

toms of life still remained. It was the crisis of the disease—the moment of resuscitation—the commencement of a more vigorous constitution than I had ever before enjoyed. So strangely does nature sometimes produce results the most opposite to its seeming tendencies !

Of the extent and malignity of the disease which raged in the prison, some idea may be formed from the following facts ; that of the great multitude of persons confined within its walls, scarcely twenty escaped without being two or three times ill of it ; and these individuals were looked upon by all the rest as prodigies. At the period when it was most fatal, it was customary for the dead-cart every morning to carry out of the prison gates from twenty to twenty-five corpses for interment. Of the 3000 prisoners who were numbered at the commencement of the mortality 1700 fell victims during the lapse of only three months.

When the disease began to subside, such was the eagerness for food, and the scantiness of our allowance, that many of the most destitute allayed their hunger by seizing upon dogs which accidentally strayed into the prison, killing them and dressing them for food ! All the methods which ingenuity could devise, or our exhausted resources furnish, were put in requisition to obtain relief. Among the rest some courted the muse.

Goaded by distress, and nearly famished, it can scarcely excite surprise, that recourse should be had, by some of the prisoners, to unwarrantable actions. One of these, in the order of events, comes next to be described.

Whatever defence the commissary who at this time had charge of us might have made, in reply to the barbarity imputed to his conduct, it was natural for those who had already witnessed several instances of his cruelty, to regard him as the principal occasion of all the miseries they were suffering ; nor was it unlikely that revenge would be contemplated. Reckless of all consequences, certain of the prisoners came to the rash determination of assassinating him. With this intention, some of them procured a large stone, which they took to the highest story of the prison, and kept a perpetual watch for his passing by, when he should pay his next visit. The fearful moment arrived. The stone was launched from the window just as the commissary came under it ;—fortunately for all the prisoners, it fell harmless at his feet ; as there can be little doubt, that had the fatal stratagem succeeded, summary vengeance would have been taken on its perpetrators. Full of fury, the commissary hastily fled from the prison, called an assembly of the magistrates, and related the narrow escape he had just had from instant death, asking their counsel how he should proceed against the prisoners. Some advised indiscriminate retaliation, others to have recourse to decimation. After long deliberation, however, they came to the conclusion, that the man, or men, who actually launched the stone from the building, should be delivered up to the municipal authorities, and undergo the penalty due to their crime ; that if