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OF  
IRISH CONVICTS,

JUDGED BY THE  
OPINIONS OF THE PUBLIC PRESS,

AND BY THE  
TESTIMONY OF HOME AND FOREIGN AUTHORITIES.

*[Reprinted from the Irish Quarterly Review for  
January, 1858.]*

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DUBLIN :  
W. B. KELLY, 8, GRAFTON-STREET.  
1858.

*Price Six Pence.*

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## THE MANAGEMENT OF IRISH CONVICTS,

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Just four years and a half ago, we commenced to write, in THE IRISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, on the subjects of Prison Discipline, on Reformatory Schools, on Industrial Training, and on National Education, a series of papers, which many people thought nonsense, and a great number thought stupid, and of which a vast number never read one single line, and we subsequently disgusted the greater part of our readers by printing regularly, a Quarterly Record of the Progress of Reformatory Schools and of Prison Discipline. Strange as it may appear, these once despised portions of THE IRISH QUARTERLY, are the very parts now most approved by the thinking section of our readers, who feel an interest in social subjects.

From the first hour in which we had the great pleasure of becoming acquainted with the Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland, we felt, as did all who came in contact with them, that they were men determined to do their duty, fully, thoroughly, and entirely. In 1855 we wrote:—

When, in the year 1854, the Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland inspected the establishments placed under their direction, they found, as their first *Report* declares, 3,427 prisoners confined, although there was accommodation for only 3,210.

With prisons thus situated, and without hope of being enabled to draft away the Convicts to a Penal Settlement, the Directors first endeavoured to enlarge the accommodation, and thus, and by classification, resolved to attempt reformation. By an official communication, from the Superintendent's Office in Western Australia, they found that, owing to the want of system in our Irish Prisons, the 600 convicts sent out in the ships "Robert Small" and "Phoebe Dunbar," seemed incapable of comprehending the nature of moral agencies; they knew nothing of the necessity of prudence and self-reliance, as means to extricate themselves from the consequences of their former errors; and the Superintendent declared—"coercion appears to be the only force they are capable of appreciating." In a word, they were unfit for the world, by reason of their crimes; they were unfit for the Penal Colony by reason of prison mismanagement at home. Under these circumstances, and knowing that from want of good arrangement, the chief mischief springs, and knowing too, that, by sending such Convicts from our Gaols to our Colonies, they but retarded the advancement of our dependencies, the Directors set vigorously about their work of reform. And we shall



permit them to relate, in their own words, some particulars of the course adopted :—

“The same feeling which prevents our inflicting on a colony convicts who have not been subjected to a proper course of prison discipline, also precludes our bringing forward prisoners for discharge in this country on *Tickets of License* as in England. We consider such Tickets of License to be a sort of guarantee to the community, that in consequence of a prisoner having been subjected to a proper course of prison discipline and reformatory treatment, he is considered a fit subject to be received and employed by those outside the prison.

Such reformatory course not having hitherto been pursued in this country, we have not felt ourselves justified in recommending the issue of Tickets of License.

On commencing our duties we found the most pressing evil to be remedied was, the indiscriminate association of the young with those more advanced in years and crime; instead, therefore, of awaiting the completion of the Juvenile Penal Reformatory Prison, (a period, probably, of eighteen months or two years,) we immediately selected all the male convicts under seventeen years of age, and placed them at Mountjoy and Philipstown Prisons. In the former there are separate sleeping cells, and convenient accommodation for working in association during the day. We have every reason to be fully satisfied with the results as evinced by the conduct and industry of the prisoners located here. In the latter there were facilities for separating the juveniles from the adults; but similar advantages to those possessed by Mountjoy were not here presented, and the effects have not been so favorable; however, we hope that great improvement will result from arrangements which we are now enabled to make in consequence of the barrack (situated within the walls of the prison), having been recently transferred to the convict department, and by which the prisoners will be placed under more effective supervision.

Taking into consideration the insufficient state of the educational departments of the Convict Depots, and the importance which should be attached to them in this country, where the causes of crime are principally ignorance and destitution, we have felt it our duty to recommend that all the Government Prison Schools should be placed under the inspection of the National Board of Education. We are much indebted to the Right Hon. Alexander Macdonnell, the Resident Commissioner, and P. J. Keenan, Esq., for having been the means of securing the services of two gentlemen, as Head Schoolmasters, for Mountjoy and Philipstown Prisons. For the former we have selected Mr. M'Gauran, late master of the Andrean Free Day School, in Cumberland-street, who has great experience in *training* as well as *teaching*, amongst a class of persons from which the criminals may be expected to emanate.\*

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\* See two admirable reports, by this gentleman, on the Andrean School, and printed in *THE IRISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, Vol. IV., No. 14, p. 1237. In fact, Mr. M'Gauran is a man of first-rate



Our intention is to train our different masters from time to time, under these gentlemen, and thus ensure a uniformity of system, throughout the Government Prison Schools. We trust, therefore, the experience they have had will exercise a beneficial influence through the different convict establishments.

In order further to increase the influence which we trust these teachers will exercise over the convicts under their care, we thought fit to recommend the Government to allow them to visit the different Penal and Reformatory Establishments in England, and practically acquaint themselves with the systems adopted therein, thus giving them an opportunity of forming opinions on a broad basis, which would render them more efficient for the reformation and training of the prisoners. Permission to carry out this recommendation was readily accorded by Lord St. Germans, and we have reason to believe the result will be most advantageous to the service.

We have found it necessary to call for special reports on the character and capabilities of the different officers of the prisons, with a view to remove those who are not qualified for so important a position: and regret to add that we have been compelled to recommend the dismissal of several warders for drunkenness, a crime that cannot be tolerated for an instant in a prison, where a good moral example should operate as one of the principal elements of reformation."

Having thus arranged the prisons under their management, the Directors were in a condition to observe, closely and accurately, the result of their labors; and having carefully watched the whole working of the system adopted, and after consultation with his colleagues, Captain Crofton, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, resolved to test the following plan of the gradual restoration to liberty of the Ticket-of-Leave men.

Finding the Smithfield Prison was no longer needed as a Prison, he stated to all employed within its walls, that he was about to use it in a peculiar manner, and that turnkeys, so called, would be no longer needed. That he was about to collect, from all the Convict establishments in Ireland, the men of the very best characters as prisoners, and who were entitled, at an early day, to Tickets-of-Leave.

That these men were to receive the suit of clothes given to Ticket-of-Leave-men on quitting prison, that he would bring these men to Smithfield, that he would not make them free men, nor yet would he by any means, let them consider themselves prisoners. That each of these men, ignorant of a trade, should be taught one. That no man should leave the Establishment until, if possible, some means of honest livelihood had been obtained for him. That every man should perform his part in the Establishment, some cooking, some

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ability for his duty, almost equal to Mr. Driver, of the Belvedere Refuge. This, it may be said, is high praise, so it is, but not higher than is deserved. We must also add that he is a writer on subjects connected with Prison Discipline, and is not alone well informed, but eloquent and concise in style; without any slang—"the right man is in the right place."



sweeping, all useful. That each of the turnkeys should know some trade, and that he should act as foreman of his craft, and sit and work with his pupils—in fact, that all within the Establishment should be usefully employed.

How the system thus founded was carried out; how, with ceaseless watching it has been tested; how with wonderful certainty every phase of character has been studied; how completely and fully it has succeeded, all the thinking men of these Kingdoms, and many of Foreign States know, and know it truly, through the exertions of Mr. Recorder Hill, of the Rev. Orby Shipley, and of Captain Crofton.\*

We now propose to show, through the opinions expressed by the Public Press, on the books named in the foot-note, the complete hold which the subject of Convict Management has secured on the minds of all who have read these works. If the system thus approved has been so successful in Ireland, why should it not be adopted in England—why should it not succeed, if the same zeal, self devotion, and energy be bestowed upon it as in Ireland? The necessity for the adoption of some measure is now more pressing than ever, since, by our abuse of the opening afforded by transportation in ridding ourselves of our Convicts, we have closed every settlement against our prisoners.

As it is unnecessary to enter into the consideration of the question of Transportation, we shall place before our readers the opinions held on the subject of Convict Management at home.

We take first the *Dublin Daily Express* of Tuesday, October 20th, 1857.

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\* See "The Purgatory of Prisoners; or an Intermediate Stage Between the Prison and the Public; being some account of the Practical Working of the New System of Penal Reformation Introduced by the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland." By the Rev. Orby Shipley, M.A., Deacon in the Diocese of Oxford. London: Masters. Oxford: J. H. and J. Parker, 1857.

"Memoranda Relative to the Intermediate Convict Prisons in Ireland from their Establishment in January, 1856, to September, 30th, 1857." Dublin: Thom and Sons, for Her Majesty's Stationery office, 1857.

"Suggestions for the Repression of Crime contained in Charges Delivered to Grand Juries of Birmingham; Supported by Additional Facts and Arguments. Together with Articles from Reviews and Newspapers, Controverting or Advocating the Conclusions of the Author." By Matthew Davenport Hill. London: J. W. Parker, 1857.



What shall we do with our Convicts? This has long been a question with politicians, disciplinarians, and philanthropists. While the Australian and other colonies were willing to receive our discharged prisoners, the inquiry was not so urgent. They could hew down trees, cut openings through hills, make and repair roads, reclaim the wilderness. There was ample employment for ten times the number annually disembarked. Suddenly, however, our colonies refused to receive them,—we need not now discuss their motives, and thus a vast number of men, women, and juveniles became a species of permanent charge upon the State, with scarcely a hope of its diminution. What were we to do with them? The object of their committal and imprisonment was the diminution of crime by their punishment, as well as the protection of others, by their removal from intercourse with the society they had outraged. Both objects might be effected by perpetual imprisonment or banishment. Where there was a vast disparity in crime this was manifestly unjust, and yet, to retain men in merely penal custody for the period of their respective sentences, and then to let them loose again upon the world, was in the highest degree cruel towards the prisoner who might possibly be reclaimed, and especially dangerous to society, for to their former evil passions the yearning for revenge would inevitably be added. These considerations led to the institution of a course partly penal, partly reformatory. As far as regards the improvement of the prisoner's conduct, the best results followed. But the plan failed in one great point: the community refused to receive our reformed criminals. Fairly enough, it was objected that a character obtained in a situation where there was no temptation or inducement to crime was no just criterion of reform. Society refused to receive into her bosom and absorb within herself men who had been manifestly guilty, and who had given no reliable proof of their repentance and reformation. The remarkable success of the plan pursued at Mettray and similar institutions suggested a course by which this difficulty might be obviated, with important benefits to all. Hence in 1855 it was proposed to add to the Penal and Reformatory stages, a third, which we may call Probationary. In this stage the prisoner is assailed by, or at least exposed to temptations. He is no longer secluded within the walls of his prison; he is sent out to mix with his fellow-men in the stirring business of laborious life. He is employed, without the immediate presence of control, in such occupations as suit his skill or strength. He executes commissions, is trusted with sums of money, and is taught thus by experience to estimate the value of character. He is not thrown suddenly from the gloom and silence of a prison, into the glare and

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“Not so Bad as they Seem. The Transportation, Ticket-of-Leave, and Penal Servitude Questions, plainly stated, and Argued on Facts and Figures; with some Observations on the Principles of Prevention, in a Letter Addressed to Matthew Davenport Hill, Esq., Q.C., Recorder of Birmingham.” By Patrick Joseph Murray, Barrister-at-Law. London: Cash. 1857.



tumult of busy life. He is sheltered, rather than detained, in what is called "an intermediate prison," until a satisfactory offer of employment is made to the authorities for him, or until the full period of imprisonment, to which he was originally sentenced, has elapsed. Under this new system, which commenced in March, 1856, in the space of eighteen months there have been launched again upon the world no less than 1,067 convicted prisoners! It is high time that the public should be fully informed of the method pursued, and of the practical result of the new mode of treatment. Our information is derived from a lecture delivered at the recent scientific meeting at Birmingham, by Mr. Hill, an official statement by Walter Crofton, Chairman of the Directors of Irish Convict Prisons, and other sources.

A convict, on coming under the control of the Board, is placed first in the new cellular prison, called Mountjoy, situate on the North Circular-road, near Dublin. By day and night he is separated from his fellows. Even in the chapel, the exercise ground, and school-room, though the prisoners move amongst each other, all conversation is forbidden. When a prisoner is taken suddenly from the flurry and excitement of criminal existence, the deep silence and monotony of this first stage form a broad line of demarcation between his past and future life. At this time the ministrations of the chaplain are all-important. Much time is devoted separately to each prisoner. His wants and tastes are studied, lessons and admonitions are given adapted to his whole character, and gradually an ascendancy is obtained over his mind and affections. At the end of nine months, unless he has misconducted himself, the prisoner is removed to Spike Island, where the shores are the limits of his prison. Here the first preparation for the intermediate stage is made. During the day he is toiling at the repair and enlargement of military works. The transition from the confinement of Mountjoy to free exercise, however laborious, in the clear air, is looked upon as an inestimable blessing, the more satisfactory as it has been earned by nine months' good conduct. By night he is shut up in a strong building, separated from his comrades, but no longer in solitude. The compartments of their dormitories are so constructed as to admit of conversation, under proper surveillance. They are amply provided with books, not merely religious, but also secular, with a moral tendency. Courses of lectures are given, chiefly upon geography, the character and climate of our colonies, &c. It is found that the really reformed criminal is anxious to leave the scenes of his former misconduct, and to begin a new life in a distant land. If their conduct has been exemplary at Spike Island, they are removed from it at the end of two months, otherwise at the intervals of three, four, or six months, as their probation has merited. On their departure from Spike Island begins the new phase in the treatment of our convicts.

Four prisons, if they can be called so, are set apart for the working out of this experiment. Two—Forts Camden and Carlisle—on each side of Cork Harbour, are occupied by men employed on public



works; Smithfield Institution in Dublin is set apart for tradesmen; and at Lusk, fifteen miles from Dublin, the men are employed chiefly in agricultural operations, such as draining, road-making, levelling, &c. The men now are allowed a certain portion of their earnings: this sometimes amounts to half-a-crown a week. Each keeps a book in which the gradual increase of this fund is recorded. He is allowed to draw 6d. weekly, and spend it as he pleases, intoxicating drinks alone being forbidden. The rest is reserved until his departure. When the men have acquired some self-control, they are sent out on messages, or work is procured for them at a distance from home. They pay the prison bills, and prepare to enter into a life of liberty again, but under fairer auspices than before. They are taught outlines of history, the benefits of emigration, the forms of government prevailing through the world, elementary science to extend their knowledge of common things, and even the principles of political economy. On Saturday evenings there is a species of competitive examination in the school lectures of the past week. Preparations for the contest are going on every night. It is stated that the men's progress is wonderful, and that the alteration of their moral character singularly improves their external appearance.

The results of this most careful training are highly important. Of the 1,067 convicts discharged from the intermediate establishments, 559 are discharged on letters of license. They are to report themselves monthly to the Constabulary, and the smallest instance of misconduct is reported. Of the rest, several have received unconditional pardons; many have emigrated; some have enlisted; and forty-two are at the present moment employed in Dublin, at wages varying from 9s. to £1 6s. a week. Even in the establishments their industry is remarkable. These institutions are not only self-supporting but profitable. After deducting every expense, even interest on money spent, share in directors' salary, &c., the establishment at Lusk exhibited a clear profit of £236 in the six months! The reformatory effect of their instruction is proved by the fact, that out of 1,067 licences granted, but seventeen have been revoked. And during the whole period of eighteen months but one man was convicted of having been drinking, though all were constantly exposed to the ordinary temptations of public-houses, &c.

Such important and gratifying results solve the question—What are we to do with our convicts? Even supposing there was no demand for their labour,—which is so far from being the case, that the supply is not equal to the demand,—yet men thus trained must be most valuable to the State. There are numerous works to be executed which, because not immediately remunerative, will not be taken in hands by private individuals or companies. There are piers and harbours to be erected for many a little fishing town, now without a shelter for its boats or crews. There are marshes to be drained, rivers to be embanked, bogs to be reclaimed, sanitary works to be executed. Such measures may fairly be executed by Government with such instruments, and may be carried out rapidly by the extension of the system. There is but one painful point in all this, one sorrowful thought which will come uppermost. Why is there not



the same zealous care taken to instruct the young? Why are there not in every city and county establishments opened, not reformatory, but educational, where the peasant's or humble tradesman's child, growing up to manhood, may be rescued from the vices and contaminations of the street, and all their evil consequences.

The second opinion is from *The Freeman's Journal*, a Dublin paper, of Saturday, October 17, 1857.

#### THE RECORDER OF BIRMINGHAM—OUR REFORMATORY SYSTEM.

The *Times* sneers at such simple fare as social science compared with Indian curries, and its earnest propagators now assembled at Birmingham. The occasion is unfitted for such maudlin demonstrations! When Lord John Russell, in the full blaze of the Russian war, could see no reason why a Reform Bill, long promised and long delayed, should not occupy the attention of the Legislature, there can *a fortiori* be none why the good people of England should not have their minds directed to the consideration of social questions, "because" British troops are everywhere successfully grappling with the military revolt in India. In our opinion the time is very opportune for the friends of social improvement, and the public zest for Indian news will not be in the least dulled after listening, in the telegraphic intervals, to the sound deductions of practical men on questions of the utmost social importance. The Society now sitting in Birmingham is called the National Association for the Promotion of Social Sciences. Like the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, the Amendment of the Law, and the British Association, the new body undertakes to impress the public mind, by the collection and dissemination of facts and arguments, with the necessity of urging social reforms on the Government and Legislature. The field of operations is of vast extent, including everything, proximate or remote, which could be referred to any of the subjects into which social science is, or is supposed to be, resolvable. This diversity of questions, involving diversity of opinions, appears to us to be the reef on which the Society is in danger of going to pieces. The public mind will be distracted with the multitude of discussions and conclusions. For instance, on Wednesday, papers were read on Jurisprudence and the amendment of the law, on education, reformation and punishment, public health and social economy. These are only the generic heads which comprise a vast variety of sub-divisional topics. In the first department, discussions took place on the transfer of land, Reform of the Bankrupt Law—ditto, the Scottish—on Commercial Law—Insolvency—Partnership, Registration, and Limited Liability—Commercial Legislation and Commercial Morality—the 17th section of the Statute of Frauds, &c.—This is only a sample of the work which the Association has cut out for itself. However worthy of attention are many of the papers, we would particularise one, because the scene is laid in Ireland and just praise is lavished on our prison authorities. Irish skill and discipline have done more to solve the difficulty, which weighs like a nightmare on social philoso-



phers, than all the plans, premiums, and Panopticons of the Home-office. From time to time the press has drawn attention to the success of the experiments in our metropolitan and provincial convict prisons. The novelty of criminals in their well known garb passing through our streets on errands involving honesty, punctuality, and attention, and no turnkey or policeman dogging their steps, was singular enough—but not more singular than the continued patience, intelligence, and religious and moral inculcation which produced such a phenomenon as a thoroughly reformed convict. The Recorder of Birmingham, Mr. M. D. Hill, a very enlightened judge and well-known philanthropist, came over to this country to see the reformatory process in operation. He had heard of its success—but he would see with his own eyes, methods and results. So he came, and the fruits of his experienced observation are communicated to the Birmingham Society.

