

system as the circumstances of the varied localities would permit. They also furnished for the new Prisons a draft plan embodying those fundamental principles of Gaol construction which they desired every county about to build to carry out.

The Inspectors found the dietary at all the Gaols different. The boarding of the prisoners was almost universally given to the Gaoler by contract at a daily rate varying from thirty-four cents to twenty cents per head. The Inspectors, after much difficulty and opposition from the many parties interested in this arrangement, have succeeded in establishing a uniform scale of diet at all the Prisons, and given their best endeavours to take the supplying of it out of the hands of the Gaolers. There are still, however, some counties which permit the old system to continue notwithstanding the representation of the Inspectors and the obvious saving of money to the counties themselves which would accrue from adopting the new plan. The yearly saving may be judged of by considering that where the sum paid per head per annum for each prisoner was formerly \$124.10 a year, it has been reduced by the Inspectors to \$36.50. The Inspectors reckon the amount thus saved at not less than \$10,000 a year in this item alone.

The Inspectors have been obliged by Statute to visit every Common Gaol twice a year, and have visited the Asylums and Reformatories three or four times; they are obliged to visit the Penitentiary as a Board quarterly; and one Inspector has to make a thorough inspection of it every month.

At every stage from the time they commenced their work they have sensibly felt the inconvenience they have labored under, in not having had an opportunity afforded them by Government, of visiting the large model Institutions of kindred character in England and on the Continent of Europe; to the improvement and government of which some of the greatest minds of the age have devoted their best energies and talent. Not having had such opportunities, they were compelled, without any previous preparation of this kind, to put in force a system which they had to devise for themselves, and to carry it out under the very restricted powers conferred on them by law. At almost every step, and on almost every tour of visitation, they became sensible of evils which they could only examine into and report upon, but which they had no authority at once to correct. Knowing too, that among the more pressing, if not more important, matters which must at all times press upon the attention of a Government, their representations could hardly receive that prompt consideration which would have been so conducive to make up for them in influence what they lacked in power, they felt that the simple authority to report was all but nugatory, especially when reiterated reports failed to attract attention, or at least to bring about a remedy.

Still, under all the discouraging circumstances under which they worked, they have great satisfaction in having testimony from a foreign country as to the results of their labors, and from parties competent to form an opinion, and, like themselves, deeply interested in the great question of Prison discipline and Prison management.

The Special Commissioners appointed last year by the Prison Association of New York, have just made a report to the Legislature of the State of New York, of their exhaustive inquiries into the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada. The report is remarkable for the evident pains taken by the Commissioners to investigate the minutest details, and for the ability with which the general principles of Prison discipline are discussed. In that report* the operations of the Board are taken notice of, and their success and difficulties set forth in the light in which they appear to disinterested and intelligent spectators.

"But, however imperfectly this Board may be constituted in respect to its want of adequate powers for good, however cramped and restricted its sphere of authoritative action, let us test its utility by inquiring what it has accomplished during the six years of its existence, in the face of prejudice, indifference, and even active hostility, for the improvement of the Prisons of Canada. As the result of their first inspection of the Gaols, they found defects pervading them throughout; in their construction, superintendence, discipline, sanitary arrangements, and all other departments of administration. They describe them all as in a frightful condition; as, in effect, nurseries of vice, as

* Report on the Prisons and Reformatories, of the United States and Canada, made to the Legislature of New York, January, 1867, by E. C. Wines, D. D., L. L. D., and Theodore W. Dwight, L. L. D., Commissioners of Prison Association of New York, Albany, 1867.