

Thoughts on prison labour, &c.; &c.; ... / by a student of the Inner Temple.

Contributors

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THOUGHTS

ON

PRISON LABOUR,

&c. &c.

" Parum est coercere improbos pœnâ,
—— nisi probos efficias Disciplinâ."

BY A STUDENT OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY RODWELL AND MARTIN, NEW BOND-STREET;
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CUMMING, DUBLIN; AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1824.

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PRISON LABOUR.

THE object of the compilation which is to follow these introductory remarks is to make the Government, and the Magistracy, fully acquainted with the working of the public mind on the subject of the adoption, for the purposes of prison labour, and prison punishment, of that enormous and complicated machinery, THE TREAD-WHEEL. The result most confidently anticipated from throwing into one STARTLING view the extraordinary and almost universal reprobation the use of this novel engine has met, and still meets with (except among one particular class of individuals), is its entire and immediate abandonment. They who do not perceive that the public voice is infallibly, and speedily bringing about this just and indispensable abandonment, cannot have lent an ear to its loud, unceasing, and rational expostulations on the subject of this PENAL PHENOMENON.

In commencing, it is necessary to expose the fallacy of a sort of appeal to our recollection of injury received, which, with indolent thinkers, has formed a quietus to their consciences, and enabled them to dismiss without compunction—to turn a deaf ear to all the powerful objections urged against the Tread-wheel. “You forget,” say these arguers, “that the objects of your sympathy are felons and vagabonds; would you make comfort and Turkey carpets, roast beef and plum pudding, the ap-

pendages of imprisonment? What harm* is there if a set of lazy, thievish beings are compelled to fag till their bones ache?" It is not with the *apparent* matter of these queries, but with the manner, and its evil consequences, that every rational and humane man must quarrel. Accompanied with a sneer, and urged with an affectation of superior sagacity, they sometimes serve the purpose of crushing all inquiry whatever. They who would abolish the Tread-wheel labour do not feel more for its objects than is proper; they are not infected with a maudlin sensibility, but, more probably, have made a stride beyond their fellows in their disenthralment from some of the too antiquated modes of acting and thinking which yet mingle with, and mar our high national polish and pre-eminence! If sweeping arguments, such as that which has just been exposed, are at once to weigh with the public, all inquiry *by what means, and how much* prisoners are made to fag, and their bones made to ache, is inhumanly and unwisely prevented. Because a human being has fallen under the censure of the laws, he is not to be altogether put out of the pale and protection of the social scheme: yet, as every offence against society has, or ought to have, its apportioned punishment, to consign offenders in this indiscriminating spirit to toils and treatment of the effects of which no account is required, is to act on the frightful principle of disproportioning punishment to crime—a principle which would warrant hanging for vagrancy, or burning for prostitution—a principle which instead of mending would make criminals, and those too of the more desperate character—a principle which does altogether put an offender out of the pale and protection of the social scheme!

* See this doctrine in all its ultraism, in an extract from Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, at page clxiii of the appendix.

It is not necessary that a principle should be pushed to its utmost extent in order to justify and procure its condemnation; for though the utmost extent to which, in keeping with itself, it might be pushed, cannot, as things are, be realised—though no one can be hung for vagrancy, or burnt for prostitution; yet if a principle would be in congruity with itself in operating *such an effect*, that principle should not be suffered to operate *any effect*! Perhaps few but those who have engaged in the Tread-wheel controversy can form an idea how indispensable it is to give a place and a prominence to the foregoing remarks. When however they shall learn another objection which has been seriously urged for endeavouring to quash the question, they will cease to wonder at the less bold, though not less mischievous attempt to render over transgressors against the laws to the tender mercies of total neglect. Will the people of England hear without astonishment, that some of the advocates of the Tread-wheel have pleaded *the enormous expense it has occasioned* as A REASON for their anger at, and resistance to, the opposition with which it has been assailed? I am not aware that this unpardonable mode of defence has been hazarded in print, but it is a melancholy fact that respectable Magistrates and others have adopted it, in oral as well as written communications, when expostulating with two or three of the chief antagonists of the Tread-wheel. Had this frightful Wheel involved its magisterial patrons in an expense equal to the tremendous outlay of the last war, that fact would not weigh one tittle with the nation against any *irremediable* mischiefs of its operation, which should be serious enough to make its abolition an object of good policy, and genuine philanthropy!

The first insuperable objection (as I have elsewhere ob-

served), which will strike a just and constitutional thinker, with respect to the late introduction of the Tread-wheel into our prisons, arises out of THE ALARMING FACT, THAT A PENAL MACHINE, SO HUGE IN ITS PROPORTIONS; SO EXPENSIVE IN ITS CONSTRUCTION; AND SUCH A THOROUGH INNOVATION UPON OUR WHOLE SYSTEM OF PENAL AND PRISON LABOUR; SHOULD HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED, WITHOUT THE EXPRESS SANCTION OF THE LEGISLATURE, after it should have deliberately consulted with the Heads of the medical profession, and the First engineers of the day!! To leave the power of making such a total *innovation* in the hands of Magistrates, is to leave in their hands a *power of legislation*; it is allowing them to perpetrate a RADICAL REFORM. It is no defence of the introducers of the Tread-wheel to say, that the laws prescribe hard labour, and that the Tread-wheel provides it. Was no hard labour to be found before the invention of the Tread-wheel, that so unnatural and innovatory a penal ENGINE should be, *all at once*, set up? The laws have prescribed hard labour for ages, and no mere society, or party, have any right, title, or pretence, to impeach their administrators, from time immemorial, by taking upon itself to detect and supply a supposed deficiency, with a sweeping change, a total and terrific and yet not generally effected innovation! There is not a question but THE PROVINCE OF THE LEGISLATURE HAS BEEN INFRINGED UPON BY THE INTRODUCERS OF THE TREAD-WHEEL! This is indeed a very grave accusation, and, really, it behoves Parliament to protect equally all its privileges, and to resist or resent every encroachment upon them. The preceding consideration, though important enough to cast entire disrepute upon the Tread-wheel, will do so apart from all account of its intrinsic and inherent defects. *It is the innovation of an usurped power, therefore*

—*obnoxious to censure, though it were in itself good.* The end will not sanctify the means. That these assertions have sound constitutional doctrine for their basis, may be elucidated by the whole practice of the Legislature,—TO CUT A ROAD, OR TO INCLOSE A SLIP OF COMMON, THE LEAVE OF THE NATION MUST BE OBTAINED THROUGH ITS REPRESENTATIVES ; SURELY, THEN, THE NATION ALONE CAN AUTHORISE THE UPBUILDING, AND USE, OF PENAL ENGINES OF THE MOST COLOSSAL DIMENSIONS, AND EXORBITANT COST ! Digressing one moment from the line of more sober argument, it may be insisted upon with effect, that to English ears the very expression, PENAL ENGINE, OR PENAL MACHINE, is revolting ; it rouses up the ideas of racks and torture. We do not, nor ever can relish the thought of *punishment being inflicted by means of huge engines, or structures of machinery*,—of “a species of *penal labour* administered by means of mechanism.”

It is not *necessary* for the introducers of the Tread-wheel to have acted *illegally*, to justify the accusation brought against them of having acted improperly and unconstitutionally. Violations of natural right and propriety are antecedent to their *legal preventives*, which are *suggested by their occurring, to aim at preventing their recurring*. Who would ever have anticipated the introduction of tremendous *penal engines*, and the subversion of our whole system of penal and prison labour, in this county, and that, *by Justices of the Peace, without the concurrence of the Legislature* ? The accusation of having acted unconstitutionally standing on its own incontrovertible basis ; it may be much in point, without confounding it with the question of legality, to say a few words on that distinct topic. The introducers of the Tread-wheel have not merely acted WITHOUT LAW ; but they have also acted in a manner contrary to the spirit,

if not the letter of all our written law, or legalised precedents.

The few existing statutes respecting setting prisoners to work, are all worded in such a manner as to define none other but such work or labour as is in common use, "to be provided" by the furnishing of "a stock of materials" or "implements," &c. Manual and ordinary labour is distinctly and therefore exclusively legalised. The whole body of laws then, on the subject, negatively at least, make illegal the late innovation which ENTIRELY dispenses with MANUAL, to substitute in its place FOOT labour. Foot labour too, at least of a *dangerous*, if not, as is generally believed, of a *distressing* nature. Let the subject be placed in another point of view. It is on all hands allowed, and in many instances boasted, that the punishment of the Tread-wheel is an OBJECT OF TERROR; that it instills a TERROR, SUI GENERIS; that in fact it has *added* a hitherto unknown—a novel TERROR to the penal code. Surely, surely it is ILLEGAL for any power but that of the legislature to ADD a hitherto unknown—a novel TERROR to our penal laws.

The INNOVATION is, in very deed, MADE WITHOUT LAW, and IN OPPOSITION TO ALL OUR KNOWN LAW: in one word, it is virtually—a bold arguer will insist it is ipso facto—ILLEGAL! The simple fact, that this subversion of an old system is not universal, but confined to certain parts; thereby making what is the PENAL LAW in one county, by no means, and *in no proportion*, the PENAL PRACTICE in another, is conclusive against the propriety of having allowed any power but the highest in the kingdom (which, by providing against the possibility of being a house divided against itself, gives equality of application to its decrees) to introduce the penal labour of the Tread-wheel. When we come to consider

that the nationally momentous questions of prison labour, and reformation, are involved in the adoption of the Tread-wheel discipline, it will strike us more forcibly than ever, HOW PREPOSTEROUS, HOW UNCONSTITUTIONAL, WAS THE INTERFERENCE OF ANY * PARTY, WHICH ATTEMPTED OR EFFECTED THE LOCALLY-OPERATING PENAL INNOVATION JUST DESCRIBED !

The Tread-wheel, then, is the innovation of an usurped power, unable from its very constitution to give general effect to this innovation : in short, the Tread-wheel has been introduced by an incompetent authority.

Previous to entering on the second division of this dissertation, which division is to be allotted to the consideration of the severity of the labour of the Tread-wheel, it will be advisable to erect some standard whereby to judge of the comparative degrees of human labour. This object cannot be better attained than by transcribing the words of the Rev. J. Headlam, who in his pamphlet on Prison Labour, after exhausting a deal of reasoning founded on palpably wrong premises, to defend† the unconstitutional practice of *compelling* untried

* By the writer of a very able article on prisons, and prison discipline, in the first part of the sixth volume of the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, the Fourth Report of The Prison Discipline Society is characterised as “ evincing more of good intentions than of enlightened views,” and as “ confounding two things, punishment and prison discipline, which are totally distinct ; and between which it is of so much importance to preserve the distinction, that without it not a rational idea can be entertained of either. What business have the Committee with punishment ? The assigning of punishment the legislature has given to other and fitter hands, to those who take cognizance of the offence, and who alone ought to *measure* the punishment.”

† See Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society, from page 39

prisoners to work, has the following JUST OBSERVATIONS on what is called "Hard (Prison) Labour."—"It has been contended by some writers, that '*severe, unmitigated labour, ought alone to be introduced into prisons ;*'—'*that prison labour should exhaust the strength and subdue the spirit of the criminal, and send him to repose, WORN DOWN IN BODY AND HOPELESS IN MIND :*'—can it be contemplated that a convict should be so far exhausted, or subdued by his labour, as that the diet and rest with which he is supplied, will not enable him to resume his task the following day, and so on, from day to day, during the term of his imprisonment? If so, he must grow daily more and more unequal to his work ; and if the same task be continued to be required of him for any considerable period, his health and strength, and ultimately his life, must sink under the infliction. It is clear that such severity of labour was never required, and never would be tolerated. If, by the criminal's being exhausted and subdued, is only meant that he feels so much weariness as a night's rest will remove, and so much exhaustion as the prison diet will replenish, so that he can resume his labour, on the morrow, with undiminished strength, then it will not appear to be more severe than the toil which the common labourer is obliged daily to undergo ; indeed it seems as unmerciful as it would be impracticable to require more."—"It may safely, therefore, be assumed, that *the sentence of hard labour has never been construed to impose more than the average work of an ordinary labourer.*" And why? Because *the ordinary labourer daily expends as much, and sometimes more, animal*

to page 46 ; and the speeches of Mr. Peel in the Commons, and the Earl of Liverpool in the Lords, against putting untried prisoners to the wheel, on the 12th and 13th of February, respectively.

EXERTION *than nature can healthfully endure.* The Prison Discipline Society, in their fourth Report, insist, that "The prevention of crime will never be effected by the influence of fear* alone. For the truth of this sentiment, the Committee may CONFIDENTLY APPEAL TO THE PAGE OF HISTORY. In no christian or civilized country has unmixed severity attained this object. The criminal thus treated, be his offence what it may, experiences a feeling of injury; resentment is excited in his bosom; the energies of his mind are exerted to resist coercion; he hardens and nerves himself, to prove to those who are likely to be influenced by his example, the firmness of his character, and the impotency of all efforts to reclaim him; his *detestation* of those who have authority over him, and his contempt for their punishments." Oh, that the Committee would practise this their adopted doctrine! How, after giving birth to such sentiments, can they consistently advocate "hard labour, which is calculated to ALARM the criminal, and necessarily produce weariness and *exhaustion*?" How, propose a system of prison discipline, which they find to be "held in PERFECT ABHORRENCE by criminals of every description?" Will the system makers be exempt from the odium attaching to the system? From such a system to seek the fruits of repentance and reformation, is to seek to "gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles."

Under a system of unmitigated severity, of what avail will be religious instruction? It will but add to the

* Dr. Chalmers, in his "Civic Economy of great Towns," insists on the utter *uselessness* and impolicy of all unmixed severity of penal infliction.

evil, for it will be esteemed as a mockery, not listened to as glad tidings.

On the eve of disputing the necessity for the TERRORS of the Tread-wheel, by showing its severity, and ineffectiveness, it will also be expedient to remind the reader how intrinsically, as well as circumstantially penal, is the simple deprivation of liberty. So little aware do some writers seem to be of the high value of personal liberty, that all their arguments are founded on the assumption that, let their diet and their labour be the same, and it recks * not to a poor man whether he be in gaol or out of gaol; but let the diet be a trifle better in the prison than the cot, and the honest man will sacrifice his liberty for the sake of a somewhat better ration! All reckoning of the ordinary unpleasantness and disgrace of criminal prosecution, of the fear of detection, and the force of good habits, especially when no adequate temptation is held out for their abandonment, &c. &c. is appropriately overlooked by those who are so little aware of the instinctive feelings of the human mind, as to esteem, at a low rate, personal restraint within the narrow and opprobrious bounds of a gaol. Let these arguers recollect, that, as prisons are now

* "His confinement does not make his life more dull or monotonous than it was at home. The change from his cell to his day-room, and from his day-room to his airing yard, furnishes *as much* variety as his passage at sun-rise from his cottage to his labour, and at sunset from his labour to his cottage."—*Headlam on Prison Labour*. This is probably about the most erroneous assertion that was ever put into print; all argument built upon it must fall to the ground; it is totally and palpably at variance with facts. If one common nature be given to us, this supposing a race of human beings so many degrees inferior in their sensibilities, &c. to the rest of their species, is indeed unwarrantable.

conducted*, every gratification for the attainment of which three parts of the criminals have ventured to commit crime, is forbidden; they cannot acquire money that they may spend it on their pleasures, or even comforts: women, spirituous and strong malt liquors, dress and shows, the sole inducements with thousands to plunder, are not to be obtained; laziness and a roving inclination cannot be indulged; in fact, IMPRISONMENT, UNDER THE PRESENT REGIME, IS THE VERY LAST PUNISHMENT THAT THE ORDINARY VAGABOND, OR THE THIEF, WOULD DESIRE; though from his present appetites and passions, being habitually stronger than his fears, he places himself in continual jeopardy of that restraint which will so *severely* punish him, by forbidding almost the only pleasures of which he is capable; namely, those administered by sensual gratification and excitement.