Before we allude to the system which has impressed the Recorder so forcibly, we shall quote the concluding passage of his speech:—“I have to express my belief that the directors of the Irish convict prisons have practically solved the problem which has so long perplexed our Government and our legislature—What shall we do with our convicts? The results of their great experiment answer thus—keep your prisoners under sound and enlightened discipline until they are reformed—keep them for your own sake and for theirs. The vast majority of all who enter your prisons as criminals can be sent back into the world, after no unreasonable terms of probation, honest men and useful citizens. Let the small minority remain, and if death arrive before reformation, let them remain for life.” This was the supposed charge of the Irish Prison Directors to their English visitor, and they contain in a few words the substance of a long course of discipline, tested by experience and crowned with success. Mr. Hill described the object of the Irish system to consist in training and instructing the prisoner so that he may be impenetrable to temptation after his discharge. It will be at once seen how perfect must that discipline be to secure such a result as effectual resistance to temptation in minds once steeped in guilt, and now fortified against crime by a moral and religious armour of true Irish manufacture. The convict is sent in the first instance to the Mountjoy Prison, where he is retained for nine months in separate, not solitary confinement, for he meets his fellow-prisoners at chapel and the exercise ground, though the hideous black mask forbids recognition, while the officer imposes unbroken silence. After this long probation he is transferred to some of the Government provincial prisons, and employed in healthy manual labour, to which he takes heartily after his long separate confinement in Mountjoy. He is now in good spirits, and in a mood to observe the restraints of discipline without a murmur. He is also more open to religious and moral exhortations, which the clergy sedulously inculcate in sermons, lectures, and conversations. The schoolmaster is not idle. He shares with the clergyman the grateful task of sowing the seeds of knowledge in an unpromising soil. And his pains are not unrewarded, for Mr. Hill testifies to the wonderful proficiency some of the convicts have attained in a very short time. On the expiration of a period, which varies according to their



past conduct in Mountjoy, they ascend in the scale by industry, attention, and good conduct, and pass into the second class—thence into the first—and ultimately into the exemplary. From the exemplary class they are advanced to Spike Island, Lusk, and Smithfield. Mr. Hill could see no difference in manners and appearance between these poor men and “freemen of their class.” They were gentle and courteous, manifestly penetrated with the instructions they had received, and from which they seemed to derive lasting profit. At Lusk Mr. Hill saw a number of intermediate prisoners engaged in building the Boys’ Reformatory. There were no bolts or bars to prevent desertion, but desertion is the last thing they think of. They know they can depart in a short time with a certificate of long proved good conduct, while desertion would only lead to their certain capture and consequent degradation. Mr. Hill renders a just tribute to the zeal, intelligence, and patience of the officers, who have discovered and are now working out the only plan of prison reform which has stood the test of experience.

Mr. Hill bestows less attention on the female convicts, because their prisons are conducted much in the same fashion as the male. But he saw quite sufficient to form a sound opinion on the methods adopted at the Golden Bridge Reformatory, conducted, as our readers are aware, by the Sisters of Mercy. “The Ladies,” says Mr. Hill, “some of whom, as well as the female governors of the prisons, are of high and even noble rank, exercise a most potent and voluntary influence on their charges.” The prisoners, when sufficiently advanced to be released—and the quick perception of the mistress soon finds out whether reform has struck root—are sent out on service where they have hitherto proved themselves worthy the lessons they had received. Mr. Hill thus summed up, amidst loud applause, the results of the Irish system. 1st—Great improvement in the health of prisoners, and diminution of mortality, varying from eight to two per cent. 2nd—Three-fold increase in the quantity of work prepared by the prisoners. 3rd—Great improvement in the moral character of the prisoners, to which he traces in a great degree the high sanitary condition of the prisons. 4th—Falling off of punishments, and 5th—such a demand by employers for the services of discharged prisoners as to exceed the supply. This is the grand, the leading fact of all. It is the touchstone of the whole system. We know all about the English ticket-of-leave man. He is a plague in society, from whose contact all men fly. The ticket-of-leave man says he is driven to crime because he cannot get employment. There is some truth in this, no doubt, but English prison discipline is so unfavourable to reform that society regards all ticket-of-leave men in the same suspicious light. If it be once ascertained that the Irish system has turned out such excellent servants that the supply is inadequate to the demand, then the question is solved which has long agitated the public mind. Mr. Hill took special pains to verify the fact. He is one of the sharpest men in England, who could unravel a false or fictitious statement with the same readiness as he pierces the fabrications of the flash thief. Mr. Hill was quite satisfied that the test of the system was real, and, in conclusion, stated that the great social problem had been solved—solved in Ireland, and by Irishmen. We regard this fact, trifling as



it may appear, as one of the grandest triumphs our countrymen have achieved. It is something to boast, after all England has been ringing with—what shall we do with our convicts?—and after all her first-rate minds had been elaborating reformatory theories, and all the machinery of the state, with full money power, had been reducing them to practice—that Ireland should have pointed out the *via salutis* and discovered the only practical method of criminal reform.

The third opinion is expressed by *The Cork Examiner*, of Wednesday, October 21st, 1857.

The problem, what are we to do with our convicts? is one ever recurring. Yet the answer is not easy; for though the government of the country has decided in favour of one of the two great principles, and has selected reformation in contradistinction to punishment as its leading idea, there still remain many troublesome questions to be solved. Foremost of these is the employment of convicts after they have left the shelter of the prison walls. It requires no extraordinary judgment to perceive, under ordinary circumstances, a "ticket of leave" or "a discharge" is a bad recommendation, and one which in nine cases out of ten will leave the holder no alternative but starvation or robbery. Of course, there is the workhouse, but that the convict would naturally look upon as a second edition of the prison he had left, with the additional drawback that the *cuisine* was a great deal worse. Under the excellent management, however, which has so distinguished the Irish Convict Prisons, an effort has been made to obviate this evil, after the fashion which Captain CROFTON, Chairman of the Board of Directors explains in a series of memoranda. The plan at once strikes the mind with satisfaction, for its merits are self evident. The principle is that of classification, the convicts whose prison conduct during the first portion of their punishment shews the strongest tendency to reformation being placed apart from the rest, and subjected to such tests as will prove, as strongly as such a thing can be proved, that their reformation is sincere, and their desire to lead honest lives not merely an affectation to be abandoned as soon as they are away from the terror of prison discipline. For this purpose four Intermediate Prisons have been selected. Forts Camden and Carlisle at either side of the mouth of our harbour; the Smithfield institution in Dublin, which is intended for tradesmen; and one at Lusk, a village about 15 miles from Dublin, the establishment there being an appendage to that of Smithfield. The men draughted into these places, while subjected to the performance of arduous industrial labour, are allowed certain privileges which mark them out in a distinct manner from convicts in the ordinary prisons. The gratuities are increased, and out of his earnings the prisoner is allowed to retain the absolute control of six-pence a week, to save or expend as he may choose. A prisoner "taken in roster from those whose terms of imprisonment are drawing to a close," is daily employed as a messenger, and it is part of his duty to make



purchases of articles of dress, diet, and other matters for his fellow prisoners. The adoption of this system was to afford a test of more than one description of the good conduct of each individual. It gives the man the custody of money, and the freedom to spend it improperly if he choose; beside which, it enables the authorities to ascertain the confidence the prisoners are inclined to repose in each other. This last is a matter of no small consequence, as however acute a hypocritical prisoner may be in deceiving those placed over him, he can seldom hoodwink his own fellows. During twenty months of the existence of this system, though the messengers have frequently fifteen or twenty shillings at their disposal, not a single instance of dishonesty was detected, nor a single case of dispute amongst the prisoners as to the purchases; but more extraordinary still, only one case arose of a man taking advantage of his freedom to drink. It may be, perhaps, somewhat premature to talk now of the results of this system as being ascertained. Time will be required fully to test its value, and shew whether it may not need some alteration or modification. But as far as can be judged at this early stage, the benefits conferred by it on the men themselves, in giving steadiness to their characters, and honesty to their dispositions, are most gratifying. Up to the 30th of September, 1857, 1,067 convicts have been discharged from the intermediate establishments, and the refuges for females, to which we shall hereafter have occasion to make allusion. Of the males 42 prisoners are at present employed in different situations in the city and county of Dublin, and are under the unostentatious but vigilant watch of the police. They receive wages varying from 7s. to £1 6s. 0d. per week, and live respectably according to their means; and so satisfactory has been the conduct of those hitherto employed, that their masters frequently return to the establishments for additional men. 559 of the whole number have been discharged on tickets of license, and the remainder unconditionally. Of the entire number out on license, 17 have had their licenses revoked, while out of 97 females out on similar leave, the ticket of only one has been withdrawn. Many of them have left the country for the colonies, and some from the migratory habits of agricultural labour have baffled any close supervision; but the majority of them have been followed by the constabulary with a very watchful attention, and the results shew but little more than three per cent. of relapses. It is right to say that some of the revocations took place even for such irregularities as the prisoners failing to report themselves at the specified periods.

A not unimportant portion of this system to be considered is the financial point, and in this respect it seems to be less open to objection than any other prison scheme. For the labour of the convict has been devoted to public improvement, in works of actual and patent necessity, but which expense or other considerations had caused to be postponed. Such, for instance, is the completion of the works at Camden and Carlisle forts, two positions of immense military importance, the natural advantages of which have undergone extraordinary improvement since convict labour was employed for the purpose. A tabular statement shews that the actual value of the labour thus given considerably exceeds the outlay, and in this point of view such



prisons might be considered self-supporting. In alluding to this circumstance we cannot help glancing at the undeveloped capabilities of our own harbour, and thinking how usefully, for the advantage of the British marine, convict labour might there be availed of.

The account of this system leads us to believe that on all descriptions of Government works the labour of convicts might be used, as at barracks, breakwaters, fortifications, harbours of refuge, &c. For an essential part of it, though at first sight it seems a small matter, is the nature of the prison employed. It consists of a series of moveable iron buildings, each capable of accommodating fifty men and four officers. These, which are erected at a cost of £330 each, may be transferred to any locality where the services of the prisoners would be required. A practical difficulty is thus removed for turning the labour of the convicts to the best account possible, without at the same time in the least degree interfering with industrial operations outside—a principle that should never be lost sight of.

The document before us refers to the Refuges in Ireland as having effected much good in procuring employment, or at all events shelter, for females. In their case it is easy to understand how far more difficult it is to procure means of subsistence than for men. For even women of unstained character the lack of employment has been one of the greatest social evils of the present day; how must it be then with those whose names are associated with the brand of felony? Only such institutions as the Houses of Refuge can step between them and the earthly consequences of their sins. Here their conduct while in comparative freedom offers a guarantee that their penitence is sincere, and removes them from the temptation to relapse which idleness and want would lay them open to. Capt. CROFTON states that since March, 1856, ninety-seven female convicts have been removed—eighty-six to the Catholic Refuge at Golden Bridge, Dublin; four to the Protestant Refuge at Cork, and seven to the Protestant Refuge, Harcourt-road, Dublin. Of this number 46 have been placed in positions of life which will give them the chance of making permanent the reformation that discipline and instruction may have effected in them. Such of them as have gone to situations as domestic servants have afforded so much satisfaction as to leave room for the hope, that the knowledge of the probation to which they are all subjected may dispel the not unnatural prejudice created by their previous guilt. We are not profound believers in the perfectability of the species, and do not consider a reformatory prison will convert a number of thieves into an assemblage of saints. But as there are few individuals of the human race wholly bad, and the majority of those even convicted of crime are for a time found to be open to good influences, let us hope that a proper system may be carried out, which will continue the good effect of those feelings, a system which will enlighten as well as deter, and may lead these wretched beings to see the advantage of honesty and the misery of guilt. The very valuable document which Captain CROFTON has issued seems to give reasonable ground for believing that such a system is in progress, effecting much good now, and promising to accomplish still more.



The fourth opinion is from *The Spectator* of Saturday, October 24th, 1857.

CONVICT REFORMATION ACCOMPLISHED.  
(From the *Spectator*.)

The Irish Convict Prisons have become a working model, in which the Reformatory system of punishment has been tested in two very important respects, insomuch, that it cannot be said that we are devoid of experience. We have already, in analyzing the report of the Select Committee on Transportation, explained the nature of the system carried out under Captain Walter Crofton in Ireland, and now we need only recall to the reader's recollection the general nature of that system. On being given in charge to the Commissioner of Convict Prisons, the convict is placed in a cellular gaol called Mountjoy, and is day and night strictly separated from his fellows, except in the chapel, the exercise-ground, and the school-room. If he does not misconduct himself, at the end of nine months he is removed to Spike Island station in the Cove of Cork, where the prisoner works at the extension of the fortifications; or if he is an artisan, he is conveyed to Philipstown, an inland Prison about forty miles from Dublin, where he follows his trade. During the whole of this period the object is not only to discipline and instruct but to train the prisoners. The chaplain endeavours to render his exhortations practical and moral; the school-master and lecturer not only teach the rudiments of instruction, but convey information on practical subjects, especially on emigration, the nature of the climate in each colony, its effect on health, the comparative rate of wages, and so forth. The majority of the prisoners are uneducated Irishmen; many of them can only speak the indigenous tongue, and some make little progress in learning; yet they collect the information, and those who understand English convey it to the others. A remarkable example of this is C. S., an old stolid man, who though dull and slowly coerced himself in reading until in a few months he could read a "first" and "second" book in the excellent series of the Irish Education Board. The work of the convicts is well done, and they take pleasure in useful handicraft occupations. Their condition and advance to the next class are regulated by their conduct. All this was the system when the Select Committee sat, but since that time there have been changes. A new act has passed, somewhat but not very materially changing the condition of the prisoners in Ireland. An important extension of the system has been introduced since January, 1856, and we now have experience of that stage extending to twenty-one months. This is called "the intermediate stage," and it is carried on at the Forts, at Smithfield, or at Lusk. Here the convict is in a condition rather of forced residence than of custody. He loses his place and lapses into an inferior class if he for an instant relaxes in his industry. The studies begun at Mountjoy are continued; and the lecturer at Smithfield, Mr. Organ, not only assists the men in informing themselves, but is indefatigable in finding for them situations after their discharge. Questions put to them,



not by their own teachers, but by highly competent casual visitors, show that their information is genuine; "the stock question and the set answer have no place here." Such is the system as it is now developed and carried out. We have a longer experience of it; and we have an admirable account of it by Mr. M. D. Hill, who visited the Irish prisons last summer, and read a paper on the subject at the Birmingham Conference. Alike within the prison walls, in the intermediate stage, and ultimately, it has been found that cheerful labour, as an appeal to the better as well as to the worse qualities of the men, conduces to discipline and stimulates improvement. Even the removal of the partitions which maintained the separate system in chapel—and stimulated evasion—has been found to increase the attention to the service and the good order of the men. Even by the time they leave Mountjoy, the beneficent influence of the system tells upon their countenances, and in the intermediate stage the improvement comes very strongly.

"This proof of amendment I had ample opportunity for studying as, in my repeated visits, I saw the men in every variety of occupation—at their labour, at their meals, during their studies, and in their moments of relaxation. Their countenances, though on the whole inferior in intelligence to the average of freemen of their own degree, bore no marks of an evil mind; and while I was rowed by more than one boat's crew from island to island, and altogether in their power, it was impossible for me not to feel as secure of their fidelity as if they had been Thames watermen. In the manners and general demeanour of the intermediate class, the desire to improve themselves and to be of service to others was also very apparent."

The men have opportunities of proving their self control. On arrival at Spike Island the convict acquires the privilege of earning, by diligent and good conduct, small gratuities, which are set to his credit in a book, and deducted for ill conduct. On reaching the intermediate stage, he may draw a sum which varies according to his industry, but rises to half-a-crown weekly; and of that sum he may spend sixpence a week.

"His choice of articles for purchase being uncontrolled except as to intoxicating drinks, which are wholly prohibited. These little books are often called for by a director or superior officer, and a friendly consultation ensues as to the state of the prisoner's funds. When it is found that the sixpence has been regularly added to the savings, an occurrence so frequent as to form the rule (spending being the exception), the man is congratulated not only on his growing store, but on his power of self-command. When the allowance has been accumulated for a time, and is then spent on some article of dress to be worn on his discharge, there is still ground for satisfaction, unless a love of finery has been exhibited. Sometimes, however, the superior shows signs of disappointment, as when on one occasion Captain Crofton found that a prisoner's weekly sixpences had for some months been wasted upon tobacco. No expression of disapproval, however, is suffered to escape, as it would lead the individual to the conclusion that although he had a nominal right to dispose of his money at his own discretion (or indiscretion), he was in truth



under such restraint in its exercise as to paralyse its free agency. The captain began by asking the man what had originally brought him into trouble. 'Drink,' was his reply. 'Are you not afraid of again being decoyed into the habit of drinking, when you leave this place?' 'Not at all,' was the confident assurance. 'I have now had no drink for years, and do very well without it.' 'But you were for years without tobacco, and although you suffered much at first, you discovered after a time that tobacco is not essential to your comfort; yet the moment you are allowed to purchase tobacco you exercise the permission. How can you be sure, that as you have not been able to resist tobacco, you shall be able to resist drink when you have the power of obtaining it?' The poor fellow reflected on this conversation, and a subsequent inspection of his book showed that he had gradually diminished his outlay on the narcotic until he had abandoned it altogether, adding the saving thus produced to his permanent fund."

