

ous association of the convicts. When its inmates are permitted to enjoy the society of each other, and to keep up a recollection and fondness for the vices, which produced their degradation, the terror of the penitentiary must lose its effects. The valuable improvement which has been made in the institution, of affording a separate apartment for each convict at night, no doubt will have a most beneficial tendency. During their labours by day, the vigilance of the keepers, may in some degree, prevent the corrupting intercourse to which their depraved minds must necessarily lead them, but when associated at night in the same chamber, they can give an unrestrained recital of their misdeeds and lay future plans of villainy. We are inclined to the belief, that the remedy for the error has not yet been fully applied. The convicts engage in the same daily labour, and it would be utterly impossible to prevent the more hardened in crime from extending their baneful influence in some way or other over those committed for minor offences—conversation cannot be entirely prevented, and if it could, a knowledge of each other is formed, which after liberation must bring them together to commit further depredations upon society. To correct this radical fault of improper association, the plan of classification may be adopted. It is certainly worthy of the experiment. But we are constrained to express our fears that a completely favourable result will not flow even from that measure.—Many difficulties would occur in making this arrangement; although they might be convicted of the same crime, yet the same aggravating circumstances might not attend its commission; and there must be different degrees in the moral depravity which no human being can discover. Unless then, there should be such an arrangement of classes as to place together those who had reached the same degree of infamy in all respects, the evils of communications must still exist. While upon this subject, we would refer you merely for examination, to the plan of the great Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania. It consists in seclusion, day and night. Labour is assigned to the convict not as a punishment, but as an alleviation of the severe anguish of his mind, calculated to produce habits of industry not by coercion, but as affording him under the circumstances a pleasing employment. He is debarred only the society of vicious associates, while he receives the visits of those who can instruct him in morality and piety.—The experiment is a new one, and we should wait to observe what good effects it will produce. Another defect seems to have arisen from the restriction imposed upon the courts in regard to the time of confinement of convicts in the