The second objection to the Tread-wheel is to the peculiarities of its discipline. *The labour of the Tread-wheel*, it may now safely be pronounced, is too trying for the average strength of prisoners, *bodily* as well as *mental*. This is an assertion to be borne out by facts alone, and

* Part of a resolution carried at a meeting of the Prison Discipline Society in 1821, runs thus: "Experience demonstrates that the criminal views with indifference, imprisonment, which is defective in classification and employment, and where his guilty propensities are indulged by vicious habits and corrupt association: in proof of which it appears, that to such gaols the same prisoner repeatedly returns, while those prisons are regarded with dread, and the re-committals to them are rare, in which idleness, gambling, and dissipation, are superseded by abstinence, labour, and restraint." Here is a concession, that ample means, *exclusive* of the Tread-wheel, are available for rendering prisons very undesirable abodes; and that these means were *effectively* in operation in some prisons before the introduction of that engine of punishment.

fortunately facts are not wanting to place it beyond the possibility of dispute—Not but that the nature of any given employment may be such, that the evil consequences it will bring upon the human frame may be calculated to a certainty; and it will be completely corroborative of the public antipathy to the discipline, to show that all the mischiefs which shall be enumerated as having actually occurred, were anticipated, not only by medical men of the first eminence, but by private individuals, on a mere observation of the nature of the labour. These anticipations being contained in detail, in the Appendix to these remarks, it will not be necessary to do more than briefly recapitulate and collect them into one view, in order that the authentic documents within the reach of the writer of these observations may follow and substantiate them. From the labour calling into *unusual*, that is, *unnatural* action, the muscles of the legs, loins, and lower extremities, and from the position in which it keeps the feet, causing the toes, or not more than one-third of the foot to support and *lift* the body; it was CONFIDENTLY and CORRECTLY foreseen, that cramps, and strains of the lower muscles; severe achings; pains in the chest and side; swellings of the limbs; weakness of the loins; and general exhaustion and debility would accrue; and that great *risk* would be run, of causing rupture; and forming aneurismal and varicose swellings in the legs; and that “if females were to be worked at the wheel, the same common cause of irksome and distressing exertion, operating* on the loins and many of the abdominal muscles, must, of necessity, in various instances, accelerate the period of

* At page cxxxii of the Appendix, the opinion of a surgeon is mentioned, which goes to anticipate “injury to the uterus” in some females, from the peculiar exertion of treading at the Wheel.

menstruation ; and where it does not force it forward before its proper time, render it excessive, and *lay a foundation for many of the most serious chronic maladies, with which the female structure can be afflicted.*"

The FIRST official documents respecting the effect of the discipline, are those communicated to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, the 10th of March, 1823.

These returns are from twenty-four different prisons, being the then total number in which the Tread-wheel was in use. The original correspondence may be seen in the Appendix to Sir John Cox Hoppisley's *very valuable pamphlet on Prison Labour*. The casualties this correspondence records, and the admissions it contains, are all that can conveniently be enumerated in this place.

BERKSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Reading House of Correction had been *two months* in use at the date of the return, which reported "all well." It is capable* of working sixty individuals at one time. The day after the return was transmitted, Wm. Strange became *ruptured*, of which occurrence Mr. Bulley, the surgeon, certifies, that "*it took place whilst working on the Wheel, by a violent fit of coughing, and in all probability would have happened independent of the exertion of the Mill.*"

* It must not be overlooked, that the number of persons each Wheel is capable of employing, is in most prisons *considerably* larger than the average number, from day to day, at work. Another distinction should be kept in view ; the number that can be worked at one time, mostly means, not the number on the Wheel only, but the number inclusive of the relays awaiting their turn to relieve those actually treading. These two considerations will materially reduce the APPARENT number of objects who supply evidence of the effects of the Wheel labour.

BEDFORDSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Bedford House of Correction had been *one year* in use, and is capable of working thirty-six individuals. The return reports “all well;” but a letter from Mr. Hunt, a visiting justice, contains this passage: “The hand-rail, which had been fixed in a line, nearly vertical over the head of the prisoner at work, caused *a pain in the loins*; but by throwing the rail forward, so as to give the body of each man at work the position of rather leaning forward, all undue pressure on the loins was avoided, and the labour became unoppressive.” The following very extraordinary PERMIT accompanies the return, and is signed by Mr. Hunt. “Mr. Tregenza, the governor, is *authorised* and *permitted* to give such a report of the effects produced by the Tread-wheel discipline, to *any* official inquiries that may be addressed to him, as he may feel that HE can give, consistently with HIS own conscientious convictions, HIS observation and experience.”

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.—The Wheel in Aylesbury Gaol had been in use *four years*, but is capable of working *only twenty-four* individuals. The return is favourable to the discipline.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.—The Wheel in the Cambridge Town Gaol had been in use not quite *four months*; the number of individuals it can work is not stated. The return is favourable to the discipline.

The Wheel in the Cambridge House of Correction had been in use *one year*, is capable of working *forty* individuals, and the return is favourable to the discipline.

DEVONSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Exeter House of Correction had been in use *six months*; is capable of working 120 individuals; but “the daily average of prisoners working on it is from seventy-five to eighty, the proportion of females being *very small*, not amount-

ing to more than ten or twelve at any time, and generally not exceeding six or eight."

A letter from Mr. Tucker, one of the visiting justices, contains this passage: "I made many inquiries of those on the Wheel as to the sensations and effects produced by this continued labour; I learned *ONLY* that *the muscles of the legs sometimes ached*, and that *work on the Wheel in warm weather would produce A GREAT PERSPIRATION.*" Another letter from Mr. Luscombe, the surgeon, contains these remarks: "I do not conceive, any injury to the legs of the prisoners can arise *except* from wilful negligence of the individual. I am of opinion, which has been confirmed by inquiry, that after a few days' work on the Tread-mill, the muscles of the legs, thighs, and back, becoming habituated to it, the employment *CEASES TO BE A PUNISHMENT*: what effect on health the Mill may produce in the summer season, I cannot now pretend to judge." A third letter from the governor states, that he "*had never heard of one prisoner, male or female, receiving any injury either in their limbs, or general health.*" This downright and unqualified assertion cuts an odd figure by the side of Mr. Tucker's admissions. It is an admirable, and very useful specimen of the method by which the question may be, as it has been, *blinked*; and, unless acute maladies, or tremendous calamities occur, how all chronic pains, all mischiefs, slow but *sure* in their developement, all peculiar perils may be taken no account of!

DORSETSHIRE.—The Wheel in Dorchester Gaol, for the males, had been in use *one year*; that for the females *five months*. They are capable of working seventy individuals. The labour is asserted to have done no injury to the men; but Mr. Birt Davies, the surgeon, allows, "that A FEW OF THE FEMALE PRISONERS HAVE

BEEN SUBJECTED TO CERTAIN COMPLAINTS INCIDENTAL TO WOMEN, RATHER MORE THAN USUAL," in his opinion, "THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE EXERTION AND EXPOSURE TO COLD."

DURHAM.—The Wheel in Durham Gaol had been in use above *nine months*, and is capable of working thirty-two individuals.

A letter signed by Messrs. Davison, Hopper, and Darnell, visiting justices, concludes thus: "It may be proper to notice, that we have not thought it *advisable* to employ FEMALES in working the Tread-wheel." Mr. Green, the surgeon, states that he is of opinion respecting this employment, that "if persevered in with PRUDENCE, and not too long continued, no SERIOUS effects are to be apprehended from its use."

ESSEX.—The Wheel in the Chelmsford House of Correction had been in use *four months*, is capable of working sixty individuals, and the return is favourable to the discipline.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Gloucester Penitentiary had been in use *three weeks*, is capable of working *thirty-two* individuals, and the return is favourable to the discipline.

The Wheel in the Horsley House of Correction had been in use *twenty days*: "*eighteen male* prisoners are employed to work it, twelve on and six off." The return is favourable.

HERTFORDSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Hertford House of Correction had been in use nearly *two years and a half*, is capable of working forty-eight individuals, and the return is favourable to the discipline.

LANCASHIRE.—The Wheel in Lancaster Gaol had been in use *three months*. Mr. Smith, the surgeon, writes thus: "I have to observe, that where the men

are free from rupture, or disease in the groin, either from syphilis or scrophula, no ill effects have ensued, either on the bodies or limbs, nor do I apprehend any injurious consequences are likely to arise from it; for on examining those men who have worked longest at the Wheel, I have found them in perfect health, and notwithstanding *their expression of dislike* to the work, **they have admitted* that they have gained weight since they have been so employed." Messrs. Hornby and Atkinson, the visiting justices, report that "James Timperly has had a degree of inflammation in his groin, which the surgeon *believes* to have arisen from the unsound state of his body, he having recently had the venereal disease. The rest of the prisoners thus employed, NINE IN NUMBER, appear healthy, and make no complaint."

LEICESTERSHIRE.—The Wheel in the Leicester House of Correction had been in use *about three years and a half*; the number of individuals it can work is not stated. The return, which is *made by the governor in answer to queries put in form to him*, and confirmed by the surgeon, and seemingly not at all supplied by the personal examination and observation of the visiting justices, states, that no mischief had been known to accrue from the discipline.

MIDDLESEX.—The Wheel in Cold Bath Fields House of Correction had been in use *seven months*, is

* It is next to impossible for an unweighed prisoner to speak to such a fact with any competent knowledge. But let the reader turn over a few pages for the analysis of the Prison Discipline Society's Appendix-Report on Tread-wheels, and he will there see that loss of weight makes a sad and distinguishing feature of the Lancaster Gaol returns.

capable of working 320 individuals, and the return is favourable to the discipline.

NORFOLK.—The Wheel in the Swaffham House of Correction had been in use *four months*, is capable of working fifty individuals, and the return is favourable.

PEMBROKESHIRE.—The Wheel in the * Haverfordwest Gaol had been in use *one year and a half*, but is capable of working *only sixteen* individuals: the return is favourable.

SUFFOLK.—The Wheel in Bury Gaol had been in use above *three years*, is capable of working sixty individuals, and the return is favourable.

The Wheel in the Ipswich House of Correction had been in use *above a year*, is capable of working *forty-eight* individuals, and the return is favourable.

SURREY.—The Wheel in the Guildford House of Correction had been in use *five months*, is capable of working *forty-eight* individuals, and the return is favourable.

The Wheel in the Brixton House of Correction had been in use *above a year*, is capable of working 200 individuals, and the return is favourable.

SUSSEX.—The Wheel in the Lewes House of Correction had been in use *four months*, is capable of working *only fifteen* individuals, and the return is favourable.

YORKSHIRE, North Riding.—The Wheel in the Northallerton House of Correction had been in use *two years and upwards*, is capable of working fifty-six individuals, and the return is favourable.

* A friend informed the writer, that he had been assured in a letter received from this part of the country, that a woman, in a state of pregnancy, had been worked on this Wheel.

EDINBURGH.—The Wheel in the Edinburgh Bridewell had been in use *eight months*, and is capable of working *forty* individuals. Mr. Law, the surgeon, writes, “Once a boy called to me to say, that THE TREADING HAD MADE HIM SPIT BLOOD; but as I was aware how ready such people are to complain, in order to get off from labour, I purposely passed him over, well knowing that if he became seriously ill, I, or one of my assistants, should soon hear of it. We heard no more of his spitting blood. Within these few weeks, a man was brought to me who had got his LEG BRUISED, as he said, in coming off the Wheel. He did not complain of the accident as any thing necessarily connected with the nature of the labour; and I was led at the time to conclude that it was produced by his own carelessness.”

As it is the very last thing likely to occur, that the prisoner would call to the surgeon to come and see that which could not be seen—that is, to observe an ailment of which he asserted he could give *palpable* evidence—no wonder that nothing more was heard of an ailment, to the statement of which a deaf ear had been turned. To LEAVE A PERSON SPITTING BLOOD AT SUCH A TOIL AS THE TREAD-WHEEL, THAT THE SERIOUSNESS OR SLIGHTNESS OF THE AILMENT MIGHT BE TESTED BY THE EXERCISE, IS TO LEAVE HIM EXPOSED TO THE IMMINENT RISK OF IRREMEDIABLY INJURING HIS LUNGS, IF NOT OF BEING ABSOLUTELY KILLED BY THE LABOUR. That the ailment did not kill, or even totally knock up, this *neglected* prisoner is no argument that it did not afflict him. Some people spit blood, at intervals, for years, before their constitution sinks under this disease. The public, and Mr. Peel, will know how to appreciate Reports containing such highly culpatory admissions, and will decide whether

humane feeling, diligent observation, and correct discrimination, are to be expected to assist in their formation!!

From the preceding analysis it will be seen, that at the date of the returns, out of twenty-four Tread-wheel prisons, this novel penal *engine* had not had a trial of more than three weeks in two of them; two months in another; three months in another; four months in four others; five months in another; and six, seven, eight, and nine months, respectively, in four others; *making together thirteen out of the twenty-four prisons*. In five more prisons the Wheel had been in use a year; in another a year and a half; in two others two years and a half; and in three others, respectively, three years, three years and a half, and four years. Thus, *in but five of the twenty-four prisons* had the Tread-wheel been introduced above a year; in one of which (Haverfordwest) it is capable of working no * more than sixteen; and in another (Aylesbury, where alone it had been used so long as four years) no more than twenty-four individuals. Yet, under all the disadvantages of very insufficient experiment, and of the labour operating under † circumstances most calculated for its sufferance (where, *in two or three instances*, it had been tried both for a considerable period, and on an average complement of treaders), the official, and in one sense premature, returns enumerate *several casualties*, and contain *several*

* So the Horsley Gaol Wheel can only accommodate twelve on; and but nine or ten were at that at Lancaster Gaol, which on page 139 of the Appendix to the Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society is stated to hold only "four persons at a time."

† Alluding to these particular prisons being mostly filled with hardy agricultural subjects, whose periods of imprisonment are generally short.

admissions, all tending to prove the distressing, dangerous, and, according to their own concessions, but partially applicable nature of the labour:—when to these casualties, and consequences so early allowed to have attended upon the discipline, are added those of which there is now incontestable evidence; that, though too palpable* to be overlooked, and too important to be conscientiously omitted, the returns from certain prisons contained no mention whatever,—we may fearlessly aver that the Tread-wheel discipline began to develop some of its multifarious mischiefs as soon as ever it was adopted. That no link in the chain of evidence is wanting, but that successive crops of evils have been maturing ever since the cultivation of this new discipline, the documents which will shortly be given cannot fail to substantiate.

The foregoing examination of the deficient official returns must convince the most obstinate champions of the Tread-wheel labour, that it would be cruel in the extreme to advocate its continuance, without conceding to the increasing excitement on the subject, a THOROUGH and HONEST inquiry into the state of affairs as connected with the punishment of the Tread-wheel, from its introduction up to the present moment !! This necessity will receive *tenfold* corroboration from the depositions, &c. which it is next in order to bring forward, and which will be arranged according to the date attached to each. It should be understood, that the Official returns, with Mr. Jackson's, and Mr. Hutchinson's exclamations, are the

* The government returns contain no allusion to the very serious mutinies, or refusals to tread, which had taken place in some prisons before the date at which they were sent in; and two or three, if not more, fractures of machinery were also passed over without notice. See Appendix, pages cxxxiii, cxxxiv.

only documents inserted in this introduction that have formally appeared in print; whatever other evidence shall be adduced, however corroboratory of, or similar to, any that has already been published, is *not borrowed from published accounts*, but is original, and collected by personal observation and examination within prison walls, or from oral or written communication with persons connected, by one means or another, with the Tread-wheel question.

Before detailing the conversations which have taken place between the two female superintendants of the female treaders in Cold Bath Fields Prison, and the writer of this introduction, it will be of striking importance to state, that *these females, who, from familiarity with the discipline, must have blunted all such feelings of repugnance to administering it, as should partake of squeamish or improper sensitiveness, have uniformly, consistently, and to various persons, magistrates as well as others, protested, that the enforcement of it is harrowing to their feelings;—that they consider it utterly indelicate and disgraceful;—and that they devoutly wish that in the case of females, it were altogether abandoned!* These females were appointed to their work on the 15th of last March.

The following is the substance of what transpired, in an interview with them on the 10th of August last. “The women under our care *complain, continually, of bearing down pains*, as also of pains in the loins and limbs, and some of them assert that the soles of their feet become sore with the treading. Their hands are generally blistered for the first few days, but soon grow horny.

“ Most of the women complain of great debility and lassitude, and many of them *cry bitterly*. In warm weather faintings *often* occur, which precipitate the treader backwards from the Wheel to the gallery floor, a height of between four and five feet: ONE WOMAN IN THE DISORDERLY YARD, HAS BEEN ORDERED ON THE WHEEL THREE TIMES THE SAME DAY, AFTER THREE DIFFERENT FAINTINGS.

“ There is now on the Wheel in this yard, a female with a contracted hand *.

“ *The female illness* is occasionally brought on, sometimes prematurely, sometimes in excess.

“ The worst characters express a strong sense of being *degraded* by the punishment, and are very much exasperated whenever they are exposed to the visits and gaze of strangers.

“ Before the new discipline was adopted, the warehouses always found work enough to employ busily all “ the Newgate fines,” who were placed at Clerkenwell prison under Mrs. Hearn, while the Wheels at Cold Bath Fields prison were building.

“ The labour is so severe, that we are *every day* compelled to exempt several of the women from a portion of their prescribed task; some we have at times exempted from as much as one half of it.”

A Letter from Mr. Jackson, Surgeon to the Guildford House of Correction, which appeared in the John Bull paper of the 14th of September, next presents itself to notice.

* Mrs. Hearn has had at this Wheel, a woman with *one arm shorter than the other*, who found great difficulty in holding on by the hand-rail while performing the task of treading.

" SIR,

" I read (with no small degree of surprise) in your paper of the 24th of August, some observations relative to the use of the Tread-mill, together with copious extracts from SIR JOHN COX HIPPISEY'S work, in which a truly horrible account is given of the sufferings of the prisoners in the House of Correction at Cold Bath Fields.

