

community evinced, the public would not have to incur much expense. Your committee are of opinion, that the effectual punishment of offenders ought to be the paramount object of every criminal code, and that if crimes can be prevented, and vice suppressed, by the humane system of penitentiary punishment, as well as by a more sanguinary one, then let the former course be pursued, at the same time we think that it is important and absolutely essential to the best interests of society, that the system of punishments should be ample to protect and defend the rights of every member of the community, as the secure exercise and enjoyment of those rights most undoubtedly formed the great inducement originally to this, as to all other political associations, and that no fears of incurring the necessary expense for effecting this object, ought to actuate any legislative body.

The stepping mill has been introduced into many of the work houses or penitentiaries in England, and in the county prison in the city of New York; and its effects, where there has been sufficient time to ascertain the result, have been manifestly and obviously in favour of this species of labour as a mode of punishment. Inasmuch, however, as the change in our penitentiary system to be produced by the contemplated improvement, would be so important as to require much time and consideration to arrange and adjust the details, we think that it had better be postponed till the next session of the legislature. Two plans occurred to your committee; the first was a partial adoption of the system, so as to give the officers of the penitentiary the power of punishing the prisoners on the stepping wheel, for transgressions of the internal regulations of the institution, or misconduct after their confinement; and the second plan was, to change the whole system, and to employ the whole number of prisoners on the wheel or wheels, as a moving power, for the purpose of carrying on some species of manufacture on account of the state. The only difficulty in adopting the latter plan, would be in ascertaining which would be the most profitable species of manufacture, because no objections could have any force or effect, grounded on the idea that the state is incapable of managing any business of that kind from the want of faithful agents, the state being now engaged in manufacturing in the penitentiary; so that the inference is fair, those who now profitably manage a manufacturing institution for the state, could do the same thing if the contemplated change was effected; the penitentiary now seems to be a mere manufacturing establishment—the introduction of the stepping mill would leave it this character, and at the same time answer and attain more effectually the ends of a system of punishment for which it was intended. Before we conclude this report, we will make one suggestion, though not immediately connected with the subject referred to us: From a communication obligingly made to the committee by the mayor of N. York, it appears that a saving has been effected in the expense of the "state prison of New York of seventeen thousand dollars annually by hiring out" the labour of the prisoners, instead of manufacturing for the state itself.

As it is now late in the session, & the committee cannot command all the information necessary for making a detailed report, we do not recommend at this time the crection of a tread or stepping mill in the Maryland penitentiary.

Which was read, By order,

J. DOUGLASS, Ck.

Mr. Orrick delivers the following report:

The committee to whom was referred the petition of sundry inhabitants of Baltimore county, praying that a law would pass authorising and directing the levy court of said county to publish their proceedings, beg leave to report—That they have had the same under consideration, and are of opinion, that inasmuch as there is a general law on this subject, passed at November session 1802, chapter 81, which directs the clerks of the several levy courts in this state to make out a list of their proceedings of said courts, and deliver the same to the different sheriffs of the several counties, to be by them set up at the place of holding the election in every district in the several counties in this state, this law therefore, meeting the views of the petitioners, recommend that they have leave to withdraw their petition.

Which was twice read and concurred with.

By order, T. CROSS, Ck.

The bill for the relief of Anne Jeffers, of Queen-Anne's county, was read the second time, passed, and returned to the senate.

The resolution in favour of Thomas Wright, was read the second time, assented to, and sent to the senate.

The bill for the relief of Jacob Lantz, was read the second time, passed, and sent to the senate.

On motion by Mr. Steele, the following message was read, assented to, and with the bill therein mentioned, sent to the senate.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, February 12, 1823.

*Gentlemen of the Senate*—We have received the bill, entitled, An act relating to the public roads in the counties therein mentioned; together with the amendments made by your honorable body. We would respectfully recommend and request, a reconsideration of the two sections relating to appeals from the levy court. The appeal allowed by the first section appears to us calculated to produce inconvenience, without any beneficial result to the party. The second section is also objectionable on account of the length of time in which appeal may be had. If it should not be acceptable to your honorable body to reconsider both of these sections, we hope it will meet your approbation to shorten the time allowed for making appeal.

By order,

J. BREWER, Ck.

Mr. Thomas Kennedy reports a bill, entitled, A supplement to an act, entitled, An act to quiet possessions and prevent suits at law, passed at December session 1818, chapter 90. And a bill, entitled, An act to repeal certain parts of the act of assembly passed at April session 1715, chapter 41, imposing amercements, and to lay a tax on original writs; which were read.