

the system would be the consequence. "The people, who were taxed for these institutions," says Mr. Livingston, in the great work which he prepared as a Penal Code of Louisiana, "saw in them [under the old system] only the nurseries of crime, and were naturally desirous of throwing off the burthen; and it was made, in one important State a serious question whether they should not resort to sanguinary and infamous punishments. The calm reasoning and spirit of investigation, which, sooner or later, resume their place in the councils of our republics, soon discovered that the experiment had not been fairly tried; the cause of the failure became apparent; and all agreed that imprisonment without separation would never serve either for punishment or reform."

Fortunately for the cause of humanity, the management of the prison at Auburn was, at or about this time, under the superintending care of Elam Lynds, formerly a captain in the United States service. To him public opinion has assigned the honor of successfully carrying into practice that discipline of Penitentiary punishment which is known by the name of the "Auburn system." Solitude, without labor, had been tried and had failed. The system of mere confinement had lost all favor even with its former warm advocates. Something was to be done, or Penitentiaries were to be abandoned. Keeping steadily in view the two great objects—punishment and reformation—Capt. Lynds essayed to give efficiency to the system, by forming a new discipline. He began by obtaining a waiver of all interference with his plans by the Inspectors, and he sought, by rigid rules, to prevent intercommunication among the convicts. He placed each prisoner in a separate cell at night, and kept them, during the day, at labor together, in shops so arranged that they were always under the eyes of the deputy keepers, but prohibited them, under the fear of severe personal chastisement, to speak to each other. "Nothing can be more imposing," says Mr. Livingston, in his Penal Code, "than the view of a prison conducted on these principles: order, obedience, sobriety, industry, religious and literary instruction, and solitary reflection, all seem to promise beneficial effects on the convict, while the important points of secure detention and economy are attained for the State."

The basis of this system, as well as that of Pennsylvania, is perpetual silence and non-intercourse among the convicts, and so effectually are the means employed by either for the permanent enforcement of those fundamental and salutary rules, that the plan at large has attracted the earnest attention of other countries, in which it is emphatically styled the American System of Prison Discipline. Already have Commissioners been deputed, at different periods, by the governments of France, England, Prussia and both the Canadas, to enquire into and report upon its organization and its action, and so universal has been the approval awarded to it, in both or either of its