" These observations and extracts are so completely at variance with the state of things as they exist in the House of Correction at this place, MORE ESPECIALLY *with regard to the effects of the Wheel* ON THE FEMALE PRISONERS, that I am induced to trouble you with an account of the weight of *all* the women who have been admitted into this prison between the 1st of May and the 1st of September: by which statement I trust I shall be able to show that (if increase of weight be a proof of improved health), the women ARE IN *better case than when they were admitted.*

			st. lb.			st. lb.	
Eliz. Simmons	. May 3	weight	8 3½	Aug. 9	weight	8 8½	gained
Frances Palmer	. — 3	—	8 10½	— 9	— 9 0½	gained	
Cath. Hargrave	. — 3	—	7 13½	— 9	— 8 1½	gained	
Ann Towers	. . — 16	—	7 11	— 9	— 7 10	lost	
Mary Hilton	. . — 16	—	7 6	— 9	— 7 2½	lost	
Maria Harris	. . — 16	—	8 10½	— 9	— 8 2½	lost	
Fanny Welch	. . June 13	—	9 5	— 9	— 8 13½	lost	
Bridget Welch	. . — 13	—	9 10	— 9	— 9 4	lost	
Joanna M'Carthy	. May 16	—	8 3	— 9	— 8 10½	gained	
Mary Key	. . — 16	—	9 4	— 9	— 9 8½	gained	
Sarah Pledge	. . — 16	—	8 1	— 9	— 8 3½	gained	
Jane Baker	. . — 16	—	7 10½	— 9	— 8 4	gained	
Caroline Taylor	. . — 16	—	8 3	— 9	— 7 11½	lost	
Sarah Mainer	. . June 13	—	7 11	— 9	— 7 7	lost	
Sarah Head	. . . July 12	—	10 4	— 9	— 10 4	equal	
Mary Reading	. . — 12	—	7 0½	— 9	— 7 0½	equal	
Abigail Speed	. . — 12	—	8 9	— 9	— 8 10	gained	

“ By this statement you will perceive, that, with *very few** exceptions, the women have gained considerably in weight, and of those who have lost weight, two, viz. HILTON and HARRIS, were labouring under disease at the time of admission, *on which account they were seldom put upon the Wheel*. I beg leave to add, that I have witnessed none of the bad effects of the Wheel on the hands of the female prisoners, as mentioned in SIR JOHN COX HIPPISEY’S work; and with regard to the dreadful consequences described by DR. MASON GOOD as *likely to result* from the labour of females on the Tread-wheel, I most positively declare, that *no such consequences have existed here*. The prisoners, and MORE ESPECIALLY THE WOMEN, are in good health—the few cases of sickness which have come under my care have been generally chronic diseases of long standing, and were so at the time of admission into this place; and *I do most solemnly declare that I have as yet witnessed no bad effects on the legs, arms, or bodies of the prisoners from the use of the Tread-mill*.

“ My object in troubling you with this is to elicit truth, and to do away what appears to me, judging from its effects in this place, a groundless objection to a *humane, useful, and harmless* instrument of punishment.

“ If the above be deemed worthy a place in your Paper, you will oblige me by inserting it.

“ I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“ EDWARD JACKSON,

“ Surgeon to the House of Correction, Guildford.

“ Sept. 2, 1823.”

* How could this assertion be correct when the numbers were all but equal—*eight* having gained weight—*seven* having lost—and *two* remaining “*in statu quo*.” The “gained and lost” column in the above table is added as a *key* to Mr. Jackson’s Staticks.

“ P. S. On visiting the Prison this day I found that the Mill was not at work, on account of the want of corn,—the men were in their different airing yards, and the women all employed at needle-work, *at which they appeared to be very expert, not one of them complaining of horny or blistered hands.*”

On Sunday the 8th, and Monday the 9th of February, the writer of these remarks visited Guildford Gaol, in company with a Surrey magistrate, when, on the latter day, the preceding letter, and table of weights being alluded to, Mr. Keene, the governor, informed us that *the women whose weight was given had scarcely ever been worked on the Wheel*, but, that MR. JACKSON WAS NOT AWARE OF THAT FACT, WHEN HE WROTE TO THE JOHN BULL. Had we not heard this startling declaration from the governor's own lips, in distinct, repeated and unqualified terms, no rumour of such a possibility would ever have cost us a moment's doubt; for we never could have conceived it possible, for even the most unpardonable, and unprecedented *carelessness* to have enacted such a *thorough misrepresentation!*

The date of the next memorandum is the 17th of September; and it relates, as will be seen, to the Tread-wheel, and its effects in the Isle of Wight. The gentleman, who drew it up, from his own observation, is a physician of the first eminence.

“ The tread-wheel at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, has a mill attached to it for grinding corn. *The hand-rail is here only two and a half feet high, from the foot-board or treadle, when it forms a horizontal line in its descent, and is placed forward seventeen inches from an upright*

line, drawn at right angles from its outer verge: in consequence of which the prisoners are in the habit, when at work, of easing their feet, by stooping forward and resting their fore-arms entirely upon the hand-rail; by which means also they ease their hands at the same time, and they can even so completely hang upon the hand-rail by this means, as for some time entirely to withdraw their feet from the tread-boards, and support them by pressing their knees against the sloping board that covers the upper part of the wheel. Here, therefore, the hands are less complained of than in Cold Bath Fields, and various other prisons; but it is an ease purchased dearly, at an expense of the chest; for in consequence of the procurvation of the chest, to lay hold of the very forward hand-rail, a pain in this organ is continually produced and complained of, and the exhaustion is so considerable, that the male prisoners have frequently let go their hold, and fallen down to the ground, and have occasionally struck their heads, in their descent, against the jambs that support the shed: the female prisoners could scarcely ever work without continually falling off, so long as this punishment was inflicted upon them.

“ The men rarely, if ever, persevere in this task-work longer than from twelve to fifteen minutes at a time; although, if they could do so, their intervals of rest would be longer also in proportion.

“ In one instance, a prisoner who fell from the wheel, in consequence of fainting, or exhaustion, struck his head so forcibly against the jamb, as to be confined, in consequence of the injury, for *two months*.

“ The *ankles* are here much and frequently affected with pain, when the feet are fairly used, and often suffer

also from being struck against the tread-board above, in its descent.

“The treaders complain of great thirst, as in Cold Bath Fields; drink cold water in consequence, when in a state of perspiration, and suffer in their bowels from this imprudence or necessity.”

On the 23d of September a second interview was had with the female superintendants before-mentioned, who stated that the complaints of lumbar affection, *bearing down pains*, aching of the joints and limbs, &c. were by no means decreased. They repeated, in VERY DECIDED LANGUAGE, their opinion of the indecency of the discipline, and said, “Since we saw you a few weeks ago, some women have fainted at the labour, and some have had their periodical illness prematurely brought on—ONE OF THOSE WHO FAINTED OFF THE WHEEL WAS SO INJURED BY HER FALL AS TO BE CARRIED TO THE INFIRMARY. Most of the women who have worked any time declare they ‘are not the women they were before being put on the wheel.’ This very day some accident happened to the machinery. The wheel stopped suddenly (with a revulsion) and then went on at a rapid rate of its own accord. *This frequently occurs.* The treaders were off a quarter of an hour; had they not dropped off at the moment the wheel stopped, their toes would have been crushed,” by being caught between the recoiling treadle, and the edge of the boarding which covers the upper part of the wheel.

The document which follows, in order, is a memorandum of a visit made to Cold Bath Fields Prison, in

company with Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart.* , on the 18th of October.

In Mrs. Kilby's yard, in the Tread-wheel gallery, were nine women.

Mary Kelly, aged forty-three, had borne TWELVE CHILDREN: she complained of excessive pain in the loins, and irregularly increased *menstruation*; this woman appeared much worn and debilitated.

Katherine Dyer had not been at the wheel a month, but had been taken off *twice* for the *female illness*; the first time in less than one-quarter of an hour after commencing to tread; she complained of severe pain in the loins.

All the women, but one, complained of pains in the loins, or calves of the legs, or insteps; one said the labour brought on pains in the head; another, who had not been long at the wheel (a stout red-haired girl), had found no inconvenience from treading.

In this yard, *the day previous to our visit*, no less than THREE JERKS of the wheel occurred. These *jerks* (as the *superintendent and women stated*) take place very frequently. When they happen, *the treaders, to save their toes from being crushed, or their legs bruised, are obliged to let go their hold of the hand-rail, and drop to the gallery floor, a distance of between four and five feet from their elevation on the treadles.* The jerks are so sudden, that

* THE AUTHOR OF THESE PAGES WROTE, IN VERY DECIDED TERMS, AGAINST THE TREAD-WHEEL IN THE BEGINNING OF 1822, just EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE HE KNEW ONE SYLLABLE OF SIR JOHN HIPPISELY'S OBJECTIONS TO THE LABOUR, which were published in the ensuing August. A mutual friend introduced him to the distinguished and philanthropic baronet, who, *at his request*, very kindly accompanied him to Brixton and Cold Bath Fields prisons.

the treaders have *no time to turn round and jump off*, but they "*drop as if they were shot*," at the risk of falling forward against the revolving wheel, or, by losing their balance in another way, backwards on their backs, or heads. *Sarah Evans and Ann Wilson* had, both of them had their *feet bruised* on one of those jerking occasions.

Mrs. Kilby, the superintendant, heard the whole of this examination, and *allowed the truth of the statements: one of the turnkeys, of the name of Chapman, was also present.*

In *Mrs. Hearn's* (the other superintendant's) yard, in the gallery were *thirteen* women; one of whom had had *three* children; others had been mothers, but were not examined as to the number of children they had borne.

Sarah Browne was subject to pains in the head, for which she had been *cupped three times, not long before* being put to the wheel; she complained that the exercise *reproduced these* pains, with a sort of throbbing pulsation in the nape of the neck: her instep was bruised by one of the jerks.

Caroline Davies exhibited a *very severe bruise on her knee*, received through one of *these jerks*.

A girl, called Matilda, who had just left the prison, according to *Mrs. Hearn's* and the prisoners' accounts, from *hanging by her hands*, and not dropping off when one of these jerks happened, was struck by the treadles in their revolution, and had *her knees so much lacerated* as to require immediate applications, and repeated dressings.

There was not a single woman of these *thirteen* who had not some complaint to urge against the labour; some it affected in the *knees*; almost all of them in the *loins*; some in the *legs*; one spoke of soreness in the soles of the feet; some described themselves as, "queer in the

inside," and "*affected in the breath*;" one described herself as feeling *at night* as if she had been "beaten all over."

Sir John Hippisley had ordered five or six prisoners, comprehending the *tallest* and *shortest* present, to mount one of the wheels; they had been treading about five minutes *when a very loud noise of the machine caused us to start, and all the treaders dropped to the floor; two or three of them uttering a cry of fright, and all of them exhibiting, in their countenances, unfeigned traces of sudden, and serious alarm.* The noise these jerks make is very loud and startling, and is as if the machinery had broken abruptly in some main part. *Sir John; the writer of this; Mrs. Hearn; and Chapman the turnkey* (who went round with us), were the *witnesses of this casualty*, and each of us was completely startled at the noise made by it, and the womens' instantaneous dropping off.

Mr. Webbe, the surgeon of the prison, joined us just after, and heard the complaints of the women, which were *distinct, unqualified, various, and strongly urged.* When asked whether they would prefer *needle work* to the *Tread-wheel*, they answered almost by *acclamation!* This question was put before Mr. W. arrived.

The hands were in no instances sore, but had gone through that preliminary stage to become, in nearly every instance, *horny.* This state of the hands, however, appeared to be of very trifling importance, compared with the other well-attested and undeniable mischiefs of the labour; *mischiefs which the superintendants distinctly allowed to accrue, and which were complained of in their presence, before three or four MALE witnesses.*

To hear and witness the examination of the *male treaders* were present, in the first yard we visited, Sir

John Hippisley; *Mr. Webbe* the surgeon; *the writer of this*; Chapman, the *turnkey* who had gone round the women's side with us; and a young man, either the sub-engineer or store-keeper: in addition to whom, in the second yard, we were joined by the engineer and another turnkey, who had but lately been appointed to the prison. The *jerks*, respecting which the engineer was questioned, he considers to be occasioned by *unequal treading in an opposite yard*, and *he fears* their recurrence cannot be prevented, as the cause cannot be controlled which produces them. In the two yards, between sixty and seventy men were inspected; they were drawn up in a line in the wheel galleries of their respective yards, and most of them were questioned as to their bodily health and feelings.

Complaints of the breath being affected were *very numerous*; two or three spoke of pains in the side, one of whom had had *a liver complaint*; several said they did not know what to describe, any more than that they felt "queer in the inside," and *very weak*; some had pains at the pit of the stomach; two or three, swimings in the head; and nearly all who had other complaints to urge, added to them that of pain in the loins, or legs, or insteps. Mention was made by some of the prisoners of a man, treading at one of the corners, who fell off the Wheel *through the trap-door*; they did not say in what manner, though they observed that he was much hurt by the fall.

John Hull had had the piles, and found the labour intolerable under such circumstances. Mr. Wakefield, who officiated during a temporary absence for Mr. Webbe, the surgeon, considered the labour to have exasperated the disease. On an average, nine-tenths of the sixty or seventy who were examined, not merely ap-

peared *wofully emaciated and haggard*, but bitterly complained of the distress occasioned by the labour!!

Three or four affirmed, that they generally felt its effects on going to bed, when the *cramp* would seize them in the legs or soles of the feet, and compel them to walk, for relief, on the flag-stones.

As Sir John's visit could not have been anticipated by any individual in the prison,—as none of the yards have communication,—as what was said at one end of the line of prisoners could not be heard by the greater part who were present to be examined,—as no talking was allowed among them,—and, let this be marked, as they did not evince any disposition to take up each other's story, but complained, one of this unpleasant and distressing feeling, and another of that, while others admitted they were not afflicted by the exercise,—it may safely be vouched for, that there is *a very preponderating portion of truth in the accounts collected from them*; and if this be allowed, it will seem as if the Tread-wheel was calculated to increase every weakness and develope every disease that may appertain to every particular constitution! It will be noticed that four of the yards, containing twelve wheels (half the number in the prison), were not visited by Sir John Hippisley and the rest of the party.

The main shaft, connecting with the fly, is eighteen inches below the surface of the ground in the fly yard.

Twenty-four wheels (originally intended for 300 prisoners) are in constant revolution upon a single axis; nor can they, but with force, and disarranging the screw boxes, be separated. So that, if the treading be going on in one yard, and not in that opposite it, its wheels

are nevertheless kept in revolution by the unseen treaders of the opposite yard.

Memorandum of a visit made to Brixton House of Correction, in company with Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. on the 22d of October, 1823.

Mr. Street, a young gentleman, the partner of the prison surgeon, went round with us, together with the gate Turnkey, and to the women's side, in addition to these persons, a female Superintendant accompanied the party.

Sarah Barker, had been in prison eight weeks; she "felt queer and faint in the inside; complained of a lump rising in her throat," and felt this sensation *off* the Wheel as well as *on*.

Helen Harknet (or Harknall), had been in prison eight weeks; she "felt pains all over of a night;" felt pains when on the Wheel, more particularly in the arms; had *no such* pains when she came into prison.

Maria Murray, had been in eight weeks, and felt *very weak* both on the Wheel and when in bed.

Ann Hall, felt a "*sinking in the inside*," both night and day; she had a pain in the left side, especially when treading with the left leg.

A woman named *Davis* had been *in the gaol four times*; she complained of "pain round the belly," and protested that the labour was *VERY HARD*.

Mary Scott, felt *very weak*, but thought more victuals might make her stronger.

Eleanor Griffiths, had been imprisoned *six* times, and

five times had been condemned to the Wheel; she felt pretty well.

Another woman (name forgotten) was at the Wheel with an *ulcerated leg**; except in that part she felt pretty well.

Ann Smith, had been sent to the Wheel *six* times; she complained of pains in the limbs. The labour once brought on *irregular menstruation*.

— *Ware*, felt very faint, and *frequently turned giddy*; she only felt thus when treading.

Mary Arch, had had three children; some of the others had been mothers, but were not questioned as to the number of children they had borne; at first she became *much swelled*, but took some medicines that were prescribed, and was now better; she appeared haggard, and prematurely old.

— *Sleight*, had been in *three* times before; felt very weak, and endured *great pains in the legs*.

Mary Ann Coram, had been sent to the

Tread-wheel	. . . . .	four times
— <i>England</i>	. . . . .	four times.
— <i>Waghorn</i>	. . . . .	twice.
— <i>Coffin</i>	. . . . .	twice.
— <i>Head</i>	. . . . .	twice.

OF THE SEVENTEEN WOMEN who were examined, let it be noticed that NINE WERE NOT FIRST COMMITTALS; the five last prisoners were only examined as to the number of times they had revisited the prison *and the Wheel*.

It will be recollected, that the isolated fact of a woman who considered a chronic rheumatic affection to have been eased by treading at the Wheel, was blazoned

* Not a fit subject for the discipline were it ever so healthful in ordinary cases.

forth by the Brixton Wheel champions, as though, in its solitary exception, it established a general rule. When Brixton was visited, almost the first object we encountered was *a woman* with her head tied up, who was exempted from the labour on account of a rheumatic affection! What general rule can be established by an exception?

