

observations to Dr. Wolfred Nelson, long holding a pre-eminent position in our noble profession, and upon whom, to the most unqualified satisfaction of the Province at large, the Government has judiciously conferred the important and responsible office of Inspector to the Provincial Penitentiary, and I have every reason to believe, that the subject, involving, as it does, the interests of science and humanity—interests, to which his whole useful life has been subservient—will share his multifarious engagements.

The statistics of prisons, published up to the year 1847, if not entirely conclusive, furnish strong grounds for the general impression which exists among those who have given particular attention to the subject, that the injurious effects of discipline fall more heavily on those prisoners who are confined for *lengthened periods*, than for *short periods*; and that the third period of *six months is especially fatal*, either in its immediate or prospective consequences.

Dr. Baly, whose observations are based on the extensive experience of a very acute observer, in his statistics, remarks:—"In this Milbank Penitentiary, and also in the Prisons of France, the mortality has been greater among the prisoners who were undergoing their second, third or fourth year of imprisonment, than amongst those who had been longer in confinement; so that it would seem as if prisoners, who were of feeble constitution, or predisposed to disease generally, fall victims to the injurious influence before the end of the fourth year of their confinement, whilst those, who were able to support their punishment until that period without serious deterioration to their health, seem proof against the causes of disease to which they were exposed."

Dr. Baly states his opinion, that the cause of scrofula and consumption, being developed by imprisonment, is a *deficiency in free, active, voluntary exercise, the state of mind, cold, and want of ventilation*—that he did not consider the site of the Penitentiary had any influence in producing consumption—that if prisoners had only been confined at Milbank three months, it would have been the most healthy prison in England—and that a great increase of disease takes place in the third period of six months; and also that this would hold good in any prison, though, if all the causes referred to were less active, the development of disease might be at a later period.

As regards several of the best conducted prisons in England and France, we have the most unquestionable evidence, that the third six months of confinement has been an especially fatal period, and the same rule holds good to a certain extent in the United States—for instance, at the large Penitentiary at Philadelphia.

We have here, as yet, it is true, no authentic data, by which we might