When the intermediate man has acquired some self-control, he is sent out on messages, or sent as one of a party to perform a piece of work. Abuse of this trust is rare; the men return punctually and promptly—they seldom if ever enter a public-house.

"The intermediate man having now established a character is intrusted with money to make purchases, or to pay bills on behalf of the prison; and what may, perhaps, be justly considered as a surer criterion that his character is known to be deserving is, that such of his comrades as remain at home are in the habit of employing him on commission to buy for them, and they place in his hands moneys for that purpose. A few months ago, a messenger so employed, when he returned, reported that he had lost sixpence belonging to one of his fellows. He was in great distress, but was reassured by the unanimous voice of the whole body, declaring that no thought of malversation had entered their minds. Subsequently one of the men found the piece of money, in an apartment where it must have accidentally dropped."

At Lusk, fifteen miles from Dublin, the men are engaged in forming a garden on open heath land, a large tract of which is to be brought under cultivation by convict labour. Their dwelling is one easily removable, constructed of corrugated iron with boards inside for warmth; it consists of two rooms, both of which by night are dormitories, while by day the one is kitchen and house place, the other is at once chapel, school, lecture-room, and library. In no instance has desertion from these residences—for they are not prisons—been attempted; and the application of industry in this form is exceedingly profitable in several ways. It is found that useful labour has the best moral effect, because it engages the goodwill of the men. Under the whole system it is found that a remarkable improvement has taken place in the bodily health of the prisoners. The mortality in 1854 was 8 per cent., in 1855 it was under 5, in 1856 under 2 per cent. Meanwhile, the quantity of labour performed by the prisoners has been nearly tripled; and the prisons are nearly self-supporting. These material facts are indexes of moral improvement. They have been attended by a further result,



which in itself aids the working of the system ; the demand by employers for the services of discharged prisoners now exceeds the supply ; the average of wages which the men can command being not less than ten shillings a week. The statistics already obtained indicate a very slight per centage of discharged convicts who have relapsed to evil courses. To Mr. Hill's pamphlet we refer for details and attestation ; we agree with him in thinking that the experience in Ireland answers the question "What shall we do with our convicts?"

The fifth opinion is from *The Philanthropist* of November 2nd, 1857.

### IMPORTANT CHANGE IN PRISON DISCIPLINE.

At a time when the great question of the disposal of our convicts demands the serious attention of the country, every plan which shall hold forth promise of successfully encountering the difficulties by which the question is surrounded will meet with consideration. Captain Crofton, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Irish Convict Prisons, gives us some very valuable and interesting details of an experiment which he was permitted to make, to amend the existing prison system for convicts.\* In November, 1855, the Captain addressed a communication to the Government, from which the following is an extract :—

"The reformability of the generality of criminals has been admitted. The present system, commencing with the deterrent, is followed by a course of penal, and of Reformatory discipline. The success of this system it is proposed to test previous to the release of any prisoner by the institution of a third stage, in which the Reformatory element shall preponderate, as does the deterrent element in the first stage.

"The great difficulty with which discharged prisoners have to contend, is 'the want of employment.' The community do not consider a character obtained under an absence from the temptations to which prisoners would be exposed in the world, a fair test of reformation. They therefore decline accepting this evidence; and refusing to employ such criminals, thus reject the really reformed, who are included in the category as untested.

"The proposed stage of Reformatory treatment, places a prisoner where he can be assailed by temptations, and where the public will have an opportunity of judging of his reformation, of his industrious habits, and of his general fitness for employment. I firmly believe, that this probationary stage, acting as a filterer between the prisons and the public, may be made the means of distinguishing the reformed convicts from the unreformed, before and after leaving their several

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\* Memoranda relative to the Intermediate Convict Prisons in Ireland, from their Establishment in January, 1856, to September, 30th, 1857. Dublin: printed by A. Thom and Sons, 87, Abbey-street, for Her Majesty's Stationary Office.



places of confinement ; and I believe the separation, operating as an important channel for amendment and prevention, will exercise an influence over the criminal populations the value of which cannot be too highly appreciated."

Captain Crofton based his on the application of the principle of "Individualisation." He recommended the adoption of periods in sentences identical with those practised in England for tickets of licence, and suggested, that in the event of prisoners being unable to obtain satisfactory offers of employment, without which no convict could be discharged on licence, they were to be detained in intermediate prisons, until the expiration of periods of imprisonment, deemed equivalent to the sentence of transportation they had received. For example, a prisoner sentenced to ten years' transportation would, with good conduct, be eligible for removal to an intermediate prison in four years. After four months' detention in this stage, should he receive an offer of employment, and should his conduct be considered in all respects satisfactory, he would be allowed a conditional pardon; the licence ticket being revocable, through irregularity, at any period within the original sentence of ten years. Should the well-conducted convict, however, be unable to obtain employment at any period between the four years and four months, and six years (the period, by the Penal Servitude Act of 1853, deemed adequate to ten years' transportation), he would necessarily receive an unconditional discharge.

He recommended also, that the gratuities, purposely kept low in the ordinary prisons, should in these intermediate institutions be increased; and should be paid, where possible, according to the amount of work performed. Each convict to be allowed to expend, or to save sixpence a-week of his earnings; and thereby was introduced a test of character. Further it was advised, that warders in the trades' establishments were to be tradesmen; and in supervising their classes also, were to give the public the benefit of their labour. The warders in the various huts were likewise to be qualified to act as foremen of works, &c.; and thus they, too, were to give the public the benefit of their supervision, economically as well as morally.

Lectures were to be introduced, on subjects likely to be practically useful on discharge; and were to be given in the evenings after the labours of the day had passed.

As these intermediate establishments were intended to act as filterers from the prisons, it was presumed that many convicts would, from time to time, fail to be beneficially influenced by the system adopted in them; and would, consequently, be returned to the ordinary routine of prison life, as unworthy of the confidence placed in them, and as undeserving of the privileges accorded to them.

These plans are at once sanctioned by government; and the intermediate system has been tried in four different prisons. In these establishments the numbers are restricted to one hundred men, in order that individualisation may be brought to bear on the inmates, who in the different stages, are exposed to more or less temptation; and in order that voluntary action, as far as it is consistent with the due maintenance of discipline and of order, may be permitted to all.



These prisons are situated at Forts Camden and Carlisle, on each side of Cork Harbour, and are occupied by the men employed on public works; at the Smithfield Institution, in Dublin, which is intended for tradesmen; and at Lusk, a village about fifteen miles from Dublin, which is, in fact, a rural appendage to Smithfield. In recommending the adoption of this system for selected convicts, it has been always contemplated to apply their labour where practicable to fortifications, to harbours of refuge on our coasts, and thus concurrently with the more important matter of moral reformation, to render convict labour more generally available for the public service. This it was proposed to achieve by means of locating prisoners in movable iron buildings, arranged somewhat after the manner of those used for military purposes, each calculated to hold fifty men, and erected at a cost of £330, inclusive for accommodation for four officers, which is considered a proper complement for that number of prisoners.

With this view, iron huts were erected at Forts Camden and Carlisle, for the performance of works, under the War Department: and two others were built at Lusk Common, to prepare the land by draining, &c., road-making, levelling, &c., for the erection of a juvenile prison. These buildings fully answer the purposes for which they were intended. One hut was removed from Trim, after being inhabited for three years, and was re-erected at Lusk, for the use of the constabulary, without damage, and at a very trifling expense.

Since the opening of the Smithfield Institution, of the Forts, and of the other Refuges, the number of discharges conditionally, and unconditionally (commencing in March, 1856), have amounted to 1067. In other words, during a period of eighteen months 1067 convicts have been launched into the world, to test the value of a system of prison discipline founded upon the individualization of every convict; and the following very important results appear to vindicate the claims which the system has for general adoption.

1st.—The adoption of stages of detention, previous to discharge, in which a prisoner possesses voluntary action for good or for evil, removes the ground of complaint that the prisoner's reformation is inaccurately tested. The convict has the power of committing himself at any time, by yielding to the ordinary temptations with which he will be beset on discharge. The intermediate prison character, therefore, is of real and substantial value; and although at first, considerable reluctance was shown to employ the "exemplary" prisoners; time and experience have completely reconciled employers, who now frequently return to the intermediate establishment for additional men. The strongest proof of this statement, is that forty-two prisoners on licence, are employed at the present time in the city and county of Dublin, at wages varying from 3s. to £1 6s.; these are visited fortnightly; and with two exceptions, are very highly reported of. It may be added, that some of these employed have been sixteen months in the same service.

No offer of employment for a convict is accepted without due inquiries being in the first instance, made as to the respectability of



the person offering it. Eighty-one prisoners have received unconditional pardons in consequence of good conduct when on probation, some of whom have enlisted, and others have subsequently joined their friends in the colonies. Since the 1st of January, 1857, male convicts on licence have been under the surveillance of the Constabulary, to whom they report themselves monthly; and in the event of misconduct, however trifling, they are at once reported to the prison authorities. The rules in this respect are as follows, having been sanctioned by the Lord Lieutenant, and circulated for the information and guidance of the Constabulary:—

“1.—When an offer of employment for a prisoner is accepted a notification thereof will be made by the Directors of Government prisons to the Inspector-General of Constabulary, by whom it will be transmitted to the Constabulary of the locality in which the employment is to be given, with all necessary particulars, for the purpose of being entered in a Register at the Constabulary Station.

“2.—Each convict so to be employed will report himself at the appointed Constabulary Station (the name of which will be given to him) on his arrival in the district, and subsequently, on the 1st of each month.

“3.—A special report is to be made to head-quarters by the Constabulary whenever they shall observe a convict on licence guilty of misconduct or leading an irregular life.

“4.—A convict is not to change his locality without notifying the circumstances at the constabulary station, in order that his registration may be transferred to the place to which he is about to proceed. On his arrival he must report himself to the nearest constabulary station (of the name of which he is to be informed), and such transfer is to be reported to Head-Quarters for the information of the Directors of Government prisons.

“5.—An infringement of these rules by the convict will cause it to be assumed that he is leading an idle, irregular life, and therefore entail the revocation of his licence.

“6.—Further regulations may hereafter be added to the foregoing should it become necessary.”

Some licensed convicts, by the exercise of great cunning, are, with the utmost strictness of supervision, still prosecuting their old calling. But these must be few. There are others, doubtless, who, from the migratory habits of labour in Ireland, have baffled supervision for any length of time; and it is believed they have left the country. On the other hand, and corroborative of the efficiency of the constabulary supervision, there are authentic communications from nearly 200 male prisoners discharged on licence, but who are strenuously persevering in an honest course of industry; many unconditionally discharged have enlisted; and very large numbers have emigrated from the country, having saved sufficient money from the gratuities allowed in the intermediate prisons to materially further them in such a course.

Although 1300 convicts have been under such detention since January, 1856, only twenty-six have been re-consigned to the ordinary prisons for misconduct. Six prisoners have been removed



from those institutions at their own request; that the principle which pervades the system is uncongenial to the idle and evil-disposed. A large amount of work is expected from the inmates, which in part accounts for the wish of the idle to be removed. To the idle and to the ill-intentioned, the system of an intermediate stage between the prison and the public cannot but be irksome; to such an extent even as to counterbalance the privileges to which they are under it entitled. No punishment is carried on in these establishments; the prisoner who misconducts himself in the slightest respect is at once removed.

The Superintendent of Smithfield, the Chaplain and Medical Officers, all bear strong testimony to the general good conduct and spirit evinced by the prisoners under the system and the superintendent.

The Superintendent of Smithfield, who was deputy governor and master of works for ten years under the old system, states, and he is corroborated by the books of his department and the trade instructors, that under the new system he obtains nearly three times the amount of work as heretofore from the same number of prisoners.

2nd.—Whether or not, the privileges allowed in the intermediate prisons have conduced, in practice, to the existence of tests of character; and in what particular?

Each prisoner is allowed to retain in his own possession sixpence per week, from his gratuity money; which sum he may expend or save, as he may possess more or less self-denial. A prisoner, taken in roster from those whose terms of detention are drawing to a close, is placed on messenger's duty daily; he is then permitted to make purchases of articles of dress, diet, &c., for the other prisoners. As the purchaser frequently has fifteen or twenty shillings at his disposal, the test is considered valuable. The ordinary temptations of the world, in the shape of public-houses, &c., of course constantly present themselves to prisoners acting as messengers; and strange to say, during this long period of daily duty, only one case has arisen of a man having been drinking. In this case, although his duty was accurately performed, the breach of rule was immediately punished, and the culprit forthwith removed to an ordinary prison.

Instruction is imparted principally by means of lectures, in which the aged and the ignorant, who could be induced to receive instruction in the ordinary prisons, evince a great interest; and after a little time, display an amount of intelligence scarcely reconcilable with their former bearing.

It has already been stated, that moveable iron huts, to hold fifty prisoners in each, have been erected and occupied: and that they are found well adapted for the purpose required. Hitherto one great objection to the employment of convict labour arose on account of the heavy expenses incurred in the erection of a permanent prison, a building which becomes nearly useless on the completion of the work. Whereas, by the location of selected convicts, in the huts described, they can be moved for a trifling expense to the next work to be performed. The cost of each building (330*l.*), has before been given; and it is evident that any number of huts may be erected, and that the principle of individualization may be preserved in each complement of fifty men.



The supervision necessary for two huts containing one hundred able-bodied convicts will be as follows:—a chief warder; a warder to act as registrar and schoolmaster; and six other warders, who should be skilled and useful men, to superintend any works that may be required. The cost of such a staff is here appended, as well as the productive labour which may be expected from the prisoners, officers, &c.

*Return showing the cost of maintenance, &c., of 100 able-bodied prisoners for six months (in two iron moveable huts) with the value of their labour.*

<i>Dr.</i>				£	s.	d.
Victualling, at 3s. 10d. per week	...	...	...	498	6	0
Clothing, at 9d.	...	"	...	97	10	0
Salaries	...	...	£178	0	0	
Rations	...	...	35	4	0	
Clothing	...	...	13	10	4	
				226	14	4
Share of Directors' salaries, Officers' expences, &c.	...	...	...	55	0	0
Medicines	...	...	...	2	0	0
Fuel, 20 tons	...	...	...	15	0	0
Proportionate amount of gratuities chargeable on 100 prisoners	...	...	...	100	0	0
Rent, &c., Huts	...	...	...	17	10	0
Soap	...	...	...	5	8	0
Light	...	...	...	4	0	0
Bedding, 2s. 6d. each man per annum	...	...	...	6	5	0
Postage	...	...	...	4	0	0
Books and Stationery	...	...	...	7	10	0
Two Cooks, 26 weeks each, 9s.	...	...	...	23	8	0
Contingencies	...	...	...	10	0	0
				£1,072	12	0
Balance, paying all expenses,	...	...	...	236	6	0
				£1,308	18	0
<i>Cr.</i>				£	s.	d.
By labour of 100 prisoners, for 26 weeks each, 9s.	...	...	...	1,170	0	0
Productive labour of six of the warders charged in salaries, &c., of officers who give their labour to the public as carpenters, artificers, &c.	...	...	...	138	18	0
				£1,308	18	0

Remarks.—Included in this 100 are carpenters, painters, masons, &c. This estimate is therefore not at all too high, as is evinced by employers taking men from the prison at 10s. per week, and many at higher wages.

Enough has been said, we imagine, in these extracts to excite a wish to understand the system more in detail. It is certainly worthy of full consideration; under the present law, taking a sen-



tence of seven years' penal servitude, the minimum period of imprisonment, with good conduct, is five years and three months; the convict may then be discharged. Misconduct will cause him to be retained till the expiration of his sentence. Everything it will be observed, appears to depend on the sufficiency or the genuineness of the prison character; and it is quite obvious that the substitution of intermediate stages of treatment, prior to the expiration of the minimum period, would better enable a correct judgment to be formed; and the principle is equally applicable to any term of sentence. We cannot but feel that though there may be some objections raised, yet the proposed system holds out considerable probability of a solution of the chief difficulties hitherto connected with our dealing with this class of criminals. The Recorder of Birmingham, no mean authority, stamped it with his entire approval, in his inaugural address as president of the third department of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science—and we shall feel glad if our readers will ponder the subject, and candidly and fairly discuss its merits or demerits, in any of our forthcoming numbers.

The sixth opinion is from *The Economist*.

#### IRISH CONVICT PRISONS.

WE have several times had occasion to remark that perhaps the feature which most especially distinguishes this age from those which preceded it, is the amount of earnest benevolence which is directed to the great subject of social improvement. Hundreds, not to say thousands, are now devoting time, thought, and toil to the task of raising the character and condition of the wretched and the wicked, not at all as a mere matter of prudence, nor altogether as a matter of philanthropy, but as an urgent and solemn duty, owed by the favoured and educated members of the community to those classes whom Providence has fixed in a less fortunate and happy station. The suffering, the destitute, the ignorant, the dangerous, and the criminal classes, have each their special friends and sympathisers—men to whom each several form of human misfortune appeals with peculiar force. These various philanthropists and social reformers are now, by help of the Association which has lately met at Birmingham, endeavouring to combine their exertions and mutually to communicate their several principles and plans; and the diffusion of sound views and the stimulus of flagging zeal will, we may fairly hope, be the result.

Of all the communications elicited by this Conference, none appears more valuable than a paper read by Mr. Hill describing the result of his personal inquiry into the working of the system recently introduced among the convicts of Ireland by the sagacious and energetic Director of Convict Prisons, Captain Crofton, under the enlightened sanction and encouragement of the Lord-Lieutenant. And as Captain Crofton has himself just issued a semi-official account of his proceedings, and as another report of them has just appeared from the pen of the Rev. Orby Shipley, to which we hope soon to give a separate notice,—we trust that the issue of this attempt practically to solve one of our hardest social problems will soon be known widely as it deserves.



Captain Crofton, convinced that the majority of convicts are capable of reformation; that hope and encouragement are essential elements in any reformatory scheme; that to reform criminals is at once the wisest, the most merciful, and the most economical way of dealing with them; and that to cast prisoners, on their discharge from gaol, loose upon the world with cash and without employment, is to undo, or at least to risk, the whole work which prison authorities have been labouring to effect—has adopted a plan of which two features are salient and peculiar. *First*, he passes the convicts through a *series* of stages, each distinguished from its predecessor by somewhat milder discipline and somewhat more extensive privileges, and promotion from the lower to the higher of which is regulated by the industry and good conduct of the prisoner; and, *secondly*, when he, the prisoner, becomes eligible for a ticket of leave, he is placed in an intermediary institution, where he is both trained for self-maintenance and self-control, and afforded means of proving his capacity for both. From this institution he is sent forth as soon as he is considered fit to “go alone,” and as soon as a master can be found willing to employ him, or as soon as he has earned enough to emigrate—if desirous of doing so. After giving a detailed account of the system, Mr. Hill continues:—

“Having now brought under your notice the principal features of Irish convict treatment, let me briefly sum up the results of reformatory principles, as the Board has succeeded in reducing them to practice.