To pass to the men's side: a little anecdote may help the public to decide how far they shall choose to place *implicit confidence* in the discrimination and judgment of the surgeon who accompanied us round the yards. One of the men complained of severe achings, on which the surgeon exclaimed, "Well, my man, do you find the pain most at night or in a morning?" "In the morning." "There, Sir John, *his* achings can not be caused by the Tread-wheel!" Next-day pains, and foundered horses, good for nothing till they become warm with exertion, never entered into the CONTEMPLATION of this professional attendant! It was most unfortunate for him that his last remark was made aloud, for the man instantly retorted, "I never had any aches or pains till I came here."

William Lock, had been committed twice; he felt pretty well.

Samuel Dennis, had been committed twice; he spoke of *great stiffness in his joints*.

T. Wilmot, had been treading eleven weeks; felt *very weak*, and appeared wofully emaciated.

Francis Water (or Waller), was "very weak across the knees;" he felt so all day long, and never had any aches before treading at the wheel.

—— *Ellett*, felt pain and weakness "across the stomach and the small of the back," and was sore "all up the bones of the legs;" he had been treading *five* weeks.

One man had his head bound up; he complained of head-ache; the surgeon stated he was afflicted with tic dolooureux.

Sir John Hippisley not feeling content to pursue the examination as the governor and principal surgeon were absent, both of whom he wished should hear the prisoners' complaints; *he did not question a tenth part of the men, nor above one-third, if so great a proportion, of the women.* In the magistrates' book he entered his reason for not persisting in his examination longer, and stated he should revisit the prison with another magistrate to pursue the investigation, after his return from Somersetshire, whither he was on the eve of proceeding.

One of the wheels in this prison broke last winter, and *another* is now very imperfect in its play.

In order that the keeper, whose house is so placed that the yards radiate three parts round it, may see all the treaders at work, they are exposed, from the absence of all side boarding of the Wheels, to the most noxious currents of air, both on the Wheels and on the *stools* when *resting* and in *perspiration*!

This day a *very sharp* east wind blew down the yards, which was frequently strong enough to carry away one's hat, if not carefully held on. Unless Brixton be visited on a windy day, or in cold weather, *more than half that the treaders are exposed to may be overlooked, and certainly will not be appreciated!*

The hand-rail, here, is of iron, about two, or two and a half inches deep internally, and of so narrow an edge, beside being very close to the boarding to which it is attached, that it cannot be anywise grasped by the whole hand, but is held by the bend of the second joints of the fingers, where all the horny appearances to be found

must be looked for. An entry in the magistrate's book recommends that the prisoners should not tread in GARTERS! The magistrate who made this entry should have taken a hint from it of the peculiar nature of the exercise.

The general race of prisoners in this House of Correction, are decidedly of a stouter frame, and more sailor or peasant-like make than at Cold-bath Fields.

Untried prisoners are here put to tread!!!

On mentioning the man killed at Swaffham Tread-wheel, the surgeon exclaimed, He did not wonder at it, if it were like Aylesbury Wheel, where *he wondered they were not all killed.*

On the 13th of December another interview was had with the female superintendants already mentioned, and the statements they then furnished will be found beneath, accompanied with a few elucidatory remarks:

“About five weeks ago a woman was sent to the Tread-wheel as disorderly; Mrs. Hearn described her to be a quiet, inoffensive creature, who had never entered a prison before, and whose heart seemed broken by being sent there. About the third day of working on the wheel she *dropped off in a fainting fit*; her fall revived her, and also caused her to utter the most piercing shrieks. Five or six gentlemen, most, if not all of them, magistrates, were in the yard at the time. The woman was carried to Mrs. Kilby's side, to the infirmary, where she remained till her discharge, which *took place* last week.

“Two women above fifty years of age are on Mrs. Kilby's wheel, and the orders are to work old women as well as the young.

“Two women have been committed to this wheel who

have had TWELVE CHILDREN EACH; one named Smith, the other Kelly. Kelly, after treading three months or more, is just transferred to the wash-house department; Smith did not work above three weeks, for what with 'crying to the doctor,' and protesting if she continued at the wheel it would kill her, she succeeded in getting appointed yards-woman, on the application of Mrs. Hearn.

"The women are frequently, as of old, taken with swimmings in the head; many of them have been mothers of three, four, and five children, and some of them of more.

"A few of them complain of being afflicted with the cramp in bed, and complaints of pains and achings in the loins and limbs are as numerous as ever.

"They express a strong sense of exasperation and shame at being exposed to the visits and gaze of strangers, and many have been known, on such occasions, to *get off the wheel*.

"The dietary is the same as the men's; and each of them is on the wheel eighteen minutes, and off eighteen minutes, working from nine till one, and from two till four in the winter, and till half past five in the summer.

"They *perspire profusely, even in this cool weather*. Mrs. Kilby, in particular, who superintends those sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, says they could not endure the labour if inflicted to the full amount ordered.

"A woman of the name of Taylor, who had been at the Brixton wheel, assured the superintendants, that at that wheel, she has seen mothers with sucking infants; that they were allowed but a very short time to suckle them; and, that if the babes cried ever so piteously while the mother was treading, she could not descend from the wheel to quiet them before her turn to be relieved came.

At Cold Bath Fields prison, mothers giving suck have extra allowance, and are not required to do any work.

“Two or three women have escaped the labour for a long time, by falsely declaring they were pregnant!”

The needle-work and natural work system is thus described by Mrs. Hearn;

“When at Clerkenwell prison, I have, at times, turned out, for the shops, as many as 400 *shirts in a week, from 30 women.* They worked quietly and steadily, because they had a penny or three halfpence a shirt, and all they then complained of was, if one had more work given her than another. *They were eager for work, and a supply was never wanting;* but, on the contrary, many orders were refused, because they could not be executed.”

The Tread-wheel system, according to all accounts, both from these superintendants and others, makes the women sullen and vindictive; it excites that sense of shame, which *must* exasperate and debase, as IT IS NOT A SHAME OF HAVING DONE WRONG, BUT A SHAME OF PERSONAL AND DEGRADING EXPOSURE; and it breeds all manner of *repugnance, hatred, and lying*, instead of *orderly habits, thankfulness, and eagerness to obtain employment.* To an inquiry put on the subject of RECOMMITTALS, the following was the answer: “We have had women sent to the wheel as disorderly, come in next as felons, and again visit us as disorderly. It is a great thing for many of them to be out three weeks. WE HAVE SCARCELY A NEW FACE AMONGST OUR CHARGE. A woman, called Jenny Matthews, was recommitted four or five times within twelve months.” So much for the terrors of the Wheel having an effectively controlling * power over the temptation to crime.

* “No such favourable inferences appear to be warranted by the prison journals with which I am acquainted, as, since the operation

To the document that succeeds, public attention should be very distinctly directed, as it is the result of an examination by *one of the most prominent medical champions of the Tread-wheel discipline*; and was not only undertaken for the express purpose of proving its harmless nature, but was announced by its author in the John Bull paper, of the 12th of October, as about to carry “a conviction of the *mildness**, the *utility*, and

of the Mill in those places, *the numbers of recommitments seem to have increased.*”—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

Chapman, the turnkey at Coldbath Fields, assured the writer, that pickpockets formed a class of culprits that was “being committed over and over again to the Tread-wheel in that prison.”

By turning back to the 35th page, an idea may be formed of the recommitments, &c. to the Brixton wheel.

The return to the Prison Discipline Society from the Gloucester Penitentiary allows that “further experience must be looked for before any thing can be decidedly said on the efficacy of this kind of labour in diminishing offences.”

The report of the visiting justices of Brixton and Guildford prisons, presented at the last quarter sessions at Kingston, avers that “It would be an evidence of enthusiasm,” to suppose that “the majority of those who underwent the punishment prescribed abandon their evil habits.”—See Appendix, page cxcviii.

“In some prisons *by far too much* dependence has been placed on the deterring influence of the Wheel labour.”—Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society.

Let the reader compare these numerous important concessions and FACTS with the analysis of commitments at the close of this introduction, and then let him fairly say, if it be possible to assert with truth, that THE TERRORS OF THE TREAD-WHEEL have really and continuously operated to the diminution of crime? All they have obviously done towards the diminution of commitments, consists in the enforcement of the payment of fines, as preferable to the ignominy and drudgery of the wheel!

* “Dr. Good (whose valuable authority I shall again have occasion to cite), and who, *for the first time*, accompanied me to the House of Correction at Brixton, on the 10th of January, 1824,

salubrity of the exercise of the Tread-mill," to all who should peruse it in the Medical Journal for the ensuing month.

examined, at my request, in the presence of the Governor, the pulses of fifteen persons (nine of whom were male, and six were female), as they descended in rotation from the Wheel. He found the average range of the pulse in women to be 144, and in the men, 123; thus exceeding its ordinary and healthy state in the former by 70, and in the latter by 60 beats. I consider this fact to be such an important confirmation of the physical effect alleged to be produced, that I again repeat the observation, that the cause of this high state of excitement must be sought in a morbid and unnatural strain of some part of the system, from the extraordinary degree of pressure which it has to sustain."—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

• The Morning Herald of the 9th of February seems to be nowise disposed to subscribe either to Mr. Peel's or Mr. Hutchinson's ideas of the healthiness of the new discipline; for it remarks, "Mr. Peel, it appears, moved in the House of Commons, on Friday night, for papers, in addition to those produced last session, respecting the correspondence between the Home Secretary of State and the visiting magistrates of prisons, in which the Tread-wheel has been introduced; and in making such motion he stated, that, from all he could learn, wherever the Tread-wheel had been introduced, it had uniformly contributed to the *general health* of the prisoners so exercised. After this declaration, what becomes of the *voluminous* testimony and anathemas of Sir J. C. Hippisley and others against the Tread-mill? But is Mr. Peel's evidence from "visiting magistrates" only? In order, however, for ministers of state, magistrates, medical people, and others, to be proper judges of the pains or the effects of a Tread-mill, they should commit some fault, and be doomed to tread the Wheel in common with others, then we should have some reports derived from experience. *At present* the matter appears to be as little understood by medical and other men as the cause for what is termed apoplexy.

Result of an Examination at the Southwark House of Correction, by B. Hutchinson, Esq. the Surgeon, with the Assistance of the Rev. T. Beecher, one of the Visiting Justices, and in the Presence of Mr. Mole, the Governor.*

<i>Names.</i>	<i>Number of Months or Weeks on the Wheel.</i>	<i>General Observations.</i>
W. Paton	10 months,	His <i>knees, legs, and thighs</i> , fatigued in an evening. No swellings in his legs, nor cramps. Walks with the <i>greatest ease</i> when fronting the wheel. The labour not greater than that of a common day-labourer.
W. Allen . . .	5 months,	<i>No pains</i> nor swellings of any kind. Could step laterally on the wheel the whole day, <i>but eases himself</i> by changing his position.
J. Staniland . .	9 months,	Can walk laterally the whole day; or either in front or to the back of the wheel. No pains of any sort.
G. Cullen	9 months,	Treads in front with <i>greatest ease</i> , but often changes his position; can walk backwards. <i>Has no pains</i> nor swellings.
W. Clewes . . .	9 months,	Walks fronting the wheel the <i>easiest</i> ; can also walk sideways and backward.
J. Abbot	5 months,	Treads in front with the <i>greatest ease</i> . <i>No pains</i> .

* This examination should be placed in juxtaposition with the assertion in the 5th Report of the Prison Discipline Society, that "*No instance* has occurred in the Southwark House of Correction, in which the health of the prisoner at the wheel has not been benefited."

To many people, the descriptions of the prisoners *EASING* themselves by changes of position, and yet experiencing *NO* pains, will seem to involve a downright contradiction. Such is the light in which they are viewed by the writer of these pages.

<i>Names.</i>	<i>Number of Months or Weeks on the Wheel.</i>	<i>General Observations.</i>
J. Hall	5 months,	Treads <i>easiest</i> laterally, and could tread the wheel in that position the whole day.
W. Calton	3 months,	Treads laterally, backwards and forwards. Complains of no pains, but of weariness in the evening. Sleeps well.
J. Kirk	5 months,	Treads laterally <i>the easiest</i> . No pains in his knees, nor weariness at night.
J. Northway	3 weeks,	Treads fronting the wheel. No pains, but wearied in an evening.
W. Simpson	6 weeks,	Treads laterally with <i>the most ease</i> . No pains.
T. Wheely	6 weeks,	Laterally the whole day. Has been a soldier, and experiences the same fatigue as produced by a walking drill, but not so severe as a balance step. The exercise <i>not so severe after he had been used to it</i> . No pains.
T. Northwainer	6 weeks,	Agrees with the above. Compares it to the balance step, and <i>the pains go off after rest*</i> . NO PAINS.
J. Slack	6 weeks,	Treads <i>the easiest</i> in a lateral direction; can also tread backwards. No pains.
W. Hatter	6 weeks,	Does not think the exercise of the tread-wheel so severe as that of the walking drill. Treads <i>the easiest</i> on the front, and has no pains nor swellings.
W. Torr	6 weeks,	Treads laterally <i>the easiest</i> . Labour somewhat like <i>the balance step</i> , but more fatiguing. A feeble man†.
R. Burns	6 months,	Treads <i>easiest by changing his position</i> . Not so laborious an employment as thrashing in a barn. No pains, swellings, nor much fatigue.

* Having NO PAINS, his PAINS go off after rest.

† Why then on the Wheel?

Names.	Number of Months or Weeks on the Wheel.	General Observations.
W. Wigley . . .	3 months,	Treads fronting the wheel <i>more easily</i> than laterally, but can do either. The labour not so severe as getting iron-stone. <i>No pains.</i>
J. Bliton	3 months,	Treads laterally, in front, or in any direction, but prefers facing the wheel. No complaints of any kind, excepting fatigue in the evening.
J. Wilkinson. . .	4 months,	The lateral tread is preferred. Without pain or complaint.
J. Orridge	5 months,	Treads <i>easiest</i> facing the wheel, but has an advantage in a change of position. No complaints of <i>pain</i> nor of swelling, but of <i>great</i> fatigue in an evening.
W. Omfield . . .	6 months,	The lateral position the <i>easiest</i> , and says that the labour is about as severe as that of sawing. He has varicose* veins in his legs; but had them previous to labouring on the wheel, or being committed to this prison.
J. Hallam	11 months,	The lateral position the <i>easiest</i> , and has no swellings <i>nor pains.</i>
T. Cliff	11 months,	Can tread in almost any direction, complains of fatigue from the exercise; but has suffered neither <i>permanent</i> pains, swellings, nor any deprivation of rest or appetite.

* "Varices and aneurisms, or tumours of the veins or arteries, may arise in any part of the body; but they occur most frequently in the lower limbs, from their dependent condition; and they never can be cured, or even prevented, where there is a tendency to the disease, but by counteracting this dependency; as by REST, A RECLINED POSITION, AND THE UNIFORM SUPPORT OF A BANDAGE, OR LACED STOCKING."—Good on the Tread-wheel. With what confidence can the public, or Mr. Peel, accept reports of the general effects of a peculiar discipline from any individual who shall allow it to be enforced in a case for which it is the very last exercise in the world that should be thought of?

No living being but Mr. Hutchinson will think, that the utility, or the injurious tendency of the Tread-wheel, is "*satisfactorily* determined" by the testimonies just offered. Other people will see the mischiefs of the Wheel grossly peeping out in this exculpatory *effort*. The nearly unanimous description of the *comparative* ease of *lateral* treading (which is not even the natural posture of this most unnatural labour) fully lets out the secret, especially when combined with the as nearly unanimous complaint of fatigue. The whole language in which Mr. H., despite of his zeal for the discipline, is obliged to couch his discoveries, is the natural language of suffering and pain under a sense of constraint, which makes it inexpedient or unpleasant to tell "the whole truth."

His examination, indeed, forms an admirable corroboration of the anticipations that were entertained, and the grievances that have been recorded. *It is the most valuable portion of all the commendatory matter which has, here, been laid before the public.* To insinuate what may not be the fact is ungenerous; but Mr. H. in some hands, would experience rough treatment, for not declaring the motive that influenced, or the rule that guided his conduct, in making his *selection* of prisoners for inspection: but half the number of the treaders, under his professional care, were individually examined. Supposing that the labour be not severer than the walking drill or balance step, the latter of which is on all hands allowed to be peculiarly tiring; still, the balance step is exercised for but a very small portion of the day, whereas the Wheel-treading is enforced throughout the whole day.

On the 29th of December, a fourth; and on the 23d of January, a fifth interview was had with the Female Su-

perintendants, the accounts of which would not be super-added to what they have already been described to state, were it not that some *new* as well as some hitherto unnoticed, and very striking facts were spoken to by them.

Since the 13th of December, that is, within the sixteen days that intervened between the two interviews, a woman, in the felons' yard, named Davies, had *twice* had irregular *menstruation* brought on, through toiling at the Wheel.

Another "very stout" woman, during the same period, and in the same yard, had complained repeatedly of the same ailment, and had *twice* been so bad as to be taken off for it.

A woman in the disorderly yard, about Wednesday or Thursday (the 24th or 25th instant), by grasping one of the upright partitions which divide the wheels from the intermediate ladders, in order to climb up on to the treadles, had her hand so much lacerated by the revolving wheel, that it is now tied up, and she is neither able to tread, nor to dress herself. The Superintendants had heard, but could not vouch for the truth of the report, that a boy had, some time before, lost one of his fingers through an accident similar to this.

