

commending the Legislature to provide by law that the new building shall be so constructed as to admit of the introduction into it of the plan of solitary confinement day and night with labor. Were this done, we should be prepared to anticipate the best results from it.—In these solitary cells the more refractory convicts might be placed and denied all labor, instead of, as now, being punished with stripes. Solitary confinement, in the Cherry Hill Prison, has not failed to reduce to obedience the most hardened criminal, and we found that it had softened the hearts of all and made them susceptible of the kindest and best feelings of our nature. The writer (Francis Leiber) of an able article on this subject in the *Encyclopedia Americana*, and who was imprisoned, for a considerable time, in one of the solitary cells of an European prison, under a reign of political persecution, thus records his experience: "Though he was not haunted with remorse, and had more resources, from the habits of his past life, than can fall to the lot of most of the inmates of prisons, he can testify to the power with which solitude forces a man to make himself the subject of his contemplation—a power which can hardly be realized by one who has not felt it. How strongly must it operate on the common convict! Deprived of most of the resources of educated men; constantly reminded of the cause which brought him into this situation; undisturbed by any distracting objects; enveloped in silence—he needs must *think!* The power of solitude was acknowledged by the wisest and best of antiquity, who retired from the walks of men to prepare themselves for great tasks by undisturbed contemplation." "When the convict has once begun to reflect, he must come to the conclusion that virtue is preferable to vice, and can tranquillize his troubled mind only by resolving on reformation." Such are the effects we have ourselves observed on the criminals confined in the Cherry Hill prison. It was particularly striking in a man who had been convicted of "high way burglary," which, as he detailed the particulars of it to us, was one of the most daring and audacious robberies ever undertaken. The life of this man had been dissolute and wicked. He had been confined previously in the Walnut street prison, where he had formed associations and received instruction in crime, which stimulated him to farther outrages. Two of his companions in the Walnut street prison were participants in the crime for which he was suffering when we saw him, and when he left that prison, having been *pardoned out*, he was, as he said himself, competent for the commission of any crime, and ready and anxious to commit it. He did commit it. He was arrested almost at the moment of its commission, tried and sent to the Cherry Hill prison. Solitude soon did its work upon his heart. His days, his hours, his moments, hung heavy on him. He became almost the "victim of despair"—he turned to labor as a solace, and it was sweet to him. He counted the tedious hours as they passed, "a prey to the corrodings of conscience and the pangs of guilt." He marked out a path of honesty to himself. He thought