1st.—A most remarkable improvement has taken place in the bodily health of the prisoners. The mortality in 1854 was as high as eight per cent.; in 1855, it was under five per cent.; and in 1856 it did not quite reach two per cent.—a diminution which the medical officers, after making all due allowance for difference of seasons, attribute mainly to the change of system.

2nd.—The quantity of labour performed by the prisoners is nearly three times its former amount. I shall add a table in my appendix, which will show that at Lusk the labour of the prisoners, rating their wages at a lower average than that which they obtain immediately on their discharge, makes the establishment entirely self-supporting; paying, in addition to the outlay for food and clothing, ample interest on capital by way of rent, all the cost of repairs—that of the services of the officers, who are especially attached to it, together with its proportion of the general expenses of the Board, including the salaries of the Directors; and, indeed, all charges which it would have to encounter if it were a private institution.

And here I may not improperly record the firm persuasion of the Directors that the success of their enterprise is, in no small degree, to be attributed to the cordial sanction which their measures have received from the Lord-Lieutenant; his high office, and still higher character, have wrought an irresistible effect in conciliating adverse prejudices, and in winning the co-operation of all classes.

3rd.—It cannot be doubted that the moral character of the prisoners must have been raised even in a higher degree than the physical. Indeed, the improvement which has taken place in the health of the inmates can only be referred to moral causes. With the ex-



ception of Lusk no new station has been added, nor has any old station been abandoned. The number of punishments has rapidly decreased, while the gratuities allowed by Government as rewards are not on the whole, greater than they were before, though distributed in a somewhat different manner.

Under these conditions the three-fold amount of labour to which I have adverted must be considered a moral result, arguing most forcibly the genuineness and the permanency of the reformation effected.

4th.—My hearers will not be surprised to find that the results to which I have called their attention have produced another consequence of the highest value. *The demand by employers for the services of discharged prisoners now exceeds the supply.* As this fact is a crucial test by which the whole system must stand or fall, I spared no pains to verify the statement which I have made.

It may seem but an ungracious return to Captain Crofton, the Chairman of the Board, and to Mr. Lentaigne and Captain Whitty, his colleagues, who have, I am proud to say, admitted me to their friendship—that I, without their knowledge, and through independent channels, should institute an inquiry, for the purpose of checking any error into which they might have fallen, from a natural bias towards a work of their own heads and hearts. I hope my friends will forgive the step which I have taken, when they learn, as they will now do from my lips, how fully the accuracy of their representations has been corroborated by the facts thus ascertained.

The average of wages which these men can command is not less than ten shillings per week. Many, however, partly in the hopes of earning a better remuneration abroad, and partly to avoid the danger of being again drawn into the vortex of crime by their old companions, use the knowledge acquired, and the fund accumulated during their long imprisonment, to emigrate; chiefly, I believe, to Canada.

As the Board, through its officers, takes measures to keep discharged prisoners in view to the best of its power, the conduct of many of them is known, and of by far the greater number it is known to be good. Those who depart on tickets of leave are bound, under pain of forfeiting that licence, to report themselves monthly to the police of the district in which they reside, and thus they are held under more complete supervision than the others. In the appendix I shall give an account, so far as it can be obtained on actual information, and without resorting to mere estimate, which will throw some light, though an imperfect one, upon the success of the new system, so far as it can be displayed by figures. Captain Crofton, while he candidly avows his inability to frame a statistical table which would deserve confidence, yet, combining the information which he has collected with his general experience, assures me that he should be much disappointed to find, if the precise truth could be known, that ten per cent. of the convicts discharged since the new treatment commenced had returned to evil courses. And, for myself, I should consider his opinion so formed as worthy of reliance—not implicit reliance, for that he would not ask—and yet I feel persuaded that the chances of any material errors are very few.

Thus then, in my humble judgment, the Board of Directors of Irish Convict Prisons have practically solved the problem which has



so long perplexed our Government and our Legislature—*What shall we do with our convicts?* The results of their great experiment answer thus—Keep your prisoners under sound and enlightened discipline until they are reformed—keep them for your own sake and for theirs. The vast majority of all who enter your prisons as criminals can be sent back into the world, after no unreasonable term of probation, honest men and useful citizens. Let the small minority remain, and if death arrive before Reformation, let them remain for life.”

The seventh opinion is from the *Globe* of November 7th, 1857:—

We have before us a paper bearing the signature of Captain Crofton, Chairman of Directors of Irish Convict Prisons, and the title of ‘Memoranda Relative to the Intermediate Convict Prisons in Ireland.’ It is a paper of great interest—and not the less so, that the interest is concentrated within sixteen pages. Upon the same subject, an Oxford young gentleman (we hope he is young) has contrived to spin himself out over 150 pages, in a pamphlet affectedly entitled ‘The Purgatory of Prisoners,’ and crammed with such a far-rago of prolix puerilities, as we should have thought it required forty ‘deacons of the diocese of Oxford,’ instead of one, to overlay the statement of a plain matter withal. Our ‘deacon’ tells us that ‘the title of the following pages was not adopted without much prayer, without much consideration.’ If he had prayed or considered a little longer, he might perhaps have thought better about the propriety of garbling and misquoting a passage of the Litany by way of motto, and smearing all over with Oxonian-Catholic unction a sober practical undertaking. ‘*O’est trop pommade!*’ The only good things in this Oxford man’s pamphlet are his citations or cribs from Captain Crofton. The rest is most ambitious and most empty verbiage. Taking as our text therefore the first cited ‘Memoranda,’ we begin by stating the general object for which intermediate convict prisons (as they are here termed) were founded. ‘The great difficulty,’ truly observes the originator and director of the experiment in Ireland, ‘with which discharged prisoners have to contend is the want of employment; and so long as this difficulty exists, so long will the criminal population, reformed and unreformed, remain a distinct portion of the community; and so long will their absorption be a matter of impossibility. The proposed stage of reformatory treatment places a prisoner where the public will have an opportunity of judging of his reformation, of his industrious habits, and of his general fitness for employment. I firmly believe that it needs but satisfactory evidence of this fact to bring together the employer, and those meriting and seeking employment.’ This experiment has been going on in Ireland for the last eighteen months in four different prisons. During that period, ‘1,067 convicts have been launched into the world to test the value of a system of prison discipline founded upon the individualisation of every convict. This number is large for good or for evil; and it is high time to inquire whether the practical results of such treatment are adequate to the amount of labour and of anxiety which have been bestowed upon the subject.’ We must refer to the ‘Memoranda’ for the details, which appear to us satisfactorily to answer that question. ‘The supposed



main difficulty against its adoption in prisons,' says Captain Crofton, 'has been on the score of expense. This is now shown to be erroneous; on the contrary, these results have been obtained with a decreased expenditure.' One very important practical expedient for economical employment of convict labour is the substitution of moveable iron huts, holding 50 convicts each, and which can be transported, at a trifling cost, from one scene of operations to another, for those permanent prison buildings which it has hitherto been thought necessary to construct where convicts were to be employed on public works. Such costly constructions necessarily limited the number and nature of such works. But on the system here proposed for the useful employment of convicts in the intermediate stage between penal confinement and perfect freedom, we agree with Captain Crofton that the public, as well as individuals, may derive advantage from that employment. There are always things admittedly desirable to be done—but which, not being of a nature to make immediate profitable returns, will always be postponed, on the score of expense, till a more convenient season, unless there is some urgent auxiliary motive for doing them. The urgency here is to bridge over the chasm which at present exists between prison labour and free labour, so that the apparently reformed convict shall be helped over that difficult transition. 'The undefended state of the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland,' suggests Captain Crofton, 'at the present moment, seems peculiarly inviting to the trial of a system which has been shown to be morally, socially, and economically beneficial. The labour is especially suitable to convicts; and under the direction of sappers, would be skilfully executed.' The vital principles of this intermediate system are, firstly, that it restores free agency to the convict, in such measure as to test his fitness for honest employment, as it never can be tested within the four walls and under the iron rules of an ordinary prison. It is the voluntary sequel and completion of a previously compulsory course of penal discipline. No punishments are ever inflicted in this intermediate state of probation; or rather the sole punishment is to be recognised to the ordinary prison. Only 26 out of 1,300 have been so recognised for misconduct—six have been so removed at their own request—in consideration of an objection they had to steady labour and steady conduct. The second essential principle of the system is bringing reformed convicts in honest contact with the public, and into fair prospects of finding and keeping individual employment. Hitherto even when discharged convicts found employment, they were generally liable to lose it again, on any chance discovery of their penal antecedents. 'Derrick may do very well,' said Dr. Johnson, 'as long as he can outrun his character, but the moment his character gets up with him, it is all over.' Surely Sam's subsequent judgment of the same person is aptly applicable to the effect of the reformation testing process before us. 'Derrick has now got a character that he need not run away from.' The object in view is to enable convicts, before their final discharge, to get a character that they need not run away from. It is not dissembled in this reform scheme—and if it were, we should not place the slightest reliance on it—that a certain per-centage of prisoners must be regarded, humanly



speaking, as incorrigible. 'These prisoners,' says Captain Crofton, 'are for the most part, easily distinguishable at an early portion of their prison career; and as their conduct approximates to that of lunatics (to the detriment of the other prisoners, and to the danger of the officers,) so should their treatment be special and severe; they should be located in special prisons, be guarded by special officers, be placed at special labour. Captain Crofton believes 'that the transmission of such prisoners to a colony is as unsound in principle as it has been found to be in practice; and that by a special treatment, firmly administered, this class of criminals may be rendered harmless in our own prisons, and may be rendered comparatively innoxious on discharge.' The Act of 1857 enables sentences of penal servitude to be carried out in such colonies (as Western Australia) still willing to receive convicts, and the recent instructions from the Home Secretary as to the minimum periods of detention direct that convicts shall be eligible for removal to a colony at the expiration of one half of their sentences. According to the system now before us, removal to the colonies may be regarded as a parallel process with removal from ordinary to Intermediate Prisons at home. It is a process therefore properly applicable only to reclaimable and well conducted convicts; and we agree with Captain Crofton that a similar term of moral apprenticeship and voluntary or semi-voluntary probation should precede their full discharge in a colony as (according to the system before us) it would at home. The sort of men treated as good enough for Western Australia should only be the sort treated as good enough for home employment. Colonial like home employers of labour should be induced (neither can be compelled) to receive prisoners whose reform has been tested by such an intermediate process as set forth in the 'Memoranda' before us again into the ranks of honest industry and reliable service.

The eighth opinion is from *The Leeds Mercury* of November 19th, 1857.

#### REFORMATION OF CONVICTS.

The Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland is now engaged in an experiment which ought to arouse deep interest here, and in the success of which every member of the community, criminal or non-criminal, is interested. When the ticket-of-leave system was introduced into the sister country, the Board of Directors felt that to turn a convict loose upon the world before the expiration of his sentence, and with no other evidence of reformation than that which he had given in the usual routine of prison life, was cruel to the convict and unjust to the public. He might, indeed, be truly reformed, but the only proof which he was able to offer of the fact halted short, very far short, of demonstration, for his newly acquired virtue had never been put to any convincing test within the prison walls. How could such a man hope to obtain employment, or even to keep himself from starvation if he remained honest? On the other hand, if the convict was not truly reformed, there might indeed be no cruelty to him in handing him a ticket-of-leave, but



there was a great injustice to the public, who were thus again exposed to his depredations long before the time originally allotted for his confinement had expired. Between the two classes of reformed and non-reformed convicts, moreover, there will always stand a very numerous class of men who being in prison, feeling acutely the consequences of their past folly, with all temptation carefully placed out of their reach, and easily impressible alike for good or evil, will present every appearance of having undergone a thorough reformation both to themselves and to others, but on their discharge will at once relapse into vice, the little strength of will which they ever had having been altogether destroyed by the necessary inflexible rigidity of ordinary prison discipline. To discharge such men on tickets-of-leave after undergoing that discipline alone, is just to invest them a few months or years earlier with the power of again becoming a pest to themselves and to others.

With these considerations in view, the Board set itself to devise a system which should at once work out and test the reformation of the convict. The first object to be attained was to secure a real change in the thoughts and feelings of the criminal; the next was to corroborate and fortify this new state of mind, and to make it habitual; and the last was to satisfy the public that the change *had* taken place, and that there was of all events a strong probability of its permanence. The change might be real, and it might last so long as the prisoner remained in gaol, but if it had not become in some measure habitual, so as to resist the temptation of the outside world, then the released convict would return to society merely to harass and annoy it. On the other hand, however real and permanent might have been the reformation of the prisoner, he would be thrown homeless and friendless upon the world on his discharge, unless the public could be fully satisfied that he had resolved to turn from the error of his ways.

The plan finally adopted for securing these objects is so simple in its nature, and apparently so obvious, that many persons will be inclined to say—"Oh! is that all? Dear me I could have devised as good a scheme myself." Perhaps so, but then to the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland belongs the honour not merely of devising but of carrying out this scheme with a heartiness and good will which deserve, and which we trust will command success.

As soon as the convict, in pursuance of his sentence, is placed at the disposal of the Board he is subjected to a course of confinement upon the separate system:—the men for a period of nine months, the women for four months. In this preliminary stage two objects are sought to be attained. In any wise system of prison discipline punishment proper ought to be inflicted. The convict has by his crime incurred a debt to society, and that debt he must pay by undergoing a certain amount of suffering. Perhaps no greater punishment could be inflicted upon him than these months of solitary confinement. Whether they conduce to his reformation or not, the society which he has outraged may at all events at their termination regard the debt due to it as discharged. But although this period is to be considered mainly as one of punishment, and with this object



nearly every description of manual labour is denied to the offender, and he is sequestered from the society of his fellow prisoners; the chaplain and the schoolmaster have free access to his cell. Endeavours are made to arouse and stimulate his mental and moral faculties, and in addition to the instruction thus imparted to him, his otherwise solitary life affords him full leisure for meditating on the course of his past career. His meditations may not be very profound, but his mind must be strangely constituted if at some moment during those long, solitary months, it does not catch a glimpse of the connection between crime and suffering—between virtue and happiness. It is not all impossible that the time thus spent may have resulted in the reformation of the offender, but as yet no test has been applied by which to judge of its reality and permanence. At the close of the nine months, however, the male convict is placed in what is very appropriately styled an "Intermediate Establishment," which resembles a Reformatory School for adults, and is, in fact, a kind of half-way house between the prison and the world. Here the prisoner becomes again half a free man. He works in company with his fellows, he is not unfrequently allowed to pass unguarded beyond the walls of the institution, and as the reward of his industry he receives a small amount of money, which he is allowed to spend as he likes. Thus has the prisoner an opportunity of making himself a character, and, what is still better, of proving to the world that he has one before he is released. The consequence is, that the demand for discharged convicts among Irish employers of labour exceeds the supply, and that so far from the ticket-of-leave man being a nuisance, he is positively considered as a valuable acquisition. He has learned to resist temptation and to form habits of steady labour, and although these qualifications have been acquired in the course of his convict life, they are not the less in demand.

The result of the system which we have thus very briefly sketched is summed up as follows in a pamphlet,\* from the theological views of which we entirely dissent, but of which we can hardly sufficiently admire the zeal and ability:—

"For a period of twenty months has this system been adopted in Irish prisons. During this time between thirteen and fourteen hundred criminals have been brought under its influence. Of this number upwards of one thousand have passed through the prescribed course of discipline; the remainder are still under probation. Of the thousand, upwards of five hundred prisoners have received absolute discharge, and between five and six hundred have received tickets of license. Of the latter, under the strictest supervision, under the most stringent rules, and for the slightest breach of privileges, only in round numbers three per cent. have caused to be revoked their license."

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\* "The Purgatory of Prisoners: or an intermediate stage between the Prison and the Public; being some account of the practical working of the new system of penal reformation introduced by the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland. By the Rev. Orby Shipley, M.A." London: Joseph Masters.



Our ninth opinion is from *The Economist* of November 14th, 1857.

This is a thoughtful, careful, and most interesting account of an attempt which, next to the institution of Reformatory Schools, may be safely called the most successful experiment of social reformers in our own day. Between Mr. Carlyle on the one hand vindictively denouncing "Scoundrelism" and proposing to shoot it down, without any consciousness of the narrowness of the gulf which separates Scoundrelism from our average humanity,—and the *Hospital-School* of criminal reform on the other hand, which regards crime as a mere disease to be pitied, tenderly treated, alleviated, and, if possible, cured by medicines and applications as little disagreeable as possible,—the system adopted by Captain Crofton in his experiment on Irish Convict Prisons, and the tone of Mr. Shipley's pamphlet which explains that system, steers a true middle course. And that course has been crowned with a remarkable success, which shows at once that the "scoundrels" of society are after all but perverted (often very slightly perverted) *men*, and yet that they are men fully conscious of their criminality, often anxious to expiate it, and easily taught to respect the law of justice they have violated when they see it strictly enforced *for* as well as *against* themselves. We fully believe the method adopted by Captain Crofton in the Irish Convict Prisons to be the true solution of the most difficult social problem of the day. In a leading article last week we explained the outline of Captain Crofton's scheme. We will now, by the aid of Mr. Shipley's excellent book, fill in a few of the details, and point out how completely the method as a whole seems applicable to our English prisons.

First, however, we may say a single word on the book itself and its style. It is vigorously, and if we may use the expression, *eagerly* written, with a single view to its object. It has, to a certain extent, the tone of an ecclesiastical school with which we have little sympathy; but the religious spirit is both deep and healthy, and if taken apart from what seems to us the slightly technical ecclesiasticism of the pamphlet, which, for example, renders the author shy of using either the word or the thought "Protestant" in any connection with the English Church, it will awaken genuine sympathy in men of all schools. We hope the allusive Puseyism of a few parenthetical sentences will not prevent men of very different Church principles from studying this most valuable account of a most valuable experiment.