On Saturday the 27th, a woman, aged 36 years (whose name, as also that of the last female mentioned, the Superintendants had not yet learnt, who had some time before been tried on the charge of throwing a man out of window, and acquitted), came in as "disorderly." Mrs. Hearn "endeavoured to put her on the Wheel, and some of the women even held her on; but she cried so, and was so awkward, and put the yard in such confusion, that the treaders themselves called out for her to be taken off." When taken off, "she was all of a tremble, and in a great sweat."

The Superintendants assert from their own *trouble-*

some experience, that it is by no means so easy to step as a spectator would suppose. Their expression was, "It is astonishing how some women get into the step directly, while others are so awkward and fearful, that they cannot step at all."

The occurrences just enumerated are posterior to the 13th of December.

The hitherto unnoticed facts are these: 1st, That "in the summer the women drank to such excess of cold water, that *a pail which is kept for their supply* in the Wheel gallery, has been filled five or six times in the day! Mrs. Hearn said she did not interfere with their drinking; but Mrs. Kilby, at times, was so afraid of its consequences, from the state some of them were in, as to prevent their doing more than "*wetting their mouths.*"

2dly, That *not one tenth of the women* in the disorderly yard (where they are not *compelled*, as in the felons' yard, to wear their shoes) *tread with their shoes on*: Their feet swell, and they find it a relief to tread without their shoes. When prison* shoes were allowed for this yard, the women *cut them into slippers to ease their feet*. Out of about twenty treaders, under Mrs. Hearn's charge, "not above two or three tread in their shoes;"—nor could Mrs. Kilby enforce, as she now does (for their stockings' sake), the wearing of the prison shoes among her Newgate fines, in the summer time!

3dly, That a prisoner, named *Collins*, escaped from treading nearly six months, by protesting, as *many others* have done with various success, that she was pregnant.

Almost all new treaders, before their chronic affections and exhaustion can be developed, are temporarily

* Prison shoes are again allowed within the last eight or ten days.

sore as if bruised and beaten—so much so that many “can hardly lift their hands to their heads,” as they express it. “Had we had a hot summer,” was one of the remarks which the Superintendants made, “no one can tell what would have been the consequence;” but “now, in this weather, the women sweat so, that their linen is frequently wet through:”—“when they get warm in bed, their aches and pains come on most; many can get no rest.”

In order to ensure correctness, in this interview, all the former memorandums were examined, and questions put from them to ascertain if the same story was told in the same way, after different intervals of time. The result was completely satisfactory; and it was highly creditable to the straight-forward, honest mode in which the Superintendants made their several, respective, and repeated statements. The precise expressions they used, or quoted, are in many instances preserved for their naturalness and verisimilitude.

On the 24th of January it was stated, That “on Saturday the 17th, A WOMAN* WHO CAME IN AS ‘DIS-

* Her name is CATHARINE MACAULAY, of No. 7, Ashton-street, Poplar, near the East India Docks. She left the prison on the 10th of February, and cannot yet walk.

JANE GEORGE, who lives in the same neighbourhood, and left the prison on or about the same day, but who had not been put on the Wheel, declared that many of the treaders “HEAVE BLOOD OFF THEIR STOMACHS WHEN THEY GET UP IN A MORNING.” Whether or not, this be *owing* to the labour, need not be inquired into, to prove what unfit subjects for *such labour* are poor, worn-out, unfortunate offenders of the weaker sex! Probably *not one woman* committed to our Metropolitan Gaols is in sound and strong health—most of them are in a miserable plight.

MARIA LAKE, who also lives in the same neighbourhood, worked a fortnight on the Wheel, and picked oakum a fortnight. She had

ORDERLY, ABOUT FOUR DAYS PREVIOUS, FELL OFF THE WHEEL AND CAUGHT HER LEG IN IT, BY WHICH SHE HUNG till released by some of her fellow prisoners; her foot swelled terribly, and on the ensuing Monday, after fainting away, she was carried up to the Infirmary, by four women, where she was still confined, and complaining of a pain up her hip," at the date at which the information was attained. Mrs. Hearn did not see her fall, but saw her just after, in her maimed condition.

On, or about, the 2d of January, a woman named Mills, after treading, was locked in her night cell with two other females. On unlocking the cell in the morning, it was discovered that she had MISCARRIED of a perfectly formed foetus, apparently between three and four months old!!!

On the 22d of January, a woman, of about fifty years of age, who had had a family, was put on the Wheel; she fell off twice; but Mrs. Hearn could not positively say whether it was, or was not, from weakness. She was, however, in consequence, exempted from the Wheel labour.

What the opponents of the Tread-wheel have urged against it, upon philosophical principles, as to *its debasing effects* on the mind, is remarkably corroborated by an assertion, founded on experience, which Mrs. Hearn made casually, and without being questioned on the point, viz. that "she found the Tread-wheel rendered the women hardened; for when they first came to it, they were abashed, but on being recommitted, they appeared callous and not to care for it." These are Mrs. H.'s

a bad leg, and a violent pain in the head. The doctor told her it would do her good to work on the Wheel, and would cleanse her blood: she fell off the Wheel three times, in one of which falls the "top of her boot was struck clean off."

words, and these very words WERE HONESTLY ADDRESSED TO A MAGISTRATE, WHO IS FAVOURABLE TO THE DISCIPLINE !

It would be supposed that to furnish so unbroken a chain of casualties and mischiefs, the wheels for the females had all along had their full complement of treaders in active operation !—no such a thing. For the last month or six weeks (from the 24th of January), not above twelve women have worked daily at Mrs. Hearn's wheels ; nor more than five or six at Mrs. Kilby's !!

In the Appendix to the Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society, published a few weeks ago, are " Reports on Tread-mill Labour" from thirty-six Prisons, being the number, within five or six, where the new discipline is, at present, *in use*. As the first official returns to Government were analyzed to expose *the concessions they contain, and the casualties they record*, these demi-official returns to the Prison Discipline Society may advantageously be submitted to a somewhat similar, though more cursory scrutiny. In the mode of reporting, as well as in the substance of the Reports, there is a great variety—some of them, for instance, mention nothing more than the diet ; others expatiate on the mechanism of certain wheels ; and others contain remarks of the state of health, *which all should have contained*, if they were to guide the Society's judgment, respecting the effects of labour, &c. &c.

Ten of these Reports contain no allusion whatever to the state of the prisoners' health ; and among these ten, is one from the largest Tread-wheel prison in the kingdom, viz. that in Cold Bath-fields.

The *Bedford* Report is very carefully and properly explicit in showing that " no female has ever been em-

ployed at the Tread-wheel in Bedfordshire; *nor is such discipline contemplated.*"

The Governor of the *Cambridge County Gaol* "has now and then remarked a weak man unable to perform a day's work, and in such cases he has been worked only half a day."

"A man fell off the Wheel in the *Exeter House of Correction* in a fit; but on inquiry it was found he had been subject to fits for many years."

At *Exeter Bridewell* "only three females had ever been put to this work, and they were *very* bad characters; but since the 26th of July not any have been so employed." The care taken to be explicit in this case proves that, in Exeter, and the adjacent parts, it is thought no light matter to put *females* on the Wheel.

So highly does the surgeon of *Dorchester Gaol* think of the new discipline, that "Convalescent prisoners have been ordered on the Wheel to work short hours." This Gentleman certainly stands alone in his "kill or cure" method of treatment.

At *Durham Gaol*, "two Inspectors are in constant attendance to watch the men at their work; but the prisoners, on a late visit, appeared to be FAR from being QUIET AND ORDERLY on the Wheels."

Mr. Wilton, the surgeon to the *Gloucester Penitentiary*, allows, "It is true that MANY of the Penitentiary prisoners have REPEATEDLY complained; but the very great majority of those complaints were full of *deception* *, for the purpose of escaping the work on the Tread-mill." This Report insists that "further experience must be looked for before any thing can be said *decidedly* on the efficacy of this kind of labour in diminishing offences."

* The moral effect of the discipline.

At the *Newport House of Correction*, in the Isle of Wight, “there was one instance of a man who, through carelessness in getting off the wheel, slipped and sprained his leg. There have been instances of prisoners who, through obstinacy, would not hold the rail, and who in consequence fell off, but without sustaining any injury. The velocity of the wheel is very high, viz. eighty steps per minute; it is a rate which must occasion *considerable* fatigue when maintained so long as—*ten or fifteen minutes* together!”

In *St. Alban's House of Correction* “females work, but no difference is made in their labour, excepting with those that are not strong and powerful, who work only *half the time*.”

At *Lancaster Gaol* “a party of prisoners were set to work on the 10th of February, having been previously weighed; they lived on the usual dietary; the particulars of their mode of working the wheel not being mentioned, the measure or amount of each man's labour cannot, in this instance, be distinctly stated. The number of working hours, during the period, varied from seven hours to ten and a half hours per day. On the 25th of May they were found, after some slight intermediate fluctuations of weight, to be within four ounces only of their original weight. The succeeding experiment can, however, be stated more explicitly: On the 26th of May, a gang of nine men were severally weighed; the same dietary was allowed; they commenced working ten hours per day, in the proportion of one-third of the set on the wheel, and with a velocity of about sixty steps, eight inches, per minute, making an amount of individual labour nearly eight thousand feet ascent per day. On being weighed

* One casualty, at least, is here omitted, which may be seen by referring back to page 27, for the account of an examination made by a physician of eminence, in *Newport Gaol*.

again, on the 18th of June, they were found to have *lost two pounds seven ounces*, on an average*, each man. The number of working hours per day was then reduced to nine, which diminishes the amount of individual labour to seven thousand two hundred feet per day. The men were again weighed on the 26th of June, *one week after*, when they were found to have lost *nine ounces more* on an average each man, making altogether a loss of three pounds, per head, for the whole month; whereas, in the first experiment, the loss for a period of three and a half months, was only four ounces." The Governor, in a letter to the Committee, attributes this reduction of flesh to *the very confined situation* of the wheel, which single defect is now remedied "by taking out the front of the room and supporting it on iron pillars."

In the *Haverfordwest Prison* "none of the prisoners complain of more than a *temporary* inconvenience."

On the 24th of January, the writer visited, for a *second time*, Brixton House of Correction; amongst other general observations, all of the same nature as those which characterise this inquiry, and all tending to corroborate the matter of accusation against the Tread-wheel; he saw a prisoner who worked at this labour IN A TRUSS; on expressing his surprise at the fact, to the Governor, that officer remarked, that they had had SEVERAL PRISONERS AT THEIR WHEEL WHO WERE RUPTURED, AND WHEN THEY HAD FITTED THEM WITH TRUSSES, THEY WERE USUALLY WORKED WITH THE REST!

Really this is past bearing, and Mr. Peel will learn

* As the strong will resist the exhausting effects of the labour much longer than the weak, this method of taking the gross amount of loss, and dividing it, by the number who lose, to give an average loss, most effectually keeps out of view the individual loss in weaker, and other subjects.

through it, how, from their general habits, some men *may* become very ill calculated to exercise discrimination sufficient to comply with the most obvious and irresistible calls of humanity. Are there half a dozen thinking beings in the world, who would not start to see an individual whose bowels were liable to protrude * * * put to such * a labour of ascent, as that required at the Tread-wheel?

It must be again and again recalled to the reader's mind, that the surgeons who allow RUPTURED men to make ascents, *on retreating steps*, daily equal to some sixty, or seventy, or eighty, or more ascents of the Monument, are of the number of those on whom Mr. Peel has called for information respecting the effects of the Tread-wheel discipline. Reports from such quarters must therefore be most severely scrutinized, as it is evident that what to the world in general would appear an unsound or injured state of health, would be taken little or no account of by these gentlemen.

In conversation, the Governor allowed, that, to PUNISH refractory prisoners, HE HAD CHAINED THEM TO THE WHEEL, AND MADE THEM TREAD WITHOUT INTERMISSION FOR TWO OR THREE HOURS. PARLIAMENT will doubtlessly look to this. Prison Discipline, preserved at such a penal cost, and placing alone in the Governor's, not even in the Visiting Justices' hands, such a power of summary, and at the same time aggravated corporeal infliction, is not the Prison discipline of England! This business must not be passed over without inquiry; and as inquiry must come, it will be in season to make the following

* "I saw, among others, in the Infirmary at Brixton prison, a young man, who, having been subject to an inguinal hernia in early life, had thrown it down on the *second* day's labour."—Good's Supplementary Note to his Letter on the Tread-wheel, published in the Pamphleteer for February.

extract from a pamphlet published two or three months ago, entitled "A Month at Brixton Tread-mill, by a late Operator on the Machine." "A PRISONER OF THE NAME OF GEORGE, so noted in the affair of Colonel Gore, WAS IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR THE SPACE OF THREE MONTHS, FOR ONLY OBTAINING BY SECRESY AND BRIBERY, A FEW ARTICLES OF FOOD, TO SATISFY HIS HUNGER: and I was informed by that person, that during such confinement, he had not a clean shirt for the period of five weeks, and on his complaining thereof to the Governor, he was by him proclaimed a liar, and followed up by every inconvenience that could possibly be inflicted: and even *the pitiful revenge* of making him eat his soup through the railing where he was confined, to get at which he was obliged to stoop on his knees, instead of putting it inside of the railing to him; which severity was exercised towards him, merely through his informing the doctor, that the Governor gave the prisoners, in the hospital, his own table beer instead of porter, as ordered by the medical attendant, and which was first made known to the medical man by a sick prisoner, who applied to George (then the attendant in the hospital) to confirm the same, and which originated on the surgeon's expressing his surprise that the porter he had ordered had not had the desired effect on the patient; when it was elucidated by George, it plainly appearing that he had not received any other than table beer. I am induced to state these circumstances upon the veracity of Corporal George*, who informed me he was ready to verify the same upon oath, at any time." Of the truth or falsehood of this serious charge, the

* Corporal George's imprisonment terminated some short time ago. A serjeant's or corporal's guard fetched him from the prison, therefore he most likely is with his regiment, which is one of the Foot Guards.

writer cannot give an opinion. THE WAY in which it is told bears strong features of verisimilitude, but the MATTER is so passing fearful, as to prove an obstacle to belief. It is merely given a place to, that inquiry may be, as it must be, under such a state of things, excited: it has been UNCONTRADICTED, before the public, for three or four months, and the public have an interest and a right to have it instantly examined into. Should this examination tend to exonerate the Governor, which, for the sake of our national character, it is to be devoutly hoped it will, no one will have greater pleasure than the writer of these pages, in assisting in the making public his exculpation.

On Sunday the 8th, and Monday the 9th of February, the writer visited Guildford Gaol; about twenty men were examined, every one of whom complained *most bitterly* of the distress occasioned by the labour: one or two of them, were working in *bandages*, another with a handkerchief tied tight round his loins, who said he felt so weak, that unless he thus supported his loins he could not work; and three or four others without their shoes. Many of those examined had been used to hard agricultural work; such as thatching, reaping, mowing, threshing, hedging and ditching, but they all described the Treading to be *far more severe* than any work they had ever been put to do. In other parts of this volume, the description of the wheels which are constructed inside the Mill building, and the information obtained respecting Mr. Jackson's very grievous blunder, have found a place.

The Governor, in describing the labour, drew a distinction which it behoves its advocates to mark. He said, "There is no doubt it is very severe; IT IS NOT MERELY HARD LABOUR, IT IS SEVERE

LABOUR!" On being told that it might be possible to furnish the Hand-crank with a tell-tale, which should register EACH MAN'S number of turns, he said in the most decided terms, "THEN THAT WOULD BE BY FAR THE BEST LABOUR:" his only objection to the Hand-crank being the possibility it afforded the lazy, to ease themselves at the expense of others. This possibility, however, is not so great as might at first be supposed. *The prisoners are a check upon one another, and it is well-known that "shirking," as it is called, at the Millbank Penitentiary, was punished among themselves, and thus generally prevented, by "THROWING THE SHIRKER OVER THE CRANKS."*

The Hand-crank, however, is hard labour, and if adopted should only be exercised by those who would be fit subjects for the Tread-wheel, supposing it were unobjectionable. It must never be forgotten, in providing labour for convicts, that in consequence of the life they have led, A VERY LARGE PROPORTION OF THEM (especially in great towns) ENTERS PRISON IN A DILAPIDATED STATE OF HEALTH, IF NOT WITH TOTALLY BROKEN CONSTITUTIONS.

On the 30th of January, Mrs. Hearn informed the writer, that the day previous, *at about ten o'clock* in the morning, a magistrate came to her side of the prison, and made inquiries respecting the Wheel and its effects. She told him distinctly, that "the labour was *most indecent*; that great complaints were made by the women, of the wind blowing against their legs; that they felt hurt at being exposed to the gaze of strangers; that they complained of pains in their bones at night; not being able to sleep well; and of being stiff in a morning; and that she thought the Wheel made them hardened, for when they first came to it, they were abashed, but

on being re-committed, they seemed callous." Other remarks she might have made, but did not call them to mind: *at about a quarter to one o'clock* she was sent for to the Committee-room, where several magistrates were sitting; questioned about some petty misconduct of a yardswoman, who had exchanged some tobacco for a piece of bacon, and sent back to her quarters. In about an hour she was again sent for, and dismissed at a moment's notice, being ordered to leave instantly. *Before two o'clock*, she was paid her due, with a pound extra, and had left the prison. On requesting leave to ask for what she was thus suddenly dismissed, she was peremptorily refused any explanation whatever. Mrs. Hearn was recommended, originally to Clerkenwell Prison, by Mrs. Fry.

