

That repulsive disease of the skin, the itch, under which most of the delinquents who arrive here labor, was communicated to some of the prisoners, but it was met with prompt and effectual treatment by Dr. Pratt, the surgeon of the Reformatory, and the contagion did not spread to the extent that might have been apprehended.

ESCAPES.

It is my duty to report that four escapes, crowned with success, were effected during the year on the following dates:—On the 14th June, one; on the 3rd August, one; on the 15th December, two. Two other prisoners also made their escape on the 15th December, but were brought back to the Reformatory by their relations. The escapes last mentioned were effected through the small door in the surrounding wall. I had not, up to that time, been able to secure the doors in the wall, in consequence of the locks, from delay in the execution of an order, not having been delivered before that period.

I may be allowed to observe, that it is surprising that the number of escapes and attempts at escapes have not been greater, in view of the complete absence of all means of preventing them, presented by the physical condition of the Institution before the entire completion of the surrounding wall.

If I have to report to you some cases of escape from the Reformatory, it is but just that I should state that the majority of the prisoners seem to be satisfied with the treatment which they receive, at least if I may judge by their obedience and application to work, and by the respect and esteem which they exhibit towards the officers of the Institution.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

Many persons will no doubt consider it tiresome to read, in my present report, the same remarks which I made last year on the subject of the inefficiency of the short terms of imprisonment of the delinquents who are sent to this Institution; but the experience which I have acquired, and the careful examination that I have made of matters that are intimately connected with Reformatories, make it my duty again to express here my regret at seeing brought hither juvenile delinquents, more or less depraved, to undergo a detention of two or three years, and to declare that one of the indispensable conditions necessary to effect the permanent reformation of these unfortunate young persons, is a prolonged detention in the Reformatory; without this condition the interests of society and of the state, and the advantage of the young prisoner will be ill attended to.

In fact, how is it possible in a couple of years to change the habits and disposition of a young man who, for several years, has lived in the midst of evil and depraved associations? Little as we know of the human heart, we must admit that a longer time is necessary to correct evil habits than it took to contract them.

The object of the state in opening this Institution was, without doubt, to afford a refuge for the moral reformation of unfortunate individuals who, from various reasons or misfortunes, have failed to obtain material assistance and, above all, religious and moral instruction when entering upon their worldly career.

My experience justifies me in stating, that all young delinquents, below the age of twelve years, should be sent to this institution for a period of at least five or six years, in order not only that they may have time to learn a trade, but also that they may attain years of discretion, and acquire the degree of strength necessary to enable them to follow the trade they may have learned.

A young prisoner of from fourteen to fifteen years of age, on his liberation, has neither the strength nor the means of gaining his livelihood; nor has he the prudence to be on his guard against the danger to which he is exposed in frequenting the society of his former companions in crime, whom, after a short imprisonment, he almost always finds in the old haunts which have been the scene of their criminal exploits; and he will invariably allow himself to be led into a relapse, and his future total and almost irremediable destruction will follow.

I hasten to remark here, with a profound feeling of pity, that two of the young prisoners in this Institution will be liberated before they have attained the age of fourteen