Captain Crofton's scheme for convicts *assumes* a sentence of *at least* four years' penal servitude, without which no sufficient time would be allowed for the trial of his method. Each prisoner is first subjected to a nine-months' solitary imprisonment, in order to mark strongly at first the penal character of the discipline. It is found, too, that, for this limited period, solitude has a softening influence on the mind. Much crime arises from the hurry of worldly excitement and passion. A criminal who is forced to look at his inmost



mind and his past life, is, after the subsidence of the first self-will, soon self-convicted ; and that he should be self-convicted is sure to secure his respect for the operation of the law in the execution of the penalty he has incurred. Mr. Shipley truly remarks that this step is far harder with the Irish than with almost any class of prisoners. The Celtic race has no inherent reverence for law. It is impulsive and lawless in its higher forms. In its lowest, it almost *hates* law. The great tendency of the system adopted by Captain Crofton, is to make the prisoners feel, after this first stage of their penalty, that law is not wholly *against* them ; that it can protect them in privileges of their own as well as restrain them from the breach of others' privileges ; that there is a side of it favourable to them, as well as a side of it hostile to them. This is managed by a classification of the prisoners after the first nine months of solitary life. The *probation* or lowest class, includes those only who have behaved ill in the solitary cell, or those whose health did not permit them to complete their time there. Others are put into the class called the *third*, from which they must rise through the second and first classes before they can in any case be permitted to go to the *intermediate* establishments, where freedom is partially and tentatively restored to them. This rise they may hasten or retard by their own conduct. The *minimum* period in the third class (for an exemplary convict) is two months,—in the second, six months,—and in the first, a year,—so that, including the nine months of solitary confinement, no man can be free of the prisons, *proper*, and admitted into the intermediate establishments within two years and five months, nor usually in so short a time. The system of promotion from class to class depends on the convict's behaviour in three respects—his amenability to authority as a prisoner, his diligence as a scholar in the prison school, and his industry as a mechanic in the trade he is taught. He is characterised monthly ; and only those who during *every* month receive the highest character in *every* respect are eligible for the intermediate establishments in the time mentioned. The conduct and industry marks by which the exact stage of the prisoner's career is denoted, are worn on his sleeve ; and any breach of discipline, secures his degradation, i.e., the loss of the marks he has acquired up to this point. How strongly this emulative influence acts upon the Irish convict's mind, we learn from the evidence of one of the chaplains, who says :—

“The badges or marks pointing out the progress he has made on the road to liberty, encourage his aspirations for the same. The denial of them sensibly reminds him of his retrogression from the goal. Excitement, *sometimes amounting to fury*, which I have seen prisoners manifest when stript of these badges, I would boldly instance, as so many genuine manifestations of these emblems of approaching liberty.”

This is very remarkable, and indicates we think one of the differences between the Irish and English criminals. The former are more lawless, but also more impressible. We doubt if the stimulus of hope and emulation would act so powerfully on the English convict ; though we should expect that fewer of them would retrograde who had once given promise of amendment.



No prisoners, then, are transferred to the intermediate establishments within two years and five months—few so soon. If a man's sentence of penal servitude is to run for seven years, he would not be admitted there till he had passed four years in the ordinary prison, and then would be required, even though exemplary in conduct, to pass one year and three months more in the intermediate stage before a release on licence could be accorded. Again, a man sentenced for ten years would be required to pass six years in the ordinary prisons, and one year and six months in the intermediate establishments, before any licence could be accorded. Before quitting Captain Crofton's *ordinary-prison* system, we must quote the report of prison discipline at Philipstown, one of the ordinary prisons, in 1855, and 1856, to show how remarkably the new system has operated to diminish the violence and ill-conduct of the prisoners:—

It must be borne in mind that the daily average in 1856 was greater by thirty-five prisoners than in 1855.

	In 1855	In 1856.
Attempts to break prison ...	6	—
Mutinous conduct ...	64	1
Assaults on prison officers ...	7	1
Malicious accusation of ditto	1	1
Assaults on prisoners ...	15	21
Theft ...	52	15
Insubordination ...	79	35
Disobedience and insolence ...	85	85
Disorderly conduct ...	172	46
Breach of prison rules (slight offences) ...	294	80
Total ...	775	285

To the number 285 must be added an item unknown to the report of 1855, idleness, &c., 20, making a gross total of 305 defaulters.

The intermediate stage between prison-life and freedom is passed at Smithfield in Dublin, an establishment intended for tradesmen; at Lusk, a colony meant for agricultural training, which is a rural appendage to Smithfield; and at Forts Camden and Carlisle on each side of Cork Harbour, places meant for men employed on public works. The object is to give enough freedom, and even enough exposure to temptation, to try the strength of the prisoner, while an effectual check is still kept on his conduct, and the influences around him still tend to keep him steady. All criminal costume is removed, and the men dressed like ordinary workmen. They are despatched in turn on errands of tradesmen's duty and errands of trust into the town and neighbouring country. The slightest violation of their trust and the slightest breach of discipline remits them at once to the old prison life. They are allowed to earn as much as 3s. 6d. a week during this stage of their career, against the time of release, and a portion of this sum they are permitted to receive at once, in order to give them an opportunity of exercise in the



habit of frugality and self-denial. And there are many proofs that this education in self-restraint is not lost. Captain Crofton tells us that no instance is known of a convict trusted out on commission with the money of his brother prisoners—often as much as a pound, who has applied it dishonestly, or even inspired his fellow-convicts with distrust. The trust reposed in them is felt as an honour, and as an honour it is faithfully respected. Here again we doubt whether English convicts would be so impressible: honesty they would learn perhaps more rapidly;—but the binding power of honour, of the *parole*, is more likely to catch hold of the generous and impulsive nature of the Irish. We must extract Mr. Shipley's very interesting account of the *education* given at the intermediate establishment, Smithfield.

Education is a subject by no means neglected at these intermediate institutions. Four hours every evening are devoted to the intellectual culture of the convicts' mind. This is chiefly of an elementary sort; and it is imparted in a manner to attract the often blunted faculties and obtuse ideas with which it has to grapple. The success attending this system is great. The Directors were very fortunate in obtaining the services of a gentlemen, who had gained much experience in the establishment of evening schools in Dublin, and who was recommended by the National Board of Education, Mr. Organ. By this gentlemen "lectures are given every evening of such a nature as to prepare the prisoners for the world in which they are about to mix, whether their destination be the colonies or at home." It is stated that the two subjects which always attract the greatest attention amongst the inmates of Smithfield, are the colonies, and any moral question. In Captain Crofton's evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, the list of lectures for a month is given. As specimens the following are selected:—Pursuit of Knowledge; Remarkable Inventions; New South Wales and New Zealand; Man, his duty to God and relation to his Fellows; the Atmosphere and its uses; Railways and Telegraphs; History; Printing; What a Man with brains may do; Coal; Physical Geography; Self-denial and decision of Character; Canada; the Calendar; Works of God; Wonders of Science; Temperance; Machinery. Now the writer is able to testify to the interesting manner in which these lectures are given. He has seen the interest they excite; and, what is more to the point, he can prove the hold they take upon their hearers. The men during the delivery of the lectures are encouraged to take notes. They do so; and during their times of work, the trades instructors are in the habit of directing the conversation to the subjects of the lectures. Now mark the result. On Saturday evenings instead of the usual lecture being delivered the prisoners are arranged in lines on opposite sides of the school-room, and are set to work to question each other upon the subject-matter of the week's programme. These questions and answers are generally given as quickly as a spectator can commit them to paper. The replies are often criticised by the questioner; and if not considered by him to be satisfactory, he stands upon his feet, and openly instructs his less mindful neighbour. The questions are given, and



replied to, alternatively from one side of the hall to the other ; and the eagerness displayed by opposing factions sometimes amounts to positive excitement. This sort of competitive examination is looked upon as the great recreation of the week ; and as such is highly prized by the men. Its benefits are manifold. It encourages attention to the lectures. It sharpens the intelligence, in making notes. It opens the understanding, by making reflection inevitable upon cause and effect. It cultivates the intellect, in requiring consideration for questions. It immensely quickens the mental power, in necessitating immediate replies.

One most remarkable result of the foundation of these intermediate establishments is that one of them already is—all of them can be made—self-supporting. In the Lusk colony there is a considerable annual balance, arising from the labour of these semi-liberated convicts, after deducting all expenses of superintendence, food, gratuity to the men themselves, and even their share of the salary of the Board of Directors. And the applications for their labour—directly they become eligible for release on licence—are now considerably more numerous than are the men to satisfy them. It must be remembered, however, that the system has only been in operation 21 months ; and we fear that relapses, when they come, will be likely to occur at some little distance of time after release, when the freshness of their teaching has worn off.

Finally, the result of this experiment is so encouraging that we would strongly urge its immediate application, *mutatis mutandis*, to the English prison system. Captain Crofton estimates the incorrigible convicts, who at present are never suited for the intermediate stage at all, at 25 or 30 per cent. of the whole. The remaining 75 or 70 per cent. he believes are all capable of rising to the intermediate stage. Of these who do reach the intermediate discipline, not two per cent. have had to be recommitment to the ordinary prison-discipline before their discharge. Out of 1,300 men in this stage, only 26 have been sent back to the old prisons. And after ultimate release, not ten per cent. are believed to be found returning to crime. This last point is not easily ascertainable, except in the case of those relieved with a revocable licence, and who, therefore, remain under surveillance. Of these not three per cent. have had their licences revoked ; and it seems not improbable therefore that a proportion of ten per cent. really covers the renegades. If, therefore, we take the reclaimable convicts at only 70 per cent. of the whole, and deduct 15 per cent. on these 70 for those who fall back either during or after their intermediate stage, we shall have 60 per cent. of our criminal population really restored to respectability by this system,—a result we could scarcely dare to hope for, were it not for the results of Captain Crofton's experiment.

The great test of its success is the real *demand* on the part of employers for the labour of men who are training in the intermediate establishments, while common prisoners on release can never get employment unless their past life can be *concealed*. But here the employer sees the system in action ; he hears the men conversing and questioning each other after the week's lectures ; he perceives the



gradual growth of intelligence and self-respect in their minds, and he cannot but trust the men. Shall we, then, be slow to apply in England a system that has produced such results? There is no sadder record than the record of our English prison systems, vibrating between false severity and false indulgence, and alike unsuccessful in teaching the prisoners to learn, to hope, and to trust. Captain Crofton has done much to remove this shadow from our land. It will be disgraceful to England not to seize eagerly on the hope his success holds out. We thank Mr. Shipley most heartily for his little book, and entreat our readers to resort to its pages for a record of which we have given a very poor and imperfect outline.

Our tenth opinion is from *The Morning Herald*, of December 24th, 1857.

It is now nearly two years since the Irish Government, at the instigation of Captain Crofton, Chairman of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland, sanctioned the trial of an experiment which was intended to give to prisoners an opportunity of redeeming their character previously to their release. The plan was, that the convict, after having completed a portion of his sentence, of equal length with that which in England would have rendered him eligible for a ticket of leave, should, if well-behaved, be transferred to a separate prison, and there surrounded, so far as possible, by the temptations that assail the working man in ordinary life, but, elevated by the enjoyment of certain privileges, be permitted to feel the incentives to integrity, and to prove, by temperance and assiduity, his sincere repentance. The experiment was commenced, as its author states, at Smithfield, an old and ill-constructed gaol in Dublin, which is now set apart for tradesmen; and it has been repeated at Forts Camden and Carlisle, on either side of Cork harbour, where are stationed the men employed on public works; and at Lusk, a village about fifteen miles from Dublin, where a sort of rural colony appears to have been formed, as an appendage to Smithfield. After four months' detention in the intermediate prisons, as they are called, at one or other of these places, the convict whose demeanour has been unexceptionable is allowed to avail himself of any suitable offer of employment which he may receive. In this case he obtains a conditional pardon, signified by a license, which may be revoked for misconduct at any time within the duration of the original sentence. If he cannot find a master, he, of course, remains in custody until his term of servitude has expired. Prisoners dismissed on license are put under the surveillance of the constabulary, and their names entered in a register at the station of the district in which they take up their abode. They are commanded to report themselves monthly to the officers, and are deprived of their tickets for even the slightest irregularity, which the constables are strictly enjoined to notify at head-quarters. It is difficult to choose any single word which gives a precise idea of the nature of the intermediate prisons. In some respects they resemble small colleges, in other model workshops for malefactors. The number of inmates in each is restricted to 100, in order that the warders and teachers may be able to maintain frequent intercourse



with every one of them, and to keep a more watchful eye over their behaviour. A felon who is shut up in a common gaol at once loses his distinct existence, and becomes a mere figure among the guilty class into which he has fallen. But no sooner does he enter upon his course of probation than he recovers his personal identity, and is treated as a man who has a will which may be exercised to restrain his passions, and physical and mental qualities which may possibly differ from those of his neighbours. During the day the probationer is occupied with manual labour, chiefly upon fortifications and other like national works; and the gratuity which the Government bestow upon all convicts is in his case increased and paid (if we rightly understand Captain Crofton) according to the amount of industry which he displays. In the evening, when his task is concluded, he attends a lecture upon some practical subject, the knowledge of which will be of service to him in his future career. Out of the earnings of his labour he is allowed either to spend or save, at his discretion, sixpence per week, and the practice of self-denial in this particular affords six shillings, it is thought a valuable test of character. This, however, is not the only test, and a variety of regulations have been conceived in a similar spirit. For instance, the duty of messenger is daily confided to one of the prisoners, taken in rotation from among those whose time of liberation draws near; and in this capacity he is often entrusted with what is to him a considerable sum of money, for the purchase of articles of diet and dress for his companions. Moreover, he is constantly obliged to pass the public-house, and is thus exposed at once to the influence of the two vices that most captivate his imagination—the love of pilfering and the thirst for drink. In all the intermediate establishments the infliction of punishment is forbidden. Whoever transgresses the rules, or deviates from the most rigid propriety, forfeits his indulgence, and is sent back to meditate upon his folly amidst the dreary dulness of his former gaol. Such is a brief view of the intermediate system, as described by Captain Crofton, which he considers to have satisfactorily answered the question, “What shall we do with our criminals on their discharge?” We agree with him so far as this, that it is the best that has yet been invented for reclaiming adults within the limits of the United Kingdom; and that, unless the custom of transportation is resumed on a far more expanded scale, we must have recourse to some general scheme of this kind in England as well as in Ireland. By this time, however, our readers are probably pretty well aware, from the arguments which we have already addressed to them upon this perplexing topic, and which it will be needless to recapitulate, that we think the scene of reformation ought to be laid in the transmarine possessions of the Crown, although for that purpose it might become necessary to found a new penal settlement. This opinion implies no disparagement of Captain Crofton’s plan, of the beneficial results of which upon the convicts themselves there can be no dispute, and which in many things is a great improvement upon those adopted in private refuges. It is distinguished by a methodical simplicity; it can be spread over the whole island, and so made uniform and equal for all prisoners; and it need not break down, even if the superintendents



and chaplains should (and we heartily hope they will) abstain from converting themselves into walking advertisements, and importuning the public for patronage to the prejudice of the free poor. Before leaving Captain Crofton's Memoranda, we cannot refrain from quoting some extracts, in which he enlarges upon the miracles achieved by solitary confinement. He is refuting the objection that the present treatment of prisoners can operate as a premium to crime, and he says—"Detention is so irksome to them, and liberty is so sweet, that all other privileges are counted as nought in comparison. The anxiety, the constant eagerness to attain the period of discharge is so great, that any person, having opportunities of witnessing these indications of feeling, cannot doubt the estimation in which they hold liberty; and, besides the influence of these natural feelings, there is the separation of nine months, through which all convicts pass, and of which all have a wholesome dread. It is an acknowledged fact that the prisoner recollects, years after he is discharged, how it was in this separate stage of detention that everything antagonistic to his former life was first placed before him. The man who delighted in filth and disorder is here made clean and regular. The man whose whole existence depended on the excitement of evil companions and their conversation is here compulsorily silent, except to certain and approved persons. The drunkard is here made sober. The hardened criminal, so long depending on others, is now thrown upon himself, and finds, to his cost, the miserable nature of his support." There is much truth, as well as eloquence, in these sentences, and we are delighted to hear that this seclusion, which, by its terrors, is so well calculated to awe the undetected offender, and, if not too long protracted, becomes so salutary to the mind of the captive, is always the first stage of that new discipline in which the period of probation is the last.

Our eleventh opinion is from *The Union*, for December 24th, 1857.

Those who are interested in the reformation of our criminals—and we hope they are an increasing class—owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Shipley for his very interesting and instructive volume. There was and still remains a blot on the primitive system of England as to adult criminals; and it is this: that, although the discipline of the prison itself may be admirably conducted in many cases, yet no systematic attempt has been ever made, through appropriate Houses of Refuge or Reformatories, to enable the criminal, when discharged, to re-enter society on such a new and independent footing as may enable him to earn his own living, and be again respected by his fellow-men. As Mr. Shipley remarks, a convict, when he leaves his prison, is a child—a mere machine; for all that he does has been so long at the dictation of others, that he loses all idea of self-government, of independent action, or moral responsibility, and providing for himself; so that he soon becomes again the tool of others, and relapses into his own ways. The most exemplary and long-continued obedience to the gaoler—whom the prisoner, of course, hates—is, therefore, no test of a change of character. It is often a mere auto-



matic habit, or else a cunning scheme to obtain indulgence or a shortening of the term of punishment, but indicates no real moral amelioration; and the man is almost sure, at the end of his sentence, to be a worse man than when he begun it.

But there were intelligent and benevolent individuals in Dublin, who devised a mode for bettering the results, and have succeeded. The beginning is with separate confinement and severe labour for some months, the prisoner's relaxations consisting in the visits of the clergy, and the kind and gentle inculcation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His moral law. Christianity, and its code of right and wrong, is made the root and foundation of his treatment; and, so soon as he shows any appreciation of it and sense of justice—the principal feeling sought to be awakened—his condition is bettered, and he is admitted to a state of limited and conditional association with his fellows. Some (about ten per cent.) are never reclaimed, and are treated as hardened, hopeless wretches; others (about fifteen per cent.) fall back and recover themselves, and fall again; but a large proportion improve gradually, and go through all the intermediate establishments, until they are discharged—altered and renovated men.