On the 19th of February, Mrs. Kilby stated that the day previous, a woman who had been treading about a week, complained, in the morning, of being indisposed. She was not, therefore, put on the Wheel; in a short time after, *a flooding came on*. She was carried to the Infirmary, and for the first time stated she was with child; a fact she seemed to infer, from not having been periodically ill for four months before.

Mrs. Hearn remarked, that many of the women who used to be under her care, were so weak in the side, through treading, that **THEY WOULD HOLD ON THE WHEEL BY ONE HAND, CLASPING THEIR SIDE FIRMLY WITH THE OTHER.** This is a fact that has not hitherto been noticed. She also asserted that they have often shown her their legs after treading, when the veins were, in her words, "blown up" to a great degree. On asking a woman, named Golding, how she came into prison, she replied, because "she had not five shillings to give the watchman." She has heard many prisoners

declare that if they had had five shillings, they should not have got into prison ! THE DOCTOR, she states, has made the very rational remark in her presence, that he "DOES NOT KNOW WHAT GOOD THE LABOUR DOES TO EITHER THE BODY OR THE MIND." The women, within these few days, have experienced a diminution of their allotted labour, partly through the intervention of a new regulation, which causes them to attend chapel daily. They now get on the Wheel at *eleven*, and leave it at *one* o'clock ; return to it at *two*, and leave it at *five*. Thus five hours are devoted to the labour, and as they are only half on and half off, each individual treads *two hours and a half*.

They used to be on the Wheel from *nine* till *one*, and from *two* till *half past five*, which is seven hours and a half ; and as two-thirds were on, and only one-third off, each individual trod for *five hours*. Thus THEIR LABOUR IS DIMINISHED ONE-HALF. But who can diminish by one-half, or one-tenth part, the degradation of which even these poor wretches are so sensible ? Does the new regulation in any way diminish the liabilities of the machinery to derangement or fracture, &c. &c. ?

The public and Mr. Peel must take into account this *halving* of the labour when receiving the reports as to its *physical severity* from the physicians, who have just been directed to visit the female side of Coldbath-Fields Prison. It is a pity they were not directed to make inquiry previous to this *diminution by half* of the labour required of the females. This done, it must be pressed on the attention, that the question of bodily health is but one of two or three other equally important questions involved in the adoption of the novel discipline ! Let the mechanical danger be looked to, and more than all, let the health of the mind receive some *due consideration*.

To this vast mass of direct proof, much that, although only collateral, is equally decisive, might be adduced. What can more forcibly characterise the discipline than the extra diets it is daily calling for? Daily labour of this kind makes inroads on the flesh; and it remains, as a sort of quack resource to cheat appearances, to * much increase the food. In a few instances the toil has been at the same time diminished. What are the real grounds for the attempts, which have so multiplied of late, to draw a line of circumvallation around Tread-wheel prisons? Why is the power of preventing any disclosures of what takes place within their walls so anxiously grasped after? At Chelmsford, against two well-meaning females, who most probably could not excite discontent if they would, but who certainly would not if they could, and whose sole object was to attempt to do good,—against these harmless females we have the prison doors closed†.

“Risum teneatis amici.”

Were the disciples of Mrs. Fry sowing sedition, or were they detected in the act of conveying implements of escape into the prison? What fears did their conduct excite? Then, a philanthropic, learned, and enlightened physician, for *his first offence* (of entering the Brixton House of Tread-wheels), is banned and barred the place by—a visiting justice! What delight there can be in issuing decrees that pass all—execution, may perhaps be known to a select few! Dr. Good has the means of access to Brixton prison as completely as the gentleman who thought fit, in his over-anxiety for the reputation of its Tread-wheel, to say a foolish thing or two about exclusion.

The veto on the Guildford surgeon's communicating

* In some prisons it is trebled and quadrupled, and even more.

† See Appendix, page cxcv.

any information respecting the prison, except to such and such specified authorities; and the rule, that no stranger can see the Surrey prisons, unless *accompanied by a magistrate*,—admirably conspire to shut out inquiry. In Middlesex, matters are not yet carried with such a high hand: an order from a magistrate will still introduce the bearer to view the prisons: and though Dr. Good has frequently visited Cold Bath Fields, for the express purpose of satisfying himself AND THE PUBLIC of the mischievous nature of the Tread-wheel discipline, no attempt was ever made to throw obstacles in the way of his researches! The late dismissal of Mrs. Hearn, however, is not of a piece with the comparative open conduct just set forth; and when coupled with the well-known discussion respecting the admission of Miss Steele, who acts as Mrs. Fry's almoner, &c. &c. it begins to show as if the magistrates considered, which they really have just cause to do, that THE TREAD-WHEEL IS IN IMMINENT DANGER.

Having brought forward matter sufficient, in all reason, to establish the fact that THE TREAD-WHEEL LABOUR (if performed in any thing like the quantity that would make it in the least worth while to erect the wheels and *incumber* prisons with them) IS FAR TOO SEVERE FOR THE AVERAGE STRENGTH OF PRISONERS, bodily as well as mental *, the reasons why it is so, and must be so, may be aptly introduced.

* Witness the deceptions, already recounted, which it gives rise to; the savage ill-will; the mutinies at Swaffham, Reading, Cold Bath Fields, Edinburgh Bridewell, and other prisons, &c. &c. See Appendix, pages xxiv, xxviii, lx, cxxx, cxxxviii, *et passim*.

The following fact, taken from the Morning Post of the 24th of February, is of incalculable importance in this discussion. The woman had been sent to the Tread-wheel two or three times, and

The labour, as it is defectively represented by the Prison Discipline Committee, is that of ascending an endless flight of stairs. If any person will observe the ordinary manner of ascending stairs, he will find that only about half of the foot is used in lifting the weight of the body. At the Tread-mill a still smaller portion usually (because the most easily) comes into contact with the treadle, so that the description of "ascending a hill on the toes" is very little indeed beyond the fact, in any*

it is doubtlessly her sense of the horrible disproportion between the terrors of the Wheel and the CRIME of being DISORDERLY which has thus exasperated her beyond all bounds. Such are the fruits of dealing too severely with minor delinquency! of making culprits consider themselves victims!

"UNION-HALL.—MR. CHAMBERS, on taking his seat yesterday morning at the above office, intimated to the officers, that he understood it was the intention of a female, named *Mills*, whom he had committed for being DISORDERLY, to take his life on her release from prison. Halls, the chief officer, answered, that the prisoner had used such threats, and after her committal a knife was found in her possession, with which she said it was her determination to commit the deed. She failed in her intention during her last examination, which was to cause him (Mr. C.) to proceed close to the bar, on which she was to stab him with the knife.—MR. CHAMBERS said, if he was sure that she intended this, he would cause her to be sent for two years to Brixton. Of course every precaution will be taken to prevent the circumstance taking place."

* "It has been repeatedly advanced, that the prisoner preserves an erect position of the body when labouring on the Tread-wheel, and therefore that he can sustain no physical injury from its exercise. Now, it is one of the most forcible objections to this labour, that the prisoner, while undergoing it, *does not, and cannot,* preserve an erect position; and it is matter of just surprise, that any person who has reflected on the subject, and who has beheld this machine in action, should be led to indulge such an error.

"Who ever heard of, or ever accomplished, the feat of walking up hill in an erect position?"

case, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is not at all over wrought. But *stairs present, at every step, an immovable fulcrum for the reception of the feet, whereas the fulcrum of each treadle of the wheel is a retreating fulcrum* *; in other words, it is as easy again to lift the weight of the body up an ascent, when assisted by stationary steps, as it is when only assisted by steps which retreat from under the feet. The treader at the Wheel, however, not only *climbs a retreating fulcrum*, but he does so WITHOUT THE POWER OF VARYING HIS POSTURE in any thing like the proportion in which it can be effected at other kinds of labour. He may place three parts or even the whole of the foot on the treadle, but that change, as Dr. Good remarks, “cannot be persevered in for more than a few minutes at a time, on account of the pain, which

“The whole weight being, in this case, transferred from *the entire foot*, to its *plant, or fore sole*, the body becomes necessarily bent forward, and deprived of the important fulcrum of the heel bone (the *os calcis* of the anatomists), and its auxiliaries, and consequently of more than half of its proper and natural basis, and that into which the tendons of all the muscles of the hind part of the leg, and particularly the great Achilles tendon, are inserted. Hence the chief cause of the weariness of climbing a steep beyond that of walking on level ground, while the fatigue is increased by the act of directly opposing the force of gravitation by the very ascent itself.”—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

* “In the up-hill labour of the Tread-wheel there is no fixed footing at all, not even for the plant of the foot. From the *rotatory* motion of the Wheel, the momentary footing obtained is incessantly giving way, as in a quagmire; THE TWO FEET ARE IN OPPOSITE AND CONTENDING ACTIONS, the one falling, the other rising, instead of one being fixed, and the other moving upwards, as in natural up-hill work. The whole force of the body is moreover concentrated, not to accomplish an ascent, but merely, as in the case of a quagmire, to keep the body from sinking.”—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

such a twist of the knees produces, which compels the prisoner to return abruptly to his original and ordinary bearing upon *the forepart of the foot alone.*" (See App. page lxxxvi.) The writer can bear witness, from HIS OWN EXPERIENCE, to the foregoing fact. Testimony of the same decisive nature is also given by Mr. Briscoe, where he says, "I should not, perhaps, omit, that it is stated to be possible for prisoners to place nearly the whole of the foot upon the Wheel. It can only be done for a very short time, and I have never seen prisoners attempt it. The advantage is, in every instance, gained by a great degree of pain to the knees and thighs, produced by the twist of the legs, necessary to obtain the position. I MADE THE EXPERIMENT MYSELF on my last visit to Cold Bath Fields, and I *was not able to continue the position beyond two minutes.*" Now, let any one call to mind their own experience of a day's running up stairs; of an ascent of the Monument, or St. Paul's; or, if they have travelled, of crawling their weary way to the summit of some of the loftiest continental cathedrals; and then, being informed that A DAY'S TOIL AT THE TREAD-WHEEL VARIES (according to the prison) THROUGH ALMOST EVERY NUMBER FROM THIRTY-TWO, WHICH IS THE LOWEST SUMMER RATIO, UP TO NINETY-SIX, WHICH IS THE HIGHEST, OF ASCENTS OF THE MONUMENT (that pillar being reckoned at the height, in ascent, of one hundred and seventy-two feet *), *every* step, however, of *every* ascent being (in aggravation of the comparative exertion, and for the more certainly rendering it unadapted to human endurance, by making it unnatural to the

* "Within is a large staircase of black marble, containing three hundred and forty-five steps, ten inches and an half broad, and six

frame,) A RETREATING, NOT A STATIONARY STEP, and the posture being almost if not altogether unvaried, let him declare whether the whole history and * mystery of the *aches* and *pains*, and *sweats*, and *high-fever pulses*, and *thirsts* and *debilitations*, and *extra diets* of the Tread-wheel system does not fully and frightfully flash on his mind !!

To elucidate this, as well as another important branch of the subject, the Table No. 2, given in the "Description of the Tread-mill," published by the Prison Discipline Society, is here introduced, with the addition of marginal calculations of the number of ascents, each being equal to an ascent of the Monument, (that is, to one hundred and seventy-two feet), which are toiled over in the respective Wheel Prisons. It here must not be forgotten that it is all ascent, without the mitigatory relief of descent. That portion of the table enclosed in

inches risers; and a balcony within thirty-two feet of the very top, where is a curious and spacious gilded flame."—"The diameter of the shaft is fifteen feet."—Maitland's London, Vol. II. p. 834.

Three hundred and forty-five steps, each six inches high, give one hundred and seventy-two feet, six inches total height of ascent.

The above dimensions are taken from The Life of Sir Christopher Wren, Knt.

* "That *enigma* of the present day, the *violent heat*, *thirst*, *perspiration*, *rapidity of pulse*, *pain in the loins and legs*, and all the other symptoms of a *morbid excitement*, and a *morbid exhaustion*, produced by *slowly walking over two miles or two miles and a half of apparent uphill exercise*, in the course of *eight or ten hours*, with an allowance of a respite at the close of *every quarter of an hour*."—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

"The alleged *cause* and effect are not commensurate. There must be SOME OTHER AND MORE MORBID POWER THAN THAT OF MERE PROGRESSION at work."—Good on the Tread-wheel.

parallelogrammatic *black** lines is a faithful transcript of the Prison Discipline Society's table; the external portion, in the margin, is added as a key or accompaniment explanatory, and *didactic*.

No one can now be at a loss for reasons why the Tread-wheel labour produces such a crop of physical and moral mischiefs! why the difficulty of distinguishing between those really ill, and those who pretend to be so, in order to escape this worse than Egyptian slaving, should in one court † of justices be the *cause* of an application, and the *justification* for the countenance it received, which was made in behalf of the prison surgeon, for an INCREASE OF HIS SALARY!

The table, with its notes, besides serving to make so plain, that "he that runs can read," the reason and necessity for the mischievous results that accrue from such a labour as that of the Tread-wheel,—tends also to render equally obvious *the illegitimacy of its origin*.

The legislature alone can make equal laws. Magisterial discretion, in usurping its functions, *has varied, to perplexity*, the scale of infliction for the same degree of criminality. Taking the extremes for an example: the number of ascents, of 172 feet each, exacted in summer, of those sentenced to the Stafford Tread-mill, is 96; while, at Chelmsford, it is but 32; making a difference *daily* of 64 ascents of 172 feet each, or (coming to a nicety, by taking the number of feet required at each of the prisons,) of 11,030 feet; which are the surplus over and above the 5600 feet which are daily ascended at

* Such a table could appropriately be put in none other than a *mourning* garb.

† The last Kingston sessions.

Chelmsford. Such a state of things is perfectly appalling. No difference in physical peculiarities, no variation in diet, did they exist to the utmost possible extent, could come near to justify such preposterous inequality.

Here is exemplified one species of inequality, namely, that which arises from the different degrees of toil imposed in almost every different Tread-mill prison, on individuals whose *sentences* are, in the eye of the law, one and the same. Thus the justices of Staffordshire *daily impose* on a worker at *their* Mill 11,030 more feet of ascent to climb than are prescribed for a worker at the Mill in Chelmsford. Yet the SENTENCE of the judge shall in both cases be *equal*; viz. three months, or six months, or twelve months "HARD LABOUR, WITH IMPRISONMENT." Allowing for Sundays, &c. supposing two convicts to retain sufficient strength to work, one at the former, and the other at the latter, of these Mills, 300 days in the twelve months; the treader at the Stafford Wheel, equalling 96 ascents of the Monument per day, plus 118 feet, will in 300 days have performed 29,005 such ascents, plus 140 feet; in other words, he will have ascended 4,989,000 feet. The treader at the Chelmsford Wheel, equalling but 32 of these ascents per day, plus 96 feet, will in 300 days have performed 9,767 such ascents, plus 76 feet, or have ascended 1,680,000 feet, leaving a surplus of 3,309,000 feet as the amount of ascent beyond his own amount, performed by an equal in crime, who was SENTENCED TO THE SAME PUNISHMENT as himself! Here it is evident, that of the 4,989,000 feet of *penal* ascent, the DISCRETION*

* And do magistrates wish to possess a DISCRETION which would subject the judges of the land to impeachment were they to ven-

of the magistrate *adds*, without law, and contrary to every sense of EQUAL justice, THREE MILLIONS THREE HUNDRED AND NINE THOUSAND feet of *penal* ascent extra !!!

“ Can such things be ;
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder !”

But the inequality does not end here. The dietaries in this and every Tread-wheel case make part of the “ confusion worse confounded*.”

It would have been imagined that at Stafford, where the labour was so frightfully greater, every day, than at Chelmsford, the diet would by its superior goodness have contributed to reduce the apparent inequality !

ture to exercise it ? A discretion of punishing in all manner of ways, and in all manner of degrees, offences which in the eye of the law are equal. A discretion of dreadfully aggravating and rendering variable the sentence of the law.

* “ It is not necessary to follow these modifications further, though several others are proposed ; as long intervals between the steps by some, short intervals by others, and a peculiar form of shoe by one or two.” “ The difficulty of rendering the Tread-wheel A SAFE vehicle of hard labour is sufficiently conspicuous. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at, that different surgeons should propose different methods, and that the same method should fail in different places. The fault lies not in themselves, but IN THE NATURE OF THE MACHINE they would correct, which, as already observed, may be *altered again and again*, and varied *ad infinitum*, without any satisfactory advantage, since, being founded on an ESSENTIALLY WRONG PRINCIPLE, no modification whatever can possibly right it.”—Good on the Tread-wheel.

