

Although we have only had time to glance over the Report of Dr. Wolfred Nelson, on the discipline, management, and expenditure of the several Prisons in the Lower Province, printed by order of the Legislative Assembly, we are satisfied the learned Dr. has entered upon the duties of his responsible office, with every desire to do full justice to the important trust confided to him. For the purpose of eliciting all the information possible, he submitted a series of 62 questions to the Sheriffs, &c., which, together with the replies thereto, are worthy of public and *administrative* notice. The expenditure of some of the jails seems over large and not to have been incurred on any fixed plan or system—hence, articles appear to have been often purchased by dribblets—sometimes in one shop—sometimes in another, and always at *retail* prices. The expenses incurred in the jail, in this (the Montreal) district amounts to a very large sum. The amount for the last year is put down at £3498 17s. 5d., and this for the care of 1612 (answer to question 4) prisoners. While at the Quebec jail, the amount expended for 1300 prisoners, including the 200 sailors mentioned at the foot of the statistical table, is only £1400. Certainly a very great difference in favor of this latter, which would appear to be a well conducted and well managed institution.

The learned Dr. has given his views on prison matters generally—which are not only the result of personal observation, but founded on the principles inculcated by some of the most celebrated writers on Prisons and Penitentiaries. He has also supported his positions by the opinions of some of the most celebrated judicial characters in England, as well as from the reports of several committees of the Houses of Lords and Commons. While strenuously advocating the necessity of punishing offenders against the Laws, he would wish to reform them—to elevate them in their own estimation, and convince them it will be their own fault if they do not ultimately gain a respectable name and standing. In furtherance of these humane sentiments, he suggests that discharged prisoners should not, as hitherto, be scouted and banished from society, but that they should meet with a kind reception, and be given a fair chance to lead a better life. The Dr. is decidedly in favour of the “separate and silent system,” and that all prisoners should be made to work, so that they might acquire industrious habits, as well as contribute towards defraying the expenses of their maintenance in jail.

In a future number we may enter more at length in the consideration of this excellent and important Report, especially in regard to all that relates to hygienic and salutary measures, to which the Dr. has