The first period past, the second is entered on, wherein a strict classification, according to conduct and character, is adopted, schooling, industrial work, with a system of gratuities, introduced. Every particular of the behaviour of each individual is recorded, with good and bad marks; and further, in order that they should be made aware of their position and progress in the prison, of the importance of good conduct, and of the records made concerning them, a badge of merit or otherwise is awarded to each convict every month. The effect has been to cause a reduction in the same prison, and numbers of prison offences, from seven hundred and seventy-five in 1855, to two hundred and eighty-five in 1857.

Having attained a sufficiently good character under these regulations, the convict is transferred to the intermediate establishments, which are the peculiarity of the system. Of these there are three—one agricultural, which is at Lusk; another mechanical, at Cork Harbour; a third artizan, at Smithfield. At this juncture, under the old system, would have intervened the ticket-of-leave system, which threw the prisoner again upon the world, without any renewed moral training as the reward of his mechanical obedience to his gaoler. Here, however, the voluntary system is alone resorted to—voluntary labours and discipline, voluntary education, voluntary temptation. Honour—the felon's honour—is the principle of his heart here appealed to; and the mainspring of his actions here worked upon—the culprit's own honour, and the honour of the institution which confides in his honour. Liberty of conduct is fully accorded; but, being fully accorded, and once in the most trivial manner abused, is irrevocably withdrawn:—"All, or nearly all connection with a prison life is suspended, even to the mere outward man, the growth of the hair, and the dress. Past offences and past punishments are never mentioned, or are only mentioned with a special or exceptional intention; and the men are treated as reasonable



creatures, accountable agents, who have acquired a sense of responsibility, who have a character to win and to lose—in a word, as Christians.”

In these last institutions the prisoners usually remain four or five months—sometimes much longer. When it is ascertained that their character is so changed that they are fit for discharge, it is given to them, with a ticket of license. If that period be long delayed, or is hopeless, they are usually remanded, and undergo the rest of their sentences; but these are a very small portion. They are employed during this last probationary period in industrial works in or out of the house, for which they receive, and are allowed to expend, a certain amount of wages, of which a regular account is kept. They (as we read it) are not allowed to sleep out of the house, and must return at certain fixed hours, but are allowed to make purchases for themselves or fellows; and, when transferred from one establishment to another, they are allowed to conduct their own transit. Thus, a carpenter was sent two miles off daily by himself for two months, to do some work in another prison, and returned punctually every evening, without fail, to his own. And, though no watch is kept over them, only a single attempt at escape has been made.

During the last period schooling of an advanced kind, and instruction in religious duties, occupy four hours every day. There are daily prayers, and full services on Sundays. On Friday and Saturday the Roman Catholic chaplain hears confessions. However, here is the failure at present—there is no effectual or converting religious discipline; and, though the present short trial of the system appears to be triumphantly successful, it will remain to be seen how, in a length of time, the discharged convicts turn out.

Having undergone this last ordeal, the reformed prisoner is set at liberty, with a ticket of license—not, as in England, to be hidden or destroyed, but as a most valuable testimonial, of which he may be proud; for in it are recited the grounds of his discharge, and the exemplary behaviour which has earned it. He is, therefore, always ready to display it; and with this document he is always sure of immediate employment—for all masters are found to be anxious to engage servants or workmen who have gone through such repeated and protracted trials. The man is thus restored to his country an altered and reformed being, and entitled to take his place again in society.

Similar institutions, on a smaller scale, exist for women—a Refuge of St. Vincent, at Golden Bridge, for Roman Catholics, under the superintendence of Sisters of Mercy; and a Protestant Refuge, which, like other institutions of the kind in Dublin, do not bear inspection or examination. We cannot but trust that the system of Brothers and Sisters of Mercy for prisons and workhouses may some day be carried out universally in England. In Rome, a Reformatory for discharged prisoners has for some time been in operation, under this management, with great success. Let us hope it may be soon tried here.



Our twelfth opinion is from the *Clerical Journal* of November 23, 1857.

THE theoretical assumption on which was based the Irish system of convict management may be stated in a few words. Mr. Shipley concisely puts it in the form, that even prisoners "are not so bad as they seem;" that they, as well as other persons have "two sides to their character;" and that one of these sides is a good one. This fact is elaborated and applied to the case of convicted prisoners in the work before us. The Board of Directors in Ireland certainly have very simple data to begin from. It seems no less simple than true. It proves itself no less true than successful. The indisputable fact, that large numbers of criminals fall rather from ignorance, education in crime, pressing temptation, than from predeterminate habits of opposition to the law, rendered some measures other than those in operation a crying necessity. The no less certain truth, that large numbers of those who do fall are unable again to arise, and to take their place in society, from the combined effect of many causes, demanded a solution of a difficulty other than that it has yet obtained. The Irish system confidently asserts the solution of the difficulty; propounds the adoption, in practical working order, of the remedial measures. It offers to the convict an improvement in prison discipline, prison education, prison employment, prison morality. It gives him an opportunity first of gaining a wish for reformation, then of putting into practice the wish, lastly, of absolutely testing the strength of his reformation. It opens a door to repentance, amendment, restoration, socially, morally, religiously; it strives to soften, softening to implant, implanting to train, training to cultivate, such virtue and grace which even the culprit in prison may, and can, and does eventually, by God's grace, obtain. The system is founded on common sense, it is nurtured by philanthropy, it is blessed by religion. And it may be added, as a glance at Mr. Shipley's statistics abundantly prove, that the system is eminently successful. It is successful in every way. It reduces crime. It restores numberless outcasts to society. It supersedes to a large extent the necessity of transportation. Lastly, it is eminently economical. But it does more; it tends to separate the presumably ductile convict from the incorrigible felon. It marks the professional criminal. It divides the *genus* convict into two distinct classes, with both of which it deals in opposite ways. Both have a chance, an equal chance, of reformation. But the one which refuses to be reformed has to be treated upon terms as stringent and severe as the opposite ones are managed by measures mild and lenient. Both systems are fully discussed in the pamphlet before us. They can only be alluded to here.

Let us now turn to the practical working of the new Irish system of prison discipline. Upon conviction, the Celtic convict is conveyed to a Dublin prison, built on a principle somewhat improved upon that which for many years has obtained at Pentonville. The *regime* under which the prisoner here finds himself is the separate system. He occupies, alone, a cell. He enjoys an hour's exercise, or more upon medical advice, daily. He is instructed for a similar period by the schoolmaster. He is visited more or less frequently by the chaplain.



He is furnished with pens, ink, paper, and books ; but his only employment is that of picking oakum. Here the convict remains nine months at the least ; and is detained longer, with an indifferent prison character. This is period the first in the convict's career ; and this, the reader will remark, is the purely deterrant (to use the language of the science) period. For the object hoped to be obtained by this discipline, and for the effects which very generally result, we must refer the reader to the pamphlet before us.

Next comes the second period of discipline ; and this may be termed (in the same dialect) the deterrant-reformatory career of the convict. This stage is a sort of transition state from the strictly-enforced punishment of the first step, and towards the purely philanthropic probation of the last step of prison life. It neither wholly enforces the rigour of the law, nor wholly holds out the privileges of freedom. It combines the penal element with the probationary ; and during his passage through this stage, the convict rises gradually from a lower class to a higher, until at length he proves himself fitted to be entrusted with that amount of confidence which is accorded in the Intermediate Establishments. The means whereby the prisoner is tested in this stage is drawn out at length by the author, both in the body of the work, and in the appendix on the system of badges, marks, and gratuities, with which the *brochure* closes. To the uninitiated reader it appears a complicated system, though it is not so in reality. Suffice it here to say that, by a cleverly-arranged classification, the prisoner, by the results of three tests—those of conduct, industry, and schooling—gradually rises in the scale of convicts. There are three classes through which he must pass, each of which is distinguished by a variety in dress, and in each of which he is remunerated for work at an increasing ratio.

The Irish prisoner at length reaches the Intermediate Establishments of the system. This, it is well to note, is the feature of the whole theory—the mainspring of the whole machinery—the centre round which all else revolves—to which everything besides tends. In the first stage he was subject to punishment to vindicate the majesty of justice. In the second, though punishment was not the primary principle, it still asserted its right to be considered ; but an element of reformatory probation was added. In the third the reformatory principle is all-powerful. In this, the last stage between the prison and the public, the convict is treated, to all intents and purposes, as a free man temporarily debarred from liberty. He chooses his own trade, at which he works, in a certain proportion, on his own account. He devotes a considerable part of the day to educational purposes. He has the opportunity of making a character for himself, of turning over a new leaf, of learning habits of self-control and self-discipline, of cultivating moral and religious graces, of starting once more in life with a clean bill of health, and with a situation, in general, procured for him by the prison authorities.

Many features of the Intermediate Establishments it is impossible even to glance at in this place. One or two, however, may be mentioned. The system of education there employed, with much success, is one very strong point in the management. The reader can judge



of the progress made by illiterate persons in a short time by a reference to the curious list of questions, based on the subjects of lectures, which the convicts put to one another during the weekly competitive examination. The results of several of these examinations are given by Mr. Shipley, and they are not the least striking portion of the evidence he adduces in favour of the new system.

The common-sense manner in which the ticket-of-license system has been worked is another great peculiarity of the Irish Direction. The way in which the constabulary have played their part is deserving of much praise; but the Board which planned the arrangements from which such good results flowed has certainly earned for itself the approbation of all persons qualified to give the subject a thought. The treatment reserved for the female portion of the Irish establishment, though we are unable to go into details, has our warmest sympathies and heartiest approbation. The devotion of the good ladies of St. Vincent's seems to point to better times. These, however, are but few points, when we would willingly touch upon many admirable features in the system.

What is to be the result of all this experimentalising in Ireland, naturally is the question which arises to the reader on laying down *The Purgatory of Prisoners*. Is the system which is so sound and so successful on one side of the channel to remain on its own side, and not to be allowed to cross over to the other? Are so many and such good results to be permitted to be monopolised by Ireland; and is England to stand looking on, in admiration, of necessity, but inactivity? Far from it. Let those it may concern—and whom does it not intimately affect?—examine deeply and closely, without fear or favour, without prejudice, and without preconceived opinions. Let them boldly and honestly announce their deliberate opinion upon the value of the Irish system. Let them, in public and in private, in print and out of it, with influence and without it, aid in the good work, and we may yet hope to see the new system established at home.

Mr. Shipley speaks warmly upon this matter, which appears to be one main object in the publication of his account. He has our warmest wishes for the success of the crusade against the existing system of convict management in England; and, in conclusion, we cordially make our own his concluding words, when he says:—

“We must give the new Irish system a fair, open, honest, patient trial. If it fail, the sooner comes its fall the better. If it succeed, the sooner comes its success the more blessed. One system of prison management alone has responded to the call of fact, has passed through the crucible of practice. One system of prison direction alone has tested its theories by practice—by practice proved its theories. That system of prison management is the Irish system of purgatorial purification in intermediate establishments. That system of prison direction is the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland.”

Mr. Shipley has discharged an important duty by the publication of this pamphlet, or rather volume, and the arduous task is performed in a very creditable manner.



Our thirteenth opinion is from *The Midland Counties Herald*, of November 5th, 1857.

Some months ago, we brought under the notice of our readers the successful results of the enlightened efforts made in Ireland towards the solution of the most difficult problems of the convict question. No person who is aware of the zeal, ability, and philanthropy with which our highly esteemed Recorder has laboured for the same end, will be surprised to learn that the proceedings of Captain Crofton and his colleagues were regarded by Mr. Hill, from a distance with feelings of the deepest interest, or that he should desire to make a close personal inspection of them. With this view, he repaired to the sister kingdom in the month of August last; and of the reformatory principles which he there found in operation a very clear and interesting account is given in the present publication. Facilities for the most rigid scrutiny were, he states, afforded him in abundance, and of these he availed himself, so that the conclusions he has drawn have not been hastily formed. The term "convict prisons," he explains, is applied to establishments reserved by the Government exclusively for criminals sentenced to transportation or to penal servitude; and the system on which those places have for several years been conducted, aims at instructing and training the prisoner so as to fit him to encounter the hardships and temptations to which he will be exposed on his return to society, and to fortify him against the danger of a relapse into evil courses. He is first consigned to the cellular gaol, called Mountjoy, in the city of Dublin, and night and day kept in a state of strict isolation from the other inmates, except in the chapel, the exercise ground, and the school-room, where conversation is prohibited. This seclusion, combined with religious instruction and reading, we are told, on the authority of Mr. Cooney, one of the chaplains, operates very powerfully on the mind of the convict for two or three months. "It subdues, and almost invariably leads to a change of sentiment." At the end of nine months, unless he has misconducted himself, he is removed to Spike Island, a fortified station in the Cove of Cork. He is there employed during the day on the repair and enlargement of military works, and at night shut up in a strong building formerly used as a barrack, containing cellular divisions, which, while preventing the prisoners from associating together, are so constructed as to admit of conversation under the *surveillance* of a watchman. This treatment, although severe, is felt to be a welcome relief from the irksome solitude of Mountjoy. Should the trade of the offender, however, be that of an indoor artisan, he is transferred from Dublin to Philipstown, an inland prison, where he is engaged in the occupation for which he is best fitted; and where, as at Spike Island, his privileges are extended. At both stations, the schoolmaster, without infringing on the province of the chaplain, plays an important part in the delivery of lectures adapted to the tastes and capacities of his hearers; and as many of these look forward to emigration as affording advantageous openings for honest industry, the situation, climate, and general character of the various colonies are occasionally intro-



duced as topics for useful discussion. On this subject one very pleasing fact is stated :—

“Men who cannot read or write, so as to gain much information from books, have been taught, orally and by lecture, something of life in general, and are partly educated. It is both amusing and edifying to hear these old men teaching each other geography, by pointing out on the maps the several countries under the Irish names, for the different colours that mark them. Those who have learnt to read, and who also speak Irish, very generally translate the subject and substance of their lessons into Irish, for those who have failed to learn to read. There was a remarkable instance of the effects of application and perseverance in the case of S. C., an old stolid man, scarcely able to utter a word of English, and not knowing a letter in the alphabet; yet such a desire had he to learn to read, that he applied himself day and night to the book, and though extremely dull and slow, in the course of a few months he could read a first and second book, and was reading the sequel when discharged.”

Oral instruction in agriculture is likewise given, and Mr. Harland, the head schoolmaster, observes, as an illustration of the dislike which prisoners have for unproductive employment :—

“It may not be amiss to state here, that if it were expedient to employ the convicts in general at trades and agriculture, I am convinced that it would contribute to humanise, improve, and prepare them for the sort of labour they will have to perform when liberated. They question the utility of fortifications and such works, but admit the benefits of trade and agriculture, and would therefore pay more attention to them.”

But at Spike Island the men are yoked to waggons for the purpose of hauling stone, earth, bricks, and coals, which reduces them in their own estimation to the level of beasts of burthen, and weakens the association of self-respect with labour. At the same time, they have a stimulus to exertion in the form of promotion by classes. On their arrival they are placed in the third division, and their ascent to the higher grades is regulated by their conduct in separate confinement. They also receive gratuities, and a small portion of their earnings, with liberty to expend sixpence per week on any thing but intoxicating drinks, which are wholly prohibited, but self-denial is encouraged and rewarded. When a prisoner, by blameless conduct for twelve months, has reached the “exemplary” standard, he is considered qualified for the intermediate stage between coercion and freedom, and is removed to the Forts, to Smithfield, or to Lusk. He is not in custody, but is subjected to watchful supervision. The work of instruction goes forward as before, and the prisoner's fitness for liberty is tested :—

“When the prison authorities observe that an intermediate man has acquired some capacity for self-control, he is sent out on messages. It is found in practice that he does not abuse this privilege, but having transacted his business with promptitude, he straightway returns. A number of such men will then be entrusted to leave the establishment, for the purpose of performing some work procured for



them at a distance from their home, returning every night immediately on the conclusion of the day's labour. Here, again, instances of abuse, such, for instance, as entering a public house, are rare, if not altogether unknown. The intermediate man, having now established a character, is entrusted with money to make purchases, or to pay bills on behalf of the prison; and what may, perhaps, be justly considered as a surer criterion that his character is known to be deserving is, that such of his comrades as remain at home are in the habit of employing him on commissions to buy for them, and they place in his hands moneys for that purpose. A few months ago a messenger so employed, when he returned, reported that he had lost sixpence belonging to one of his fellows. He was in great distress, but was re-assured by the unanimous voice of the whole body, declaring that no thought of malversation had entered their minds. Subsequently, one of the men found the piece of money in an apartment, where it must have been accidentally dropped."

Nearly all pass through this ordeal without failure, the offences committed by them being few and slight. Of 1,300 who were exposed to it between January, 1856, and September, 1857, all but twenty-six retrieved their position, six others being relegated to Spike Island at their own request. But the highest testimony in favour of the plan, of which we have given the leading features, is to be found in the demand by employers for the services of discharged prisoners which now exceeds the supply. The conduct of by far the greater number of them is known to be good. With regard to the exact numbers of those permanently reformed, as compared with those who break down, it is too soon, Mr. Hill, says, to speak with confidence; but the following figures go very far to justify the opinion expressed by Mr. Hill, in concluding his valuable pamphlet, that the Board of Directors of Irish County Prisons, have practically answered the question which has so long perplexed the Government and Legislature of this country—"What shall we do with our convicts?" The intermediate stage commenced in January, 1856, and, according to present experience, it is found that from seventy to seventy-five per cent. of prisoners rise to that stage, the residue remaining below, to be discharged at the completion of their sentences. On the 30th of September, 1857, 1,067 convicts had been discharged from intermediate establishments and refuges: On tickets of leave, 559; licenses revoked, 17; absolutely, 508; tickets of leave to females, 97; tickets to females revoked, 1. Managers of female refuges speak favourably of all the 96.

We have, at the imminent risk of being considered extremely tedious, collected and printed this vast mass of evidence in support of the system of Convict management adopted and carried out so successfully in Ireland. Why should not the like system be adopted and carried out through England and Scotland? Well has the Rev. Mr. Shipley written:—

That the system must ultimately become the method by which our Convict population are to be treated, for reasons too numerous to be



mentioned, it is hoped will be the opinion of the majority of those who read these lines. The foundations upon which the plan is raised, the method of construction of the building, the general design, the particular details, the adaptation of the means to the end, the very substantial and satisfactory results which have been obtained, all seem to point to a time, not far distant, when England shall enjoy, at the least, an equal amount of prosperity in the Christianising influence which, by more enlightened provisions than heretofore, may be made to bear upon such as have succumbed to crime. There is no conceivable reason, as such, why a system unequivocally successful in one portion of a country in which many obstacles had to be surmounted, should not be adopted in another portion, in which none or few of the peculiar difficulties impede. In truth, all reason, and all justice, and all interest, both for the public, and for the prisoner, incline the other way; and it certainly seems incumbent with the opponents of the system to show cause, why a trial of the plan should not be made.