“ These evils are inherent in the principle of the Tread-wheel discipline, and *no modifications of it can cure, though they may perhaps palliate them*. But that even in its actual practice, this colossal machine should not be allowed to be exercised in *the irregular and inconsistent manner*, in which it is at present, in different parts of the kingdom, must be obvious, according to every rule of justice and humanity.”—Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.

How does the case prove? The diet at Stafford gaol is—*one pound and three quarters of bread, one pound of potatoes, and a quart of gruel for breakfast, per day.* The diet at the Chelmsford House of Correction—*one pound and three quarters of bread, two ounces of cheese, and a quart of beer, per day:* a diet actually more nutritious, as well as far MORE PALATABLE (this constitutes *another* inequality of punishment) than that which is to support those who are performing a task of ascent, daily more severe than that of those which the better diet is to sustain, by 11,030 feet! But compare the Chelmsford labour with that at Leicester, and then compare the dietaries: at Chelmsford (as just enumerated), bread, cheese, and beer: at Leicester, BUT ONE OF THESE THREE ARTICLES, viz. bread, and bread short by an ounce (being only one pound eleven ounces) of the allowance at Chelmsford. This allowance to support human beings at a labour of penal ascent, daily severer by 7900 feet than that at which other fellow-creatures, EQUALLY SENTENCED, are toiling with a threefold better ration!

It may very much serve the cause of humanity to subjoin in this part the list of dietaries, extracted from the Prison Discipline Society's pamphlet; any of the readers of this book will then be better able to wander through the whole labyrinth of confusion and inequality, both by having presented to them THE INEQUALITIES OF THE TOIL REQUIRED, as well as THE INEQUALITIES OF THE FOOD SUPPLIED, and by tracing the horrible *conjunction, in several prisons, of THE MOST LABOUR TO

* “ In order to show the importance of further attention to this subject, and the GREAT CONFUSION that at present prevails in the manner of enforcing the labour, the Committee refer to the table in the Appendix, founded on returns recently received, showing the

TABLE

Showing the Amount of Tread-mill Labour per Day, in Winter and Summer, according to the present System of Management.

Ascents, each in height equal to an ascent of the Monument. †	Feet, surplus of	Name of Prison.	Time of General Labour per Day. WINTER.	Amount of Individual Labour per Day.	Time of General Labour per Day. SUMMER.	Amount of Individual Labour per Day.	Ascents, each in height equal to an ascent of the Monument.	Feet, surplus of	Number of such ascents more in Summer than in Winter.
27	16	Lancaster Castle.....	Seven Hours.	Feet. .. 4660..	Ten Hours.	Feet. .. 6660..	38	124	11
32	6	Lewes	Seven Hours.	.. 5510..	Eight Hours.	.. 6300..	36	108	4
36 32	108 96	Chelmsford { Felons..... Misdemeanan.	Seven Hours.	.. 6300.. .. 5600..			36 32	108 96	0 0
32 31	96 68	Bedford (Sometimes)	Six Hours.	.. 5600.. .. 5400..	Nine and a half Hours.	.. 8860.. .. 8570..	51 49	88 142	19 18
41	148	Haverford West..... Men and Women	Eight Hours.	.. 7200..	Twelve Hours.	10,800	62	136	21
42	126	Swaffham.....	"As long as light continues, excluding an hour and a half for meals." = 7½ Hours †.	.. 7350..	Ten and a half Hours †.	10,300	59	152	17
34 41	152 148	St. Albans	Six Hours.	6000 to 7200	Eight Hours.	8000 to 9600	46 55	88 140	12 14
45	135	Leicester	Seven Hours.	.. 7875..	Twelve Hours.	13,500	78	84	33
47	86	Bury.....	"As long as day-light will permit." = Seven Hours.	.. 8170..	Ten and a half Hours.	12,250	71	38	24
44	52	Cold-bath Fields House of } Correction for Middlesex } Men and Women	Six and a half Hours.	.. 7620..	Nine Hours.	10,560	61	68	17
44	42	Durham	Five Hours.	.. 7610..	Seven Hours.	10,650	61	158	19
47	136	Horsley	Seven Hours.	.. 8220..	"From 6 A. M. to near sunset, with two hours release for meals." = 12 Hours.	14,080	81	148	34
51	128	Cambridge (County)	Seven Hours.	.. 8900..	Ten Hours.	12,725	73	169	22
51 40	48 100	Northallerton.... { Men .. Women	Seven Hours.	.. 8820.. .. 6980..	Nine Hours.	11,340 8975	65 52	160 31	14 12

The spiral conformation of the staircase of the Monument, and the breadth of the steps, cause a small amount of progression horizontally, besides the perpendicular or ladder-like one, besides in fact the ascent.

An ascent of the Monument equals 172 feet 6 inches. For the purposes of this Table it was not deemed necessary to take any reckoning of the small fraction of inches.

"On Wednesdays and Fridays an intermission to attend Divine Service."

TABLE—continued.

ASCENTS, each in height equal to an ascent of the MONUMENT.	Feet, sur- plus of.	Name of Prison.	Time of General Labour per Day. WINTER.	Amount of Individual Labour per Day.	Time of General Labour per Day. SUMMER.	Amount of Individual Labour per Day.	ASCENTS, each in height equal to an ascent of the MONUMENT.	Feet, sur- plus of.	Number of ascents mo Summer th Winter
52	16	Ipswich	"As long as day-light will permit, excluding one hour for dinner." = Seven Hours.	Feet. .. 8960..	Ten Hours.	Feet. 12,800	74	72	22
52 36	54 108	Exeter { Men .. { Women	Seven Hours.	.. 9000.. .. 6300..			52 36	54 108	0 0
54	162	Hertford.....	Seven Hours.	.. 9450..	Nine Hours.	12,150	70	110	16
54 51	112 48	Guildford { Men .. { Women	Seven Hours.	.. 9400.. .. 8820..	Ten and a half Hours.	14,100 13,230	81 76	168 158	27 25
63	124	Reading	Eight Hours.	.. 10,960..	Ten Hours.	13,700	79	112	16
58	104	Brixton.....	Seven Hours.	.. 10,080..	Ten and a half Hours.	15,100	87	136	29
58	104	Dorchester.....	Seven Hours.	.. 10,080..	Ten Hours.	14,400	83	124	25
58	124	Stafford	Seven Hours.	.. 10,100..	"From about half-past 5 in the morning, until 7 in the evening, with intermission of half an hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner, and half an hour in the afternoon for relaxa- tion:"— actual duration Eleven and a half Hours.	16,630	96	118	38
56	68	Gloucester Penitentiary * ..	Six Hours.	.. 9700..	Ten Hours.	16,170	94	2	38
87	156	Edinburgh Bridewell.....	"Nine Hours in general."	.. 15,120..			87	156	0

* The Rules laid down for General Labour at this Prison are, for the Months of November, December, January, and February, Eight Hours; March, April, September, October, Nine Hours; May, June, July, and August, Ten Hours.

N. B. The Tread-mills at several of these Prisons having been only completed since last Autumn, the Summer Labour in such Instances is nominal.

BE DONE, AND THE LEAST FOOD TO BE HAD. To facilitate the solving of this perplexed account, the number of summer ascents of the Monument are also brought forward, in marginal notes, and affixed by the side of the respective prisons and their dietaries.

great varieties of *punishment* inflicted; a bare reference to which will prove the necessity for adopting some uniformity of practice, in order to equalize the administration of *prison discipline*." Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society, page 36. Here the Society fall into their old error, of confounding punishment with prison discipline. What on earth have they, or any power, but that of the Legislature, to do with the equalizing of *punishment*? No punishment is legal, but what is prescribed by the law, and apportioned by the Judge.

Dietaries at present allowed to Prisoners employed at the Tread-mill.

LANCASTER.—One quart of oatmeal porridge morning and evening; one pound of wheaten bread per day; a quarter of a pound of cheese weekly; a quarter of a pound of salt weekly; one pound and a half of potatoes daily; one quart of stew on Fridays; and on Sundays, half a pound of boiled beef without bone, with one quart of broth.	Summer. — Ascents of the Monu- ment, <i>i. e.</i> As- cents each equal to 172 feet. — 38
LEWES House of Correction.—One pint of soup, one pound and a half of bread per day.	36
CHELMSFORD House of Correction.—One pound and three-quarters of bread, two ounces of cheese, and one quart of beer per day.	Felons. 36 Misdem. 32
BURY.—One pound and three-quarters of bread made of second flour, and a quart of small beer per day; with one pound of Suffolk cheese per week; and three-quarters of a pound of meat for Sunday dinner.	71
COLD-BATH FIELDS House of Correction for Middlesex.—Three days in the week, six ounces of boiled meat, one pint of gruel, and one pound	

and a quarter of bread ; three days in the week, one pint of gruel, one pint of soup made from the boiled meat of the preceding day, with one pound and a quarter of bread ; one day, a quart of gruel, with a pound and a quarter of bread.	Summer. — Ascents of the Monu- ment. 61
HORSLEY House of Correction.—One pound and a half of bread, one pint and a half of gruel, and one pound and a half of potatoes per day.	81
NORTHALLERTON.—Breakfast every morning, a quart of oatmeal porridge, and one pound and a half of bread. Dinner. Sundays and Thursdays, six ounces of boiled beef, and a quart of potatoes with salt. Mondays and Fridays, a quart of stew made of beef, ox-heads, bones, vegetables, oatmeal, and onions, with pepper and salt. Tuesdays, a quart of boiled rice and milk, or a quart of stew, same as Monday. Wednesdays and Saturdays, a quart of broth thickened with oatmeal, onions and vegetables, with pepper and salt. Supper. Every evening a quart of oatmeal porridge.	Men. 65 Women. 52
CAMBRIDGE County.—Three pounds of bread, and one pint of small beer, thus distributed: one pound of bread for breakfast ; one pound of ditto with half a pint of beer for dinner ; one pound of bread with half a pint of beer for supper.	73
IPSWICH County Gaol.—One pound and three-quarters of bread, and two ounces of cheese per day.	74
EXETER House of Correction. — Twenty-two ounces of wheaten bread per day ; twenty-two ounces of bacon per week ; and half a peck of potatoes per week.	Men. 52 Women. 36
HERTFORD.—Two pounds of bread of the best quality per day.	70
READING.—One pound and a half of bread per day ; and a quarter of a pound of bacon every other day.	79

BRIXTON.—Three days in the week :—

Breakfast. Half a pound of bread.

Dinner. Half a pound of bread, a third of a pound of beef without bone, and half a pound of boiled potatoes.

Supper. A pint of soup made of beef, Scotch barley, and herbs.

Four days in the week :—

Breakfast. Three-quarters of a pound of bread.

Dinner. Ditto, and a pint of soup made as before.

Supper. Half a pound of boiled potatoes.

N.B. In case of delicacy of constitution, the surgeon orders extra allowance ; viz. a quart of soup.

This dietary has been in use for the last nine months. Feb. 1823.

GUILDFORD.—The same.

DORCHESTER.—Three quarts of broth per day, with a pound and a half of bread ; the broth is made of grey peas and barley, dressed each alternate day with two legs or shins of beef stewed down in it, seasoned with pepper and salt.

STAFFORD.—One pound and three-quarters of bread, one pound of potatoes ; and a quart of gruel for breakfast per day.

DURHAM.—Breakfast every morning, one quart of oatmeal porridge, made up with half a pint of milk ; the same for supper every day. One pound of bread per day.

Dinners. Sundays and Thursdays, one quarter of a pound of dried fish, and one pound of potatoes. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, one quart of oatmeal porridge. Tuesdays and Fridays, two red herrings and one pound of potatoes. When potatoes are not in season, a quarter of a pound of rice is delivered in lieu of each pound of potatoes.

GLOUCESTER.—One pint and a half of water-gruel for breakfast ; one pound and a half of

Summer.

—
Ascents
of the
Monu-
ment.

87

Men.

81

Women.

76

83

96

61

bread; for dinner, five days of the week, two pounds of potatoes; on the other days, one pint and a half of soup made with beef and peas.

—
Ascents
of the
Monu-
ment.

94

BEDFORD.—A loaf of bread weighing one pound fourteen ounces *every day*: a quart of soup containing peas, vegetables, and a portion of the meat of which the soup has been made, *three times a week*.

N.B. An *alteration* is on the point of being made, viz. to “increase the quantity of soup, so as to supply the prisoners with it *six* times a week *instead of three*.” “No beer is allowed, and the meat, peas, vegetables, &c. for soup, are purchased with a portion of the money earned from grinding corn by the prisoners.”

51

or

49

LEICESTER.—One pound eleven ounces of bread per day.

This ration is distributed every other day; and our correspondent adds, he is informed that *some of the men will occasionally eat their two days supply of bread in one day*.

78

ST. ALBANS.—One pound and a half of the best wheaten bread per day.

46

or

SWAFFHAM.—Two pounds of the best wheaten bread per day, and half a pound of cheese per week.

55

EDINBURGH BRIDEWELL.

59

Bread, from wheat with the bran, made up into loaves of the size of twelve to the weight of a quartern loaf (making five ounces each). *Two* of these loaves are given to each prisoner *weekly*, viz. one on Wednesday and one on Saturday at dinner. Prisoners sentenced to be fed on bread and water only, have *three* of these loaves *daily*.

Oatmeal. Two-thirds of a pound avoirdupoise per day for each prisoner; one half made into a chopin (quart) of porridge for breakfast, and the other half into a similar quantity for supper.

Barley. Four ounces avoirdupoise per day for each prisoner, made into a Scotch pint (two quarts) of broth for dinner six days in the week.

Cheese. Four ounces avoirdupoise to each prisoner every Saturday for dinner.

Small beer. One half pint, English measure, per day at breakfast, and one English pint every Saturday for each prisoner at dinner.

Salt. One ounce per day to each prisoner six days in the week, and half an ounce on Saturday (cheese and beer being for that day's dinner).

Flesh, usually ox-heads. Thirteen pounds weight for every twenty prisoners on Sunday, and the same quantity for every thirty prisoners on Wednesday, and during the other days of the week.

Vegetables. From the garden, as necessary, and in season.

Summer.

Ascents
of the
Monu-
ment.

87

Prisoners employed upon the Tread-wheels have been allowed an addition to the above dieting, as follows: If sentenced to bread and water, to have two of the five-ounce loaves extra daily, and if on the ordinary allowance of the prison, one extra loaf daily, with a quart of small beer for dinner, and a pint for supper.

It has been made manifest that in consequence of the new discipline being introduced and held under the sole control of magistrates, UNIVERSALITY, as well as EQUALITY of penal operation do not, as they never can, under such patronage, attach to it. There being no power vested in that body of enforcing its general adoption, it becomes merely and most unjustly a local innovation; the nuisance with which one county is burdened, while its neighbour goes free! Two causes operate this happy freedom from the novel discipline: the laudable dislike entertained for it by any magisterial majority; and more frequently, the inability to draw on the county purse for such enlargements and alterations of certain prisons as would be indispensable to its introduction. Should our penal laws bear unequally from such causes as these? THE LAWS SHOULD CONTROL SUCH CAUSES, AND NOT SUCH CAUSES CONTROL THE LAWS!!

But do the *inequalities of the toil required*, and the *inequalities of food supplied* (often cruelly conjoined for the exaction of the extreme amount of exertion, and the smallest supply of sustenance), do these distinguishing, and respectively varying inequalities make up the hideous sum of confusion, variety, and unequal law? By no means.

A glance over the foregoing Prison Discipline Tables will detect exemptions of females, from a portion of the gross amount of toil, in *three*, and *only three*, of the five prisons*, at which they are worked on the wheel. Either such exemptions, in justice to the female prisoners of other prisons, should extend to all, or be made in favour of none. Should caprice, or some eternal and fundamental principle of nature and justice, prescribe such exemptions?

Again, the rates of velocity of the different Tread-wheels vary from 20, which is the lowest, up to 87, which is the highest, number of steps per minute†.

Again, the rise of the steps varies from 7 to 11 inches and more‡.

Again, to some wheels no fly regulator is attached, so

* According to the latest reports, out of more than forty prisons where Wheels are actually in use, only ten of them present the odious spectacle of women toiling at the tread labour.

† Some Wheels being constructed to walk, some to trot, some to canter, and some to gallop their treaders, and some presenting all these paces in turn; by these variations in their revolutions making a proportionate variation, or inequality in punishment! It is *generally believed* to be easier to walk than to run up hill. The difference in the rise of the steps making a corresponding difference in the stride, contributes to multiply the scale of inequalities. Thus may be enforced steps or steppings, short and quick; short and slow; wide and quick; wide and slow, &c. &c.

‡ At Aylesbury Gaol, "The prisoners not compellable to work are placed *in the inside*, and the convicted on the outside of the wheel, which latter position imposes by far the most severe labour, as the steps are nearly 2½ feet apart; its diameter is 21 feet."

that without corn in the mill the wheels cannot be worked. Now, luckily for their treaders, but unjustly as far as others are concerned, the supply of corn *frequently* fails, and makes *holiday* for the convicts, while other convicts have *no such holidays* whatever.

Again, the *feeding* of the mill-stones, where no *fly* is attached, has the power of varying, to a very considerable extent, the velocity of the machinery. At many prisons, therefore, the rate of exertion, or the number of steps taken per minute, instead of being placed under the knowledge and control of the Governor, is left to vary according to the wish of THE MILLER.

