a means of reformation, both here and elsewhere, is undeniable. Notwithstanding which, every effort should be made to perfect it, and to ascertain whether our disappointed hopes have proceeded from any defect in the arrangements of those establishments, or from the settled depravity of human nature—defying the institutions of man and to be operated on by the force of Religion only. The system itself, is a benevolent one. Let us then make the experiment of solitary confinement, as recommended in the report of the committee, and which has been resorted to by some of our sis-