

conclusions our experience has drawn, and proffer for your consideration such suggestions as we have been enabled to form.

The moral improvement of the culprit, and not the vengeance of the law, is the grand object of prison discipline. To accomplish this end at the least possible expense to the State, is the great desideratum. The experience of this institution amply proves that the prisoners can be so employed as to defray its expenses; and it has recently been ascertained that, after performing an amount of labour commensurate with the cost of support, there are large portions of time which must remain unemployed or very ill-employed, unless properly directed to pursuits which will increase the intellectual powers, and thus prevent the mind from sinking into apathy, and cherishing the perverted conceptions already existing. The experiment already imperfectly tried, warrants the affirmation that convicts are not only capable of intellectual culture, but that they gladly resort to the means of instruction, as a relief from corroding reflections; and that this diversity of employment, so far from infringing upon the amount of labour, gives them more alacrity, and consequently incites to greater industry; that since the institution of our school, there has been less vice and immorality, and that the aspect of the prisoners is greatly improved—the dark scowl of despondency or desperation having changed into the more confiding look of hope, and the more cheerful expression of contented employment. There are now few blank, vacant visages: all exhibit the marks of active thought. We are confident that the only plan for effectuating the designs of penal law is, to blend productive labour with useful education. The mutual contamination of prisoners when permitted an unrestrained intercourse, we are aware, is the greatest evil alleged against Penitentiaries; and consequently plans have been adopted elsewhere to prevent all intercourse. This, we believe, is running from one extreme to its opposite. Man is naturally social, and requires interchange of thought, for the purpose of forming or sustaining healthy action of mind. Absolute solitude is inimical to the growth of both intelligence and virtue; but occasional seclusion conduces to both, by affording opportunities for meditation and reflection upon the perceptions or crude materials obtained in previous social communion. The usages now in train in this establishment, we think, require little improvement; our prisoners have sufficient seclusion in their solitary night