The English mind appears to be particularly adapted to the well working of the Irish system. Less impulsive than the Celt, the Saxon race, though the required effects might take longer to produce fruit, would probably yield a more abundant crop of impressible and reformational convicts. A great gain would likewise accrue to the system in the manner of Religion in this country; independent of theoretical and doctrinal questions, the practical element would, it is hoped, be more in the ascendant. Then might be realised in its completeness, the true theories of penal amendment. Then might the Church be allowed to exercise Her mission to class almost without Her pale, entirely without Her influence. Then might the Spirit of Catholicity be brought to bear upon prison discipline; and the scheme of reformation, go hand in hand, from its commencement to its close, with the doctrines of Catholic Truth, with the discipline of Catholic practice. Then might be seen devoted Priests spending themselves and being spent in CHRIST's service; earnest laymen following in the wake of Ecclesiastical example; Angels in female form doing the work of Evangelists amongst the fallen of their sex. Then might be witnessed philanthropy elevated by Christianity, Christianity sobered by philanthropy. May God in His infinite mercy hasten the day! May He cause this good work to flourish in our own country! May He give grace to persons of all ranks, and all conditions, to help on—in this one particular—the advance of His Kingdom on earth! May He crown with blessings, the labour of our hands!

To conclude; in addition to matters elsewhere particularised, one desideratum for the efficient working of the Irish system consists in a course of training for prison officials, in some establishment where an uniformity of plan, both for education and discipline, may be adopted. The great element of success, however, which we possess in England is our elaborate organization of the parochial system. This is a subject too large for discussion here. It is one which will well repay consideration. It is one which requires much thought and much discussion. It must play a very important part in any extensively designed scheme of penal reformation. It is much to be hoped that



some comprehensive plan for the employment of the parochal clergy—a plan tempered with experience, and not devoid of zeal—in the service of philanthropy, may be made public. Men's minds are now turned towards the amelioration of the criminal classes. Let them see to it, the attention now attracted, result not in empty curiosity or in idle inquiry; terminate not in selfish inactivity or in careless apathy. Men's minds are conscious that much may be done towards the reformation of the prison population. Let them see to it, that much, morally, socially, and religiously, be done. One system, and one system only of prison discipline should prevail in Great Britain and Ireland. One plan, and one plan only should be permitted to be continued at home and abroad. If the English system be all that is satisfactory; if the results obtained from its working, do accomplish all that is desirable; if there is nothing wanting to improve the condition of our convicts within the prison, to change their condition without it; then in the name of all that is Holy, let the English system prevail. But if not: if the old system be weighed in the balance, and be found wanting; if it be not suited to the advanced principles of philanthropy; if it be contrary to the dictates of common sense; if it fail to treat criminals as men, and as Christians; and if it does not produce the favourable results that by other means may be obtained; then for the uninterested benefit to the prisoners, for the selfish good to ourselves, for the cause of Religion, for the benefit of CHRIST'S Church, which suffers in all its suffering members, let some other system, some new plan, some fresh theory, some tested idea be adopted. This is no time for sitting with our hands folded before us. This is no season for discussing with the condescension of a patron, paper schemes of philanthropy. We must be up: we must be doing. We must give the new Irish system a fair, open, honest, patient trial. If it fail, the sooner comes its fall the better. If it succeed, the sooner comes its success the more blessed. One system of prison management alone has responded to the call of fact, has passed through the crucible of practice. One system of prison direction alone has tested its theories by practice, has by practice proved its theories. That system of prison management is the Irish system of purgatorial purification in Intermediate Establishments between the prison and the public. That system of prison direction is the Board of Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland.

These, it may be said, are the dreamings of an enthusiast, or the hopes of a partizan. Let it be so said, but first let us take the testimony of Captain Crofton, who has as little of romance about him, in his official capacity, as possible. He states in his *Memoranda* as follows:—

I.—Whether or not the grounds on which Employers formerly refused to take Convicts into their employment, viz., the insufficient guarantee of an ordinary Prison character, is applicable to the Intermediate Establishments?

The adoption of stages of detention, previous to discharge, in which a Prisoner possesses voluntary action for good or for evil, removes



the ground of complaint that the Prison character is under the new system insufficient. This fact is patent, inasmuch as the Convict has the power of committing himself at any time, by yielding to the ordinary temptations with which he will be beset on discharge. The Intermediate Prison character, therefore, is of real and of substantial value. It is evinced by the circumstance, that although in the first instance considerable reluctance was shown to employ the "exemplary" Prisoners; time, and experience of those who have passed through the probationary stage, have completely reconciled employers, who now very frequently return to the Intermediate Establishment for additional men. The strongest proof of this statement, will be to append a return of those Prisoners on Licence, who are employed in the city, and county of Dublin. It must be remembered that these men are not indebted for such employment to their own friends, but to the unwearied exertions of the Lecturer, who considers the greatest advocate in their favour to be, the circumstance of their being placed before release in such a position, that the ordinary temptations of life can assail them. This circumstance is not only indicated to the employers, but they are themselves invited to judge of the effects produced.



Return of Prisoners on Licence, in the City, and County of  
Dublin, for August, 1857.

Initials of Name.	Employers.	Weekly Wages.	Observations.
		£ s. d.	
D. L.	M. N., ..	0 12 0	
D. K.	M. C., ..	0 9 0	
D. R.	John M'D., ..	0 7 0	
M. M'L.	Do., ..	0 7 0	Not able-bodied men.
P.M'N.	Do., ..	0 7 0	
D. R.	Do., ..	0 7 0	
M. G.	Do., ..	0 7 0	
T. R.	Do., ..	0 7 0	
P. M'G.	James M'D., ..	0 13 0	
C. M'C.	Do., ..	0 13 0	
P. G.	Do., ..	0 13 0	
J. K.	Do., ..	0 13 0	
P. M.	Do., ..	0 13 0	
T. F.	M'C., ..	0 9 0	
P. K.	B. H., ..	0 3 0	And board.
P. M.	M. K., ..	0 10 0	
M. W.	M. C., ..	0 10 0	
P. H.	Mr. R., ..	0 8 0	
W. K.	M. H., ..	0 10 0	
J. J.	Mr. H., ..	0 10 0	
J. N.	Mr. K., ..	0 9 0	
F. R.	Own account ..	0 18 0	At his employer's re- commendation.
T. K.	M. C., ..	0 10 0	
M. R.	Mr. J., ..	0 10 0	
J. G.	Mr. C., ..	1 6 0	
J. F.	M. C., ..	0 8 0	
P. Q.	Public employ- ment, ..	0 10 0	
M. C.	Do., ..	0 10 0	
J. W.	Mr. S., ..	0 12 0	
P. K.	Mr. K., ..	0 10 0	
J. S.	Mr. H., ..	0 10 0	
T. L.	Mr. F., ..	1 0 0	
H.	Public employ- ment ..	0 11 0	
J. T.	Mr. B., ..	0 8 0	And house.
— R.	Mr. H., ..	0 10 0	
— B.	F. and T., ..	0 10 0	
P. B.	Public employ- ment, ..	0 12 0	
W. T.	Mr. J. G., ..	0 9 0	
M. E.	E. N., }	—	The wages in these cases are fluctua- ting.
P. C.	M. M'K., }		
J. J.	M. H., ..	0 10 0	
J. G.	M. H., ..	0 10 0	



It will be observed by this return, that forty-two prisoners are so employed at the present time. Others have been similarly situated; have quitted their places, after receiving unconditional pardons; and many have subsequently joined their friends in the Colonies. It may be added, that some of those employed, have been sixteen months in the same service.

Observations on each Prisoner's character, made by the Officers brought into contact with him, are appended to his application for conditional pardon.

II.—Whether or not, the character of those employed gives satisfactory evidence of the value of their special training; and how proved?

It has been before stated, that up to the 30th September, 1857, 1,067 convicts have been discharged from the Intermediate Establishments and Refuges; 559 of these have been discharged on Tickets of Licence, and the remainder unconditionally at periods, and under rules before stated. With reference to the 559 Prisoners on Licence concerning whom these statements principally apply as having afforded better means of verification, it will be necessary to observe, that no offer of employment for a Convict is accepted without due inquiries being, in the first instance, made as to the respectability of the person offering it. Forty-two of the 559 Prisoners are now employed in the City and County of Dublin; they are visited fortnightly; and, with two exceptions, they are very highly reported of. Eighty-one have received unconditional pardons in consequence of good conduct when on probation, some of whom have enlisted, and others have subsequently joined their friends in the Colonies. Since the 1st January, 1857, Male Convicts on Licence have been under the surveillance of the Constabulary, to whom they report themselves monthly; and in the event of misconduct, however trifling, they are at once reported to the Prison Authorities. The rules in this respect are appended.

“MEMORANDUM.

“*Dublin Castle, 1st January, 1857.*

“REGISTRATION AND SUPERVISION OF CONVICTS ON  
TICKET OF LICENCE.

“His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant being desirous of accurately testing the practical working of the Ticket of Licence System, by a well-organized system of Registration of Licensed Convicts, whereby they may be brought under special supervision and a check be laid upon the evil-disposed, has been pleased to sanction the following regulations, which are, therefore, circulated for the information and guidance of the Constabulary:—

“1. When an offer of employment for a Prisoner is accepted a notification thereof will be made by the Directors of Government Prisons to the Inspector-General of Constabulary, by whom it will be transmitted to the Constabulary of the locality in which the employment is to be given, with all necessary particulars for the purpose of being entered in a Register at the Constabulary Station.

“Each Convict so to be employed will report himself at the appointed Constabulary Station (the name of which will be given to



him) on his arrival in the District, and subsequently, on the first of each Month.

"3. A special report is to be made to Head Quarters by the Constabulary whenever they shall observe a Convict on licence guilty of misconduct or leading an irregular life.

"4. A Convict is not to change his locality without notifying the circumstances at the Constabulary Station, in order that his Registration may be transferred to the place to which he is about to proceed. On his arrival he must report himself to the nearest Constabulary Station (of the name of which he is to be informed,) and such transfer is to be reported to Head Quarters for the information of the Directors of Government Prisons.

"5. An infringement of these rules by the Convict will cause it to be assumed that he is leading an idle irregular life, and therefore entail the revocation of his Licence.

"6. Further regulations may hereafter be added to the foregoing should they become necessary."

It will be obvious that as the employer is in every case made acquainted with the antecedents of the prisoner he wishes to engage, any inquiries that may afterwards be discreetly made, as to character, conduct, &c., cannot in any way affect the prospects of the convict. The managers of the Refuges for Female Prisoners favourably account for ninety-six out of ninety-seven Female Convicts up to the 31st of August, 1857, (the Licence of one has been revoked.) It appears that on the whole number of 559 Convicts on Licence up to the 30th September, 1857, seventeen Licences have been revoked. It will be observed also that in addition to the stringent observation exercised over forty-two men who are, many of them, exposed to the temptations of the City of Dublin, there is also the very efficient and general supervision of the Constabulary. Yet the results, though slight irregularities are always noted, and the terms of the Licence most strictly enforced,\* prove the revocation of rather more than three per cent.

There may be, and there probably are some Licensed Convicts who, by the exercise of great cunning are, with the utmost strictness of supervision, still prosecuting their old calling. But these must be few. There are others, doubtless, who, from the migratory habits of labour in Ireland, have baffled supervision for any length of time; and it is believed they have left the country. On the other hand and corroborative of the efficiency of the Constabulary Supervision, there are authentic communications from nearly 200 male Prisoners discharged on Licence, proving that they not only evade detection, but that they are strenuously persevering in an honest course of industry.

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\* As corroboration of the practice pursued, I may add that two of these revocations of Licence have been on account of irregularity in reporting themselves; three for keeping bad company; one for losing his employment through drink; one for fighting and brawling in the streets; one for defrauding the Railway Company by travelling without taking a ticket.



This, to my knowledge, has occurred in many cases of those discharged conditionally and unconditionally from the Intermediate Prisons, under circumstances of great privation during the winter months. As far as possible a correspondence has been kept up with the Convicts unconditionally discharged, which, in general has proved satisfactory; many of these have enlisted; very large numbers have emigrated from the country, having saved sufficient money from the gratuities allowed in the Intermediate Prisons to materially further them in such a course. There can be, it is submitted, no doubt on the mind of any person who examines the subject, that there is abundant evidence of the value of the special training these Prisoners have received, to warrant a favourable judgment upon the system; a judgment not formed on isolated cases, which, of course occasionally shine forth too brightly to warrant conclusions upon the whole, but formed on the conduct of the aggregate number of Convicts discharged.

IV.—Whether or not, the privileges allowed in the Intermediate Prisons have conduced, in practice, to the existence of tests of character; and in what particular?

Each Prisoner is allowed to retain in his own possession sixpence per week, from his gratuity money; which sum he may expend or save, as he may possess more or less self-denial. A Prisoner, taken in roster from those whose terms of detention are drawing to a close, is placed on messenger's duty daily: he is then permitted to make purchases of articles of dress, diet, &c., for the other Prisoners. It was considered advisable to prove whether or not the confidence of Prisoners in each other was equal to that entertained by the Authorities. Not one instance of wrangling, or of dispute has arisen during a period of twenty months, with regard to such purchases; and although there have been two or three cases in which the Messenger has returned sixpence or one shilling deficient of his change, there has never been any suspicion of wrong doing on the part of the Prisoners, and the money has always been subsequently found. As the purchaser frequently has fifteen or twenty shillings at his disposal, the test is considered valuable. The ordinary temptations of the world, in the shape of Public Houses, &c., of course constantly present themselves to Prisoners acting as Messengers; and, strange to say, that during this long period of daily duty, only one case has arisen of a man having been drinking. In this case, although his duty was accurately performed, the breach of Rule was immediately punished, and the Culprit forthwith removed to an ordinary Prison. Each Convict is provided with a Book in which he enters the amount of his labour, and its value, weekly, as also the money he has expended.

VI.—Whether or not, the results being proved morally beneficial, it can be shown, that the labour of the Convicts, prosecuted under such a system, will be economical to the State; and, particularly applicable to the condition of the United Kingdom at the present moment?

It has been already stated, that moveable Iron Huts, to hold Fifty Prisoners in each, have been erected, and occupied: and that they



are found well adapted for the purposes required. A little consideration will show the great advantages which would accrue to the Government, from the fact of its being enabled to undertake works of less magnitude than have formerly been thought possible for Convicts to perform. Hitherto one great objection to the employment of Convict labour arose on account of the heavy expenses incurred in the erection of a Permanent Prison, a building which becomes nearly useless on the completion of the work. Whereas, by the location of selected Convicts, in the Huts described, they can be moved for a trifling expense to the next work to be performed. The cost of each building (£330), has before been given; and it is evident that any number of Huts may be erected, and that the principle of individualization may be preserved in each complement of Fifty men.

The supervision necessary for Two Huts containing One Hundred able-bodied Convicts will be as follows:—A Chief Warder; a Warder to act as Registrar and Schoolmaster; and six other Warders, who should be skilled and useful men, to superintend any works that may be required. The cost of such a staff is here appended, as well as the productive labour which may be expected from the Prisoners, Officers, &c.



*Return showing the Cost of Maintenance, &c., of 100 Able-bodied Prisoners for Six Months (in two Iron Moveable Huts) with the value of their Labour.*

	Dr.		Cr.		£	s.	d.
	£	s.	£	s.			
Victualling, at 3s. 10d. per week ...	...	...	By Labour of 100 Prisoners, for 26 weeks each, 9s. ...	...	498	6	8
Clothing, at 9d. ...	...	...	Productive Labour of six of the Warders charged in Salaries, &c., of Officers, and who give their labour to the public as Carpenters, Artificers, &c., ...	...	97	10	0
Salaries, ...	£178	0					
Rations, ...	35	4					
Clothing, ...	13	10					
Share of Director's Salaries, Officers' Expenses, &c, ...	...	...			226	14	4
Medicines, ...	...	...			55	0	0
Fuel, 20 Tons, ...	...	...			2	0	0
Proportionate amount of Gratuities chargeable on 100 Prisoners, ...	...	...			15	0	0
Rent, &c., Huts ...	...	...			100	0	0
Soap, ...	...	...			17	10	0
Light... ...	...	...			5	8	0
Bedding, 2s. 6d. each per man per annum, ...	...	...			4	0	0
Postage, ...	...	...			6	5	0
Books and Stationery, ...	...	...			4	0	0
Two Cooks, 26 weeks each, 9s., ...	...	...			7	10	0
Contingencies, ...	...	...			23	8	0
					10	0	0
Balance, paying all Expenses, ...	£1,072	12					
	...	6					
	£1,308	18					
	0	0					

REMARKS.—Included in this 100 are Carpenters, Painters, Masons, &c. This estimate is therefore not at all too high, as is evinced by employers taking men from the Prison at 10s. per week, and many at higher wages.



