

soners a *conjuree*, upon two or three bricks or stones in the prison-yard, and making it boil by keeping a small fire under it, fed with sticks, which we purchased for the purpose in small fagots. On a certain day, whilst many of the prisoners were thus busily engaged in tending their *conjurees*, and were just about to enjoy the food they had prepared, the commissary made his appearance, and sternly ordered all the prisoners to be immediately turned into the orchard to be mustered. Every one engaged in his culinary employment was forthwith obliged to cease tending his little fire, and leave the *conjurees*, with all they contained, to their chance. In the orchard we were detained for three hours, hungry and faint, but still hoping to enjoy our soup and gruel, although cold. When, however, we were admitted into the prison-yard, piteous was the scene which presented itself to us. During our absence, the unfeeling commissary had given command that all our *conjurees* should be broken to pieces, and their contents shed upon the ground; pretending that the smoke of our little fires would soil the walls of our prison!

Hitherto we had been able to bear up against our troubles with tolerable fortitude. Our allowance of bread was indeed scanty, and its quality coarse, yet we had not perceived it to be pernicious. It was not long, however, before we had to enumerate this circumstance among our calamities.

The close of the year 1794 was indeed a time of great scarcity, owing both to the badness of the preceding season, and the desolating conscriptions which had been levied, as well upon the cultivators of the soil, as on other classes of the community, in order to swell the ranks of the army, to the comparative neglect of agriculture. The prisoners of war were sure not to be the last on whom the consequences of these disasters would fall. Towards the close of the autumn, we began to perceive a deterioration in the quality of our bread, and to feel the effects of it in our health. Every week its quality became perceptibly worse, till from the coarsest and worst kind of wheaten flour, it at length was made of such a vile admixture of barley, rye, and other wretched materials, that the loaves had scarcely the appearance of bread. An encrustation, full of husks of various grain, was hardly possessed of sufficient consistency to hold together its loathsome contents. On removing the crust, nothing generally presented itself but a blackish paste, so revolting to look upon, that nothing short of actual starvation could bring a human being to eat it. A pound and a half per day of this wretched substitute for bread, together with water to drink, was all the provision allowed at this time for our support! The result upon the health and life of the prisoners may easily be imagined. That large proportion of our inmates, who through poverty were restricted to the prison allowance, speedily began to droop under the withering influence of disease. Those whose constitution was less robust than the rest fell early victims, and thus escaped the increasing horrors which