

their previous habits and inclinations. 3rd. The temptation which the possession of money and liberty create to indulge in company, drinking, &c., which few have the will, and fewer still the power to resist, especially as they can gratify their inclinations with impunity, the law having ceased to interfere, as heretofore, and recognising their right to leave of absence from their place of employ.

The evils arising to the employer, and reflected back upon the convict, are—1st. It being impossible to gain any certain knowledge of the capabilities and conduct of the passholders, and quite as impossible to compel them to perform the duties for which they are hired and kept at great expense; from the natural extravagance of their habits, and the cost, annoyance, and loss of time arising from the frequent necessity of returning them to the Government and procuring others, their labour is valueless. Wages are proportionately low, and the convicts, who look upon this as an attempt on the part of the hirer to depreciate their worth, are dissatisfied with their places, and feel no interest in obtaining the good will of their employers. 2nd. No one can afford to teach those who are ignorant of the means of gaining an honest livelihood, or to attempt to reclaim them from their vicious habits, because they cannot secure their services for a term long enough to recompense them for the loss of time and the expense of keeping an unprofitable servant. The convict, therefore, never learns anything perfectly. 3rd. Punishment for lesser crimes and misdemeanours is a source of inconvenience and annoyance to the employer, without any benefit to the convict, who, though retarded in the progress to further indulgence, is not deprived of any privilege already possessed, and having undergone a nominal sentence, becomes again eligible to the same privileges for the abuse of which he or she has been punished; and this punishment not only fails to deter from the commission of crimes and offences, but is often courted as a means of escaping from servitude and respectability. 4th. The continued change from one service to another, and from private to Government employ, unsettles the minds of the convicts, and gives rise to feelings of careless indifference destructive to any steady habits of industry, thus rendering them useless to the hirer, helpless in themselves, and a burden upon the Government. In furtherance of the above observations, I shall relate some examples and other facts.

I have several times been told by the better disposed of the women, that they could do very well if it were not for the temptations by which they were surrounded whenever they went out; that they were continually meeting with acquaintances, all having obtained leave of absence to spend their wages, and that one induced the other to drink, without intending to get intoxicated. One woman, in particular, told me that there were many women in the Brickfields who preferred an idle life to service, and would not hire themselves at all; or, perhaps, for the sake of variety, would enter into service for a month, with the intention of returning to the Brickfields to spend the money earned, or of absconding and spending it in the town; after which they would give themselves up to the Government, and, having undergone a mitigated