

suspend for a while their work upon the Institution, in the hope that a favorable change in financial affairs would enable them to complete it more advantageously. This determination, you will I think approve, especially as a prudent regard to economy in such cases, is too frequently overlooked by those intrusted with the disbursement of public funds.

I have not yet received, but you probably shortly will, the reports of the other charitable institutions patronized by the State or in which she takes an interest.

MARYLAND PENITENTIARY.

You will receive herewith the Annual Report of the Directors of the Penitentiary for the year ending 30th November last, which presents a most satisfactory exhibit of its operations, more especially as regards its financial condition. It is out of debt and has a balance of available resources to the amount of \$5,118.22; these facts connected with the assurance that the report contains, that no special appropriation will be asked of you for the present year, authorize the belief that the time has at length arrived when the Institution may be regarded as able to sustain itself. This result has been reached in a great measure by the change in the system of labor lately introduced, and by the care and attention of the Directors to the affairs of the Institution. Their immediate superintendance of all its important operations, and their personal attention to the purchase of its provisions and supplies, governed by a due regard to economy as well as the reasonable comfort of the prisoners, have contributed largely to its present success. I would unite in the recommendation which the report contains that some authority be conferred upon the board to modify within certain limits the punishment of the convicts by allowing a monthly deduction of a few days to be made from the term of each prisoner's confinement, who at the end of the month shall have entitled himself to such deduction by his exemplary conduct.

This plan appears to have been introduced into several of the Eastern Penitentiaries with marked success; the Warden quotes as you will see in his report, very strong testimony in its behalf, given by the officers of the State Prison of New Hampshire, and I find in the Report of the Inspectors of the Massachusetts State Prison for 1858, an equally emphatic approval of the system. When referring to the improved condition of the Institution, they attribute that improvement, to use their own language, "in no small degree to the law of 1857 which virtually secures a small monthly commutation of sentence for continued good conduct." The experiment seems