

of his days of childhood, when his heart was innocent and his spirits buoyant,—he thought of his old mother—his brothers—his sisters—his own disgrace and misery,—and he determined to “sin no more.” We had a long and interesting conversation with him, and we left him satisfied that he was a “brand snatched from the burning.” We could multiply instances of this kind. Another convict, a young girl from one of the peaceful villages of Pennsylvania, attracted our attention. She had been found guilty of concealing the birth of a child, and had been sentenced to confinement for three years. The recollection of her own innocent home would bring tears into her eyes; and, when speaking of the kindness with which she had been uniformly treated, and the solace she had derived from the moral instruction she had received from the members of one of the benevolent female societies which distinguishes the city of Philadelphia as the city indeed “of brotherly love;” and then, referring to the solitude of her own cell, she said, “but, oh! it is so lonely!” The pathetic tone, the manner, the look, with which she uttered these words, cannot be described; but they called up to our recollection, and forced upon our minds, the truth of the emphatic words, “*The way of the transgressor is hard.*”

Such are the good effects which may be expected from the introduction of the system of solitary confinement, into the new building proposed to be erected. It has another recommendation. The State of Maryland owes something to her States in this matter. She has so far been a follower in the work of improvements in prison discipline. No experiment has been made by her until it had been tried elsewhere; and with such slow steps were even the improvements in the government of prisons introduced into her Penitentiary, that it gives a point and a sting to the remark of the Directors (see page 12 of the testimony) that “the reputation of our Penitentiary has been remarkably, up to the period of the completion of the new work shops, only for its favorable pecuniary results as a manufacturing establishment.” The same remark had been previously made, in substance, by the British Commissioner, William Crawford, Esq, in his report, before referred to. “The Maryland State Prison,” he says, “is remarkable for nothing more than for the profits arising from its manufactures;” and the point and the sting were made sharper and deeper, in the latter case, when he summed up his description of the prison and its discipline, as it existed before the erection of the new work shops, by saying, “I am of opinion that imprisonment in the Maryland Penitentiary is very far from having any tendency to diminish crime.” The rebuke (for such it is) was a severe one, and we are pained to believe that it was merited.

We owe much, then, to our sister States in this way, and we propose now to do something in the way of paying it off. Should a building for solitary confinement be erected, as we propose, in the Maryland Penitentiary, it will afford an opportunity for making the