It will be observed, that a large balance may reasonably be expected to accrue to the Public through the employment of Prisoners in this stage. The undefended state of the Coasts of Great Britain and Ireland at the present moment, seem peculiarly inviting to the trial of a system which has been shown to be morally, socially, and economically beneficial. The labour is especially suitable to convicts; and under the directions of Sappers, would be skilfully executed. It is not sufficient to say, that convicts should be employed on useful works. They should be employed on the most useful works, *i.e.*, on works most pressing for the necessities of the State, and on those which will most conduce to their own reformation.\*

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\*At page 20 of his paper on Irish Convict Prisons, Mr. Recorder Hill observes:—

“At Lusk (fifteen miles from Dublin), I found a body of intermediate men engaged in forming a garden on open heath land, a large tract of which is to be brought under cultivation by convict labour. Their dwelling, to be supplied with vegetables from the garden, is constructed of corrugated sheet iron, with an interior lining of boards for warmth. It comprehends two distinct erections, each consisting of a single spacious room, which, by the slinging of hammocks, becomes at night a dormitory. One of these rooms is by day their kitchen and house-place; the other their chapel, school, lecture room, and library. Each of these two apartments is calculated to give sleeping room to fifty men. They are capable of removal at a slight cost, being light, readily taken to pieces, and as easily reconstructed; consequently they are well adapted for temporary stations like this, which is to be the residence of convict artificers engaged in building a juvenile prison about to be erected in the immediate neighbourhood. Iron edifices like these have been some time in use at the Forts, and experience has proved them to be very comfortable habitations. The portability of these rooms will overcome the difficulties which have been experienced in employing bodies of men at tasks which are completed within short periods of time. Not being prisons, however, they are only suitable for convicts who can be held to the spot by moral restraints. But intermediate men are striving to acquire such a character as will recommend them to employers, and thus accelerate their discharge; consequently desertion rarely, if ever, occurs. I heard of no instance in which it had been attempted. Bodies of men so trained may surely be turned to the best account. Thousands of hands might be usefully employed on public works of pressing necessity (like harbours of refuge and coast defences), in which neither private capital, nor that of joint-stock companies, will ever be invested, for the obvious reason that, although indispensable to the community, they cannot be made to yield a revenue. War, emigration, and the rapid expansion of our agriculture, our manufactures, and our commerce, all point to an approaching scarcity of labour. Beyond a doubt, then, the new application of the labour of our criminals, hitherto so little profitable, which the board has thus admirably devised, challenges immediate and most earnest attention;



IX.—Whether or not, beneficial results may be expected from Penal Servitude in Western Australia, under the Act of June 26th, 1857 ?

The act of the 26th June, 1857, enables sentences of Penal Servitude to be carried out in the Colonies, and concurrently with the instructions from the Home Secretary, before referred to, as to the *minimum* periods of detention for certain sentences, it is directed that convicts shall be eligible for removal to a Colony at the expiration of one-half of their sentences ; and soon after their arrival, conditional on good conduct, to receive a Ticket of Leave, followed after a certain period, if their conduct continues to be good, by a conditional pardon. For example:—in the case of a prisoner sentenced to ten years Penal Servitude. In this country his minimum period of detention would be seven years and six months. If removed to Western Australia he would be sent at the end of five years ; and soon after his arrival in the Colony, if his conduct merited the indulgence, he would receive a Ticket of Leave, to be followed by a conditional pardon.

It will be well to note the favourable position in which the prisoner sent to the Colonies is placed ; and, at the same time, to avail ourselves of a privilege so wisely given to the convicts, so judiciously conceded to the Colonists. It is evident, that the holding out of such a boon to the prisoner, will be a powerful stimulus to good conduct, whilst under detention. This incentive should be so used as to become equally or even more beneficial as a measure of reformation, than any yet promulgated for the treatment of Criminals. The importance of the letter and the spirit of such a regulation being strictly adhered to, is so great that any deviation from either, such as the deportation of a prisoner because he is troublesome or irreclaimable, would be fatal to the good results which must surely ensue through the strict prosecution of a system in accordance with the principle laid down by the Secretary of State. It is submitted, that the adoption, in Western Australia, of a similar course to that in practice here, will so filter the Convicts before discharge on Tickets of Leave as to render it probable, that their conduct will be more satisfactory to the Colonists, and will be the means of preserving an outlet for

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and we have a right to expect that every improvement which can be suggested in the law controlling the treatment of criminals, so as to bring them at the earliest possible moment to the requisite degree of trustworthiness, will be forthwith made. And no amelioration, believe me, will be so efficacious to that end, as enhancing encouragement to work out their own freedom—a motive which ought not to be confined to the cases of heinous offenders like the convicts whose discipline forms the subject of this paper, but which should carry its stimulating force into every cell of every prison, purging the administration of justice of the lamentable, nay, revolting absurdity, of withholding a priceless boon from the lesser criminal to confer it on the greater.”



our Convicts which, if judiciously used, may, under recent legislation, be made of great value.

X.—Whether or not, good results have been experienced by placing Female Convicts in Refuges?

Since March 25th, 1856, Female Convicts have been removed (at periods of their sentences in which they are eligible for Tickets of Licence) to Protestant and Roman Catholic Refuges. Ninety-seven have been so removed: Eighty-six to the Roman Catholic Refuge at Golden Bridge, Dublin; four to the Protestant Refuge at Cork, and seven to the Protestant Refuge, Harcourt-road, Dublin. Of this number thirty-eight have left the Golden Bridge, two have left the Cork, and six have left the Harcourt-road Refuges; and have either obtained situations, or have returned to their families, when they are respectable and are willing to receive them, on the representations made to them by the Lady Managers. Whether we refer to the amenability evinced by the Female Convicts to the regulations of the Establishments in which they have been received, or to their conduct after discharge, it is difficult to adduce more satisfactory results than have been obtained from a residence in the Institutions, and which, considering the influence that females exercise for good or for evil, in a community, it is scarcely possible too highly to prize. When we consider the state of these prisoners, on entering the Convict Establishments, it must be a source of the highest gratification to all connected with their administration, to be enabled to report circumstances affording such strong testimony, to the value of the preparatory discipline and training in the prisons, as well as to the zeal, the devotion, and the success of the Managers of the Refuges. These results, it must be remembered, affect a class of criminals hitherto deemed so incorrigible as to be absolutely rejected by the Colonists of "Western Australia," a Colony whose vitality, at the present moment, depends on an increase to the female sex. At the present time, many of these prisoners are employed in this city, within constant observation, and are giving great satisfaction to their employers. Such a state of things will now evince to the Colonists that, as the system on which Female Convicts were formally trained has been changed, so also it is hoped will be the fruits; and that those who have been found fit for employment in a country where there is a sufficiency of female labour, must be at least equally desirable in a Colony circumstanced as is Western Australia. This is a truth so evident, that it needs no argument to support it. Unfortunately, truths unknown or imperfectly considered are often neglected; and it would be well that those persons in the United Kingdom who are interested in this Colony should inquire for themselves, and report accordingly. I have stated that Forty-six Female Convicts have been so employed. Accommodation in the Refuges is alone wanting to increase this number. This deficiency is, in the case of the Golden Bridge Refuge, in the course of being supplied: and it is reasonable to suppose on the completion of the additional works, that great difficulty to obtain through prison discipline, the reformation and the employment of Female Convicts, will have not only almost, but altogether, disappeared.



It strikes us that in all schemes of Prison Discipline the attainment of the following ends should be aimed at, and their successful accomplishment kept clearly in view. First, Reformation of the Criminal. Second, his prison labor made useful to the State. Third, a reasonable security afforded to the public that the Criminal has something more than a Prison character to show upon leaving the Gaol, to prove his Reformation. If these three points can be carried out fully, completely, and fairly, the system of Prison Management must be as perfect as any system can be; and we contend that the system founded, and carried out by the Directors of Convict Prisons in Ireland is a system, proved and admitted, of excellence in no way inferior to this, perfect in all its parts, and bearing examination in every phase of its administration. Thus thought Mr. Recorder Hill when he declared, in that paper to which we have referred—

“In my humble judgment, the Board of Directors of Irish Convict Prisons have practically solved the problem which has so long perplexed our Government and our Legislature—*What shall we do with our Convicts?* The results of their great experiment answer thus—

Keep your prisoners under sound and enlightened discipline until they are reformed—keep them for your own sake and for theirs. The vast majority of all who enter your prisons as criminals can be sent back into the world, after no unreasonable term of probation, honest men and useful citizens. Let the small minority remain, and if death arrive before Reformation, let them remain for life.”

But it will be said, consider the cost. THE COST! This is always Bull's cry when he has any new project, save a mercantile, placed before him; yet it has been proved most clearly by Captain Crofton, and by Mr. Hill, that the system adopted in Ireland is cheap, and could be made most certainly remunerative.

But supposing it were not a cheap system, let us look upon the old system, through the spectacles of *The Times* of Thursday, December 22nd, 1853, which declares, in its leader of that day—

We believe it is no exaggeration to say, that every London pickpocket sent to Holloway prison costs the pay of a curate,—of a gentleman who has had a University education, and whose office is the most dignified that man can aspire to. *We are spending the*



*revenue of a State in mere punishment, or rather revenge ; for what is punishment but revenge, when it leaves our foe worse than it found him ? It has been ascertained that individuals have cost the country several thousand pounds in their repeated prosecutions and punishments, and thousands of houseless wretches of all ages cannot wander about the streets without an amount of depredation that must tell seriously on the profits of trade and the cost of living. In fact, there is nothing so expensive as crime. It is the leak in the ship, which may seem a small matter, but spoils the whole cargo, compels delays, overtaxes the strength of the crew, and throws everything out of course and trim.*

Thus wrote *The Times* in December, 1853, and in the issue of January 6th, 1857, we find it declaring as follows :—

“The Reformation of Criminals is a high, holy, noble object—an object worthy of any Legislature. But the criminals which it contemplates are those of a corrigible nature. Human policy deals with possibilities, with difficulties not with impossibilities. It has works to perform, not miracles. It has to fight with facts, not with speculations. It proceeds under the guidance of experience ; it does not experimentalize under the ‘ignis fatuus’ of a dream. When it weighs the treatment of criminals it discriminates between their various characters, misdeeds, and chances of amendment. It punishes those whom it despairs of amending. It instructs and moulds those who are susceptible of reformation. It remembers that art is long and life is short ; therefore it does not waste time in reforming the incorrigible. It leaves these to play the only part which they can well and safely play—that of a warning to others. It recognizes the wide distinction which exists between public and private charity, between the charity of the individual who forgives his own foe or his debtor, and the charity of the nation which lavishes the contributions of the poor and the honest on the uncertain but costly experiment of converting hardened and obstinate offenders.

“Thus does human policy when sagely and temperately administered. Thus it should do in the present phase of criminal acts and punishments in England. There is no need for undue severity ; as little need for effeminate and sensitive tenderness. We know by this time that we have two classes of adult criminals. The one class may be the victim of goading poverty, of sudden temptation, of accident, of ignorance. The other we know is educated and hardened in crime ; has taken



to crime as a vocation ; talks the slang, frequents the haunts, loves the fraternity of crime ; prefers its exciting variety of turbulent enjoyment and temporary seclusion to any other mode of life ; goes into gaol with the full intention of qualifying itself for readmission when it comes out ; and finally, despises every form of honesty, industry and goodness, as a milksop and unmanly weakness."

It will be observed that what *The Times* has foreshadowed as an object worthy of any Legislature has been by this system accomplished and in the way suggested. By it the corrigible and incorrigible are distinctly treated ; the former moulded, instructed and ultimately restored to the community wiser and better men—the latter by a course of so prolonged detention as to operate as a warning to others and a protection to the society they would otherwise outrage.

Thus has a course of prison treatment been pursued alike distinct from indiscriminate humanitarianism as from indiscriminate severity, and (which it will be observed from the quotations before made,) has met with as strong an approval of public opinion as can well be arrayed on any one subject. It has been tested, and has well responded to the test. We have now but to press its general adoption, to England, to Europe. Monsieur Mittermaier, a Jurist of European repute, has already sounded the call in Germany. Three articles have lately appeared from his pen in his Journal entitled ("Arch des Criminales,") advocating the adoption of the Intermediate System with the force that might be expected from his great talents.

And now coming down from our elevation of facts and figures, what, we ask, should be the result of this Irish experiment upon English statesmen ? Simply that they should try the Irish system, thoroughly and thoroughly in England. Let the intermediate stage be tried ; let the Convict come forth a good MAN, not a good PRISONER. The reader knows the system carried out in Ireland ; let us look at the system adopted in the case, we will say, of *The Nobbler* when his time of discharge is approaching. *The Nobbler* may have a father and mother, both of the criminal class (this is the worst cross one can fancy), and *The Nobbler* has grown up in a perfect knowledge of all the shifts and dodges of his trade. We have known the species, *Nobbler*, in every stage of development, from the little boy, the baby, we may say, in his own peculiar trade,



to his final resting place, the Condemned Cell ; and we know that when he is reared in crime it is very hard, indeed, to "get anything out of him." Now, we have seen members of *The Nobbler* family who have gone through every phase of rascality and scoundrelism, from picking pockets to burglary, and from assaulting the police to dancing on the unfortunate, forlorn women who live with them, and yet we have seen these ruffians though sentenced to transportation, let loose upon the community in England, at the expiration of a fixed period of the sentence ; why ? Because the LAW willed it, and because they had good PRISON characters !

The reader will understand we are writing now of the prison characters around which *Punch* and Dickens, tumble, and mouth, and grin, and they are quite justified by facts, to tumble, and mouth and grin, if they can fill pages, and gain pence, by laughing at what should be laughed at—the prisoner who has *only* the Chaplain's character ; but the prisoner who has a character from the public works can be made, if the right system be adopted, a man of an entirely different stamp ; and it will be recollected that we are still, even with *all* these characters, keeping our ideal, he is really, one of half a dozen facts, *The Nobbler* in view.

Well, *The Nobbler* has had his separate confinement ; he has got on some public work, and his time has come round for "The Ticket : " the chaplain tries to procure employment for him ; suppose his place of conviction to have been Liverpool, the chaplain, at *The Nobbler's* suggestion, tries there. Now, suppose employment is, or is not, procured, out *The Nobbler* goes at a certain time. He, rascal as he is, has, as he would say, "gone in to win," and he has tried to please everybody : he is a "handy man ;" he turns himself to anything : he makes as much money as he can by prison earnings, and in a new "fit" of clothes, he goes off at the appointed time to the railway station, accompanied by an officer ; his fare is paid, he gets his post-office order, for the first instalment of his earnings, on the office of the place to which he goes, and the charming innocent starts upon his new road of life. He arrives ; "the active and intelligent constable," Brown, has not been informed, as he should have been, that his old friend, *The Nobbler*, has gone back, after a four or six years' sojourn in prison and on public works ; but Brown "spots" *The Nobbler*, and he tells Robinson to look out, for *The Nobbler* has come back. The two constables, Brown and Robinson, do look particularly



sharp after *The Nobbler*. They may look too sharp, and deprive him of work; or they may see him going about with *Downy Jim* or the *Larky Boy*, and they may know that he has no honest means of support, and they may have full and legal proof that he is rearing a whole new army of little *Nobblers* and *Nobbleresses*, with a code of moral laws like that set down in Sir E. B. Lytton's *Paul Clifford*—"Never steal when any one is looking at you." Brown and Robinson may know, and *do know* that all scoundrelism is going on and progressing, but the police authorities appear to be communistic. We cannot see the difference, practically, between Prudhon and Sir Richard Mayne except in this, that Prudhon knows his business, and Richard Mayne, K.C.B., admits that he is quite ignorant of his business, and directs his officers to do that which the law says they should *not* do.

Colonel Jebb, R.E.C.B., receives *The Nobbler's* paper a month before *The Nobbler* is to be discharged: the chaplain sends in his enquiry papers: *The Nobbler* has, in addition, good marks from all the authorities, and the papers are sent to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who, by a wonderful fiction, is supposed to read them. Now, it *appears* from the evidence that the Secretary does sometimes read reports of the conduct of Ticket-of-leave men during the period over which the tickets extend, but he has always directed that the bird shall be allowed to "set" in a *new* offence before he is arrested, even though this course is, in all points, contrary to the system, and to the intention of the Legislature.

In fact the mischief here is, that a Secretary of State, in addition to all his other duties, is expected to discharge a particular office more than sufficient, if discharged with advantage to the public service, to engross the entire attention of a very able man,—namely, the overseeing and inspection of all Convicts entitled to discharge, and the examination of all their papers.

But there is no such person, and there is no such office, and, therefore, *The Nobbler* gets out, and he becomes honest or roguish just as the Fates and Police may please; for there is no Board to carry out the broad principles of Reformation, founded on Hope, as in Ireland.

These are great facts and worthy of notice from every man who calls himself a statesman or who believes himself a patriot. There is no such man but will acknowledge, first, that the action of government in the prevention and punishment of



crime is *paternal*; second, that the object of punishment is reformatory and not vengeful; third, that the law of reformation, in the State as in the family, is the law of kindness; fourth, that as criminals differ in age and experience as criminals, they should be treated accordingly; fifth, that prisons and gaols are not in their essence reformatory institutions, and only become so by means of circumstances not necessarily nor ordinarily acting—the prison being a battle-field between Vice and Virtue, with the odds of position and numbers on the side of Vice; and consequently and finally, that since prisons ordinarily can only exert a feeble moral influence on their inmates, and fail as reformatory institutions, on the whole, we ought to search for a new and different agency, and if we find one, put it in use. We have found an agency, Hope, which we can use, if we will, effectively. As the criminal staggers beneath the accumulated weight of his sin and its penalty, he should feel that the State is not only just in the language of its law, but merciful in its administration; that the government is in truth paternal. This feeling inspires confidence and hope, and without these there can be no reformation. And following this thought, we are led to say it is a sad and mischievous public delusion that the pardoning power is useless or pernicious. It is a *delusion*, for it is the only means by which the State mingles mercy with its justice; the means by which the better sentiments of the prison are marshalled in favour of order, of law, of progress. It is a *public delusion*, for it has infected not only the masses of society who know little of what is going on in courts and prisons, but its influence is observed upon the bench, and in the bar, especially among those who are accustomed to prosecute and try criminals. This is not strange, nor shall it be a subject of complaint: but we must not always look upon the prisoner as a criminal, and continually disregard his claims as a man. It is not often easy, nor always possible, to make the proper distinction between the *character* and *condition* of the prisoner. But the prison, strange as it may seem, follows the general law of life. It has its public sentiment, its classes, its leading minds, as well as the University or the State. It has its men of rank, either good or bad, as well as Congress or Parliament. As the family, the church, the school, is the reflection of the best face of society, so the prison is the reflection of the worst face of society. But it, nevertheless, is society, and follows its laws with as much fidelity as the world at large.



These things are known and admitted in this country ; it is for England to apply to herself in her own needs, the system which has worked so perfectly and so advantageously in Ireland. Theories may be against the experiment ; prejudice may oppose it ; self-interest may endeavour to misrepresent it ; but above them all there rises truth ; truth backed by experience, and supported by the entire and unqualified testimony and support of the Press, and of all who have examined the whole working of the system ; a system as well designed as it is successful : a system as honourably and fairly carried out as any system ever formed by men of intellect, and experience, and self-devotion, whilst it is administered by men of honor and of zeal in the service of the commonwealth.



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