

## REPORT OF PHYSICIAN.

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*To the President and Directors of the Maryland Penitentiary, the following Report is respectfully submitted.*

During the past year the health of the prisoners generally has been as good as usual. No epidemic or epidemic disease has prevailed among them.

The mortality has been greater than in the preceding year. Thirteen of the prisoners have died. Five of them were white—eight colored.

It is proper that the Board be acquainted with the circumstances attending these fatal cases in order that they may be able to judge of the efficiency of the regulations of the prison with regard to health.

Six of the deaths were caused by consumption. Three of these cases originated out of the prison, the convicts having been admitted into the Penitentiary while laboring under the disease of which they subsequently died. A fourth had been invalid and confined to the hospital for more than two years previous to his death. Another was a case of scrofulous phthisis, growing out of a strong hereditary predisposition.

Of the remaining fatal cases, one had lingered two years or more under extensive and complicated abdominal disease. Another, whose lungs were previously extensively disorganized, died suddenly upon drinking a large quantity of cold water, when overheated by exertion. One died of chronic diarrhæa, and four of acute diseases.

From this statement it will be seen that the increased mortality has been occasioned by the dropping off of lingering and hopeless cases, and not from causes requiring the action of the Board.

I wish to direct the attention of the Board particularly to the fact that prisoners are frequently condemned to the Penitentiary when they are hopelessly diseased and are consequently burthensome to the State during their lives, and injurious to the reputation of the prison in their death, swelling the yearly bill of mortality and causing it to compare unfavorably with similar institutions in regard to health.

There are now several prisoners in the house who were received in a shockingly diseased condition, and who would have been more