Again, in the words of the Prison Discipline Society, "In several prisons, if the numbers of convicted prisoners happen to decrease, it is usual, in order to keep the mill at full work, to man the wheels accordingly, and allow a less number of relays. Thus, unless the wheel's revolution be carefully attended to, and its velocity proportionably reduced, the prisoners may be exposed to a very heavy rate of labour, and THE PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIMINAL BECOME MORE OR LESS SEVERE IN PROPORTION TO THE EXISTING STATE OF CONVICT POPULATION IN THE PRISON."

Again, in three prisons, viz. Exeter, Chelmsford, and Edinburgh Bridewell, the labour required is the same both in summer and winter.

Again, the scale of the difference between summer and winter labour varies at almost every prison where the distinction exists.

Again, in some prisons part of the product of their penal labour is paid to the labourers.

Again, that portion which is paid varies both in the time of paying it, and in the amount paid, in nearly every prison where the regulation exists.

Again, in one, and but one, instance, a distinction in

penal labour required is made between felons and misdemeanants.

Again, in some prisons untried prisoners are ILLEGALLY compelled * to do the same PENAL work, to the same amount, as those who are convicted.

Again, in one gaol†, at least, as the writer of these remarks knows, but *half* the quantity of PENAL labour which is required of the convicted is required of the untried.

Again, at Walsingham Bridewell, the treaders are about to be set to work on "all fours."

Again, in some prisons no exemption from the labour is made in behalf of MOTHERS WITH SUCKING INFANTS AT THEIR BREASTS; who at other‡ prisons are the very proper objects of a total exemption from all prison labour whatever. Now where no exemption is made in behalf of women in such a situation, not only are they in consequence more severely (at that crisis when they should be less severely) punished in their own persons, than their fellow labourers; but a second and *illegal* infliction is more or less practised on their unoffending infants.

Will any human being read the preceding§ statements and not feel petrified with astonishment, to think that

* Here, and in most other instances, the labour is only virtually, not "*vi et armis*," compulsory. Bread and water diet is *the mean of starvation*, by which, contrary to the meaning of the late gaol act, and contrary to the whole essence of justice and the spirit of our constitution, the justices of Northallerton and Surrey, and other parts, have ventured to force untried prisoners to the degrading toils of the Tread-wheel.

† Guildford.

‡ This is particularly the case at Cold Bath Fields prison.

§ Well might Mr. Holme Sumner allow, as he is stated to have done at the adjourned Newington sessions, that "for the last two years magistrates had been groping about in the dark with respect to the discipline." This from so staunch a champion of the Wheel is invaluable.

such things can be? The contemplation is not merely distressing, it is positively terrifying; and yet another stroke must be put to the picture. The labour of the Tread-wheel is on all hands allowed to be a truly hard kind of labour; one that produces profuse perspiration. It is labour, therefore, far more endurable in cool and bracing weather, than in the heats of summer. The magistrates, however, looking to the length of the days, instead of the average powers and state of the prisoner, have actually, in almost every instance, allotted him the MOST of this peculiar labour at the very season he is LEAST calculated to endure it. Take Stafford and Gloucester Prisons for an example. The prisoners at Stafford Gaol make an ascent of 6530 feet more on a summer's* than a winter's day. The gross amount of ascent required on the latter being 10,100 feet, and on the former 16,630. The prisoners at the Gloucester Penitentiary, perform 6470 feet more on a summer's day than on a winter's; their gross amount being 9700 feet for the latter, and 16,170 feet for the former. The Stafford treaders, therefore, in one summer's week of six days, ascend 39,180 feet more than in a winter's week. The Gloucester treaders, 38,820 feet more in the summer than the winter week. But is not the summer's diet put on a richer scale than the winter's? Let the enquirer look and see! In this solitary instance, where he should meet with a variation, where the two periods should produce respective and far different diets; there alone will he find *equality*. With but the same quantity of food, and probably *half the quantity of sleep*, the unfortunate being who continues till the summer at the wheel, will have to perform daily 790 or 6530 feet (taking

* "In summer, a sentence of hard labour is now, in many instances, at least 50 per cent. more severe and oppressive than in winter."—*Fifth Report of Prison Discipline Society*.

the extremes), or some number varying between these two, (the amount varying, as every thing else does, in the different prisons) * more labour of ascent than he was called upon for in the winter. IT IS AS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE TREAD-WHEEL TO STAND BEFORE SUCH DISCLOSURES AS HAVE JUST BEEN, AND ARE YET TO BE, MADE RESPECTING IT, AS IT WOULD BE FOR INJUSTICE AND UNEQUAL LAWS PERMANENTLY TO FIND AN ASYLUM IN THIS FAVOURED COUNTRY.

The most serious moral consequence of inflicting a punishment, so continuously afflicting and irksome as that of the Tread-wheel, is to make those subjected to it lose *that sense of their criminality, which should ever be kept before convicts' eyes*, in AN EXASPERATING SENSE OF BEING CHASTISED BEYOND THEIR DESERTS. A constant feeling of injustice and cruelty causes the prisoner to consider himself a victim† rather than a criminal: "What

* If such a state of things were to continue, we should have all the rogues in the land playing their games according to calculation, so that in case of detection their residence in gaol should be in the winter season.

† "Of what avail can be the office or the duties of a prison chaplain, by the side of the Tread-wheel? Is it possible that the two systems of benevolence and unmitigated severity can ever be reconciled?" —Sir John Hippisley on Prison Labour.

It is well known that the late chaplain of Cold Bath Fields prison, the Rev. Mr. Ruell, has been all along opposed to the new discipline: the Rev. Mr. Bennett, of Millbank Penitentiary, and the Rev. Mr. Cotton, of Newgate, are likewise well known to have expressed themselves as thoroughly opposed to it. Two other clergymen are mentioned in Sir J. Hippisley's work, who disapprove of it. See Appendix, page lx, and Sir John Cox Hippisley's pamphlet, page 135.

"In the situation and feelings of a person labouring for ten hours of every day upon the Tread-wheel, (professedly acknowledged and designed to operate by *terror*), what avail the visits of the chaplain, or the prayers which, by the last Gaol Bill, are appointed to be read? These prayers may be repeated, and the minister of religion may exhort to repentance; but if the body be

have I done to deserve such severity as this?" is on the lips or in the heart of the greater portion of individuals, who experience the penalties and pains of the Tread-wheel. But, such feelings cannot co-exist with any desire to reform, and lead a new life. They are too absorbing, and beget only sullenness and that train of feelings allied to vindictiveness and desperation. A little anecdote* or two may contribute to confirm this view of the case: in one of the repeated visits, which the writer of these remarks has paid to Cold Bath Fields Prison, a friend who accompanied him mounted

worn down by suffering and exhaustion, while the mind partakes of its irritated and depressed condition, I fear there is small prospect of exciting kindlier feelings, or establishing the impression of religious truth—of that Divine Truth in which justice, judgment, and mercy are inseparably united."—*Briscoe on the Tread-wheel*. See also the quotation respecting penal terrors, from the Prison Discipline Society's Fourth Report, given in the commencement of this introduction.

* The anecdote of an INTENDED ASSASSINATION, given at p. 62, will be here called to mind, and contribute with the above to make every one *terrified* for the *consequences of the terrors* of the Wheel. To prove how just such an alarm will be, let the reader likewise consult the 173d page of Mr. Briscoe's Letter; and also read the subjoined extract respecting the consequences of the 'Tread-wheel's introduction into Trinidad, which occurs in Dr. Good's Supplementary Note. "So vehement are the sufferings endured in this tropical region, that in one or two instances the workers have voluntarily allowed their legs to be crushed and fractured by the Wheel, in order to avoid a continuance of the labour: in consequence of which, a Wheel of *a new construction*, formed so as effectually to prevent the culprit from thus maiming himself hereafter, is at this moment casting at Messrs. Lees and Co.'s iron-foundry, Winsley-street."—This morning (March 3), a poor man, whose friend had been liberated from Cold Bath Fields prison in a state of weakness produced by the Wheel, made the remark, "they had better hang them at once."

a Wheel, and trod for some short time, when, on getting down, a morose-looking treader, whose mind was evidently rebelling at the labour, and whispering the wrongs of degradation, and exposure, and suffering which he was experiencing, deliberately spat on him, as he was standing underneath. Another prisoner who was awaiting his turn on the Wheel, came forward and offered to give a detailed account of its operation, general effects, &c. This called forth the remark from some of the officers of the prison, that the Wheel would never hurt such a subject as himself, on which with a ferocity of look that evinced he would willingly have torn them to pieces, he muttered out, “ I will take d—v—l—sh good care it sha’n’t.”

The punishment of the Tread-wheel, however, with a physical combines a moral characteristic, both conspiring to the subversion of all hopes of his reformation by making the culprit BROOD OVER THE PUNISHMENT HE SUFFERS, INSTEAD OF THE CRIME HE HAS PERPETRATED. Perceptions of the ridiculous are not more sure and instinctive than they are sometimes difficult to explain. Now, the Tread-wheel labour renders the object of it RIDICULOUS !! What man of philosophic ideas—who that knows any thing of the constitution of the human mind—will dream of *reforming* by the process of hoisting up to *ridicule*? by daily and hourly rendering a man ridiculous, both in his own eyes, and the eyes or estimation of all mankind? Such a process is sure to *deprave*, by calling into action all the bad passions of the human heart, by engendering the most malignant and ferocious desires of retaliation and revenge.

It is a complete misstatement of the fact to say, that the generality of prisoners are debased beyond the hope of redemption, or that justice administered in mercy might not, in most instances, subdue evil inclination by

a joint and irresistible appeal to the native impulses of self-interest and gratitude*. People unacquainted with prisons are little aware how much of the better feelings of humanity yet remain unextinguished in the breasts of numbers of their unfortunate inmates. The writer of these remarks has seen many a blush on the cheeks, and many a tear in the eye, of those of whom, for indolent purposes, it is sometimes argued, that they are collectively callous and irreclaimable. The blush that is extinguished, or the tear that is frozen up by the finger of scorn, is like *the simple* which, by amalgamation, becomes *a compound* of the most virulent properties. Who will venture to assert that individuals in the remorseful state above depicted, or that those who still hopefully retain a keen sense of shame, will not be irretrievably ruined by being made the laughing-stocks of strangers, and the unpitied objects of self-contempt?

That the Tread-wheel labour places HUMAN NATURE IN CARICATURE; that it renders THE HUMAN ANIMAL A LUDICROUS OBJECT can more easily be proved than accounted for. To prove this assertion nothing further is necessary than to point out the immediate and instinctive decision of the public mind as soon as ever the novel discipline became known. The pandæmonium of jeers was moved from its centre to meet it. It became a by-word and a jest; the food of

* “Convicts are susceptible of gratitude, which, when sincere, is not less binding than chains. The subject thus attached is more likely to become useful to society than he whose mind, unused to *the language of consolation*, sinks into pitiable imbecility, or too often is driven by despair to horrible deeds.” Evidence of Mr. Reid, medical and moral superintendant of the convict ships Neptune and Morley, in their respective voyages to New South Wales.—Convicts are our fellow creatures! They are “men of like passions with ourselves.”

caricaturists, and farce-wrights, and ballad-mongers, and punsters, and little wits of every caste, denomination, persuasion, and gender!

Would anything but the quality thus assigned to it cause what has frequently occurred in the case of female treaders, viz. their jumping off the wheel on the entrance of strangers into their side of the prison?

From what source arise their bitter and indignant expostulations on the subject of being "put up there to be stared at?"

Would they in like manner resent the visits of strangers, were their penal occupation of a natural and usual sort? What but this has mainly contributed to excite THE FREQUENT MUTINIES which have taken place?

There is something in the very *attitude* into which the labour throws the frame—in the being hoisted up on a shelf "all in a row"—in a conviction which the popular notion must familiarise to the mind, that the toil is degradingly akin to the labour of turnspit dogs, or cage-winding squirrels—there is something in all this, and more than this, that annoys the treader with a sense of the ridiculous, the unnatural, the degrading*! A minute observation of the peculiar

* "This very *degrading* and laborious employment."—*Speech of Sir F. Burdett, Bart. Feb. 12.*

"A punishment *full of ignominy*."—*Speech of the Marquis of Lansdowne, Feb. 13.*

"*Degrading* men into mere automata."—*Good on the Tread-wheel.*

"From its intrinsic nature it has a strong tendency to *degrade* the moral character, by debasing and hardening the feelings; the *shame* at first excited too generally terminating in obduracy."—*Briscoe's Letter.*

"Prison labour when *humiliating* should not be public."—*Sir Wm. Blizard on the Tread-wheel.*

"Infliction of *degrading* punishment, with too little deference to

and irritated state of the mind in a very large number of treaders justifies the writer in expressing his belief, that if these unfortunate beings were to explain in so many words the keen sense of being *degraded*, which seems to haunt them, they would declare they felt as if sunk to a level with the brute creation. Impress the mind of a criminal with the idea that his betters are humanely anxious for his welfare; *and that his punishment is proportioned to his offence*; and in multitudes of instances, if the means of reformation be afforded, the inclination will be found to co-operate. But laugh at him in his trouble, expose him to ridicule when his situation calls for some degree of pity, and you blast as with lightning, you sear as with a red-hot iron, the last remnants of kindly and virtuous desires: you make familiar to his heart a malignant contumaciousness; you call into activity, according to the disposition, either the heroism of audacious obstinacy, or the sullen * stubbornness of a vindictive desperation.

It is no argument to assert that the penal annals of the acuteness of feeling, resulting from an *excess of shame*, or aggravated humiliation."—*Sir J. Hippisley on Prison Labour*.

Speaking of *irons*, the Prison Discipline Committee, at page 66 of the Appendix to their Fourth Report, declare, that "the general use of these DEGRADING instruments tends, without doubt, to prejudice the discipline of a prison, BY LOWERING THE STANDARD OF RESPECT in a prisoner BOTH TOWARDS HIMSELF AND HIS SUPERINTENDENTS: turbulence is more liable to break forth, and difficulties in the management are thereby GREATLY increased." How can the society reconcile with their patronage of that *degrading* engine of punishment the Tread-wheel, the doctrine so admirably set forth in the above extract? The doctrine or the Wheel must be abandoned! "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

* A fact, of which the writer is credibly informed, though not bearing immediately on the Tread-wheel discipline, will do so remotely, by assisting to elucidate and confirm the reasoning, which tends to reprobate the adoption of unrequited labour as an

the world consist almost entirely of records opposed in practice to the principle here laid down. *The penal annals of the world are a hideous record of a savage, a barbaric ignorance of the rights and uses of punishment.* They pourtray, in characters of blood and vengeance, the abuse instead of the use of penal power.

Under the third division of this treatise must be noticed how THE TREAD-MILL* IS INCIDENTALLY WRONG. It not only is incidentally wrong as A HUGE ENGINE OF PUNISHMENT, from the peculiar and inseparable† instrument of penal infliction:—A tailor in the Millbank Penitentiary, some time ago, chopped off one of his fingers with a cobbler's knife, to save himself from having to work for nothing.

* "That vilest of all mechanical powers, the Tread-wheel."—*Register of Arts and Sciences.*

† "Occasional accidents are inseparable from the use of any kind of machinery. It does not appear that the mechanism of the Tread-wheel is more liable to derangement, or sudden fracture, than must necessarily be the case in any machinery where the resistance, and consequently the power, is so great."—*Dent's Reply to Sir John Hippisley.*

"Among the many evils attending this punishment, there is a liability to accident arising from the complicated nature of the machinery; as well as from the frequent impediments or jerks experienced in its revolutions; together with their occasionally and suddenly increased velocity. These jerks *I have personally felt* in working on the Guildford and Cold Bath Fields Wheels."—*Briscoe on the Tread-wheel.*

The writer has also felt, to his no small uneasiness, these jerks at the Guildford Wheels.

"A complaint had reached the Bench that the Wheel (at Guildford) was so constructed, or rather so defective in construction, as to occasion a painful jerk, and that the prisoners found this defect a considerable obstruction to their efforts, and a most rigorous addition to their punishment. The general opinion of the Bench was, that the Wheel was liable to the objection of inflicting an unnecessary and rigorous degree of punishment."—*Report of Kingston Sessions, from Morning Post of the 16th of October.*

liabilities of all huge engines, or structures of machinery, to occasion very alarming* accidents, either by themselves getting out of order in a multitude of ways, or by entangling, or giving blows which may break the limbs or cost the lives of the careless or uncautioned; but IT IS INCIDENTALLY WRONG, as it at present exists, from the defective or improper construction of its wheels and other parts of its machinery in several of the largest wheel prisons.

To the first point the subjoined extract of evidence respecting steam engines, given by Mr. James Brown of the house of Boulton and Watt, before "the Parliamentary Committee on the roads from London to Holyhead," and printed † in their second report, will equally apply. To the question "what would be the effect of making the whole engine as strong as possible, by using nothing but malleable iron?" Mr. B. replies, "I do not conceive you could make *an Engine without being liable to break*; there are some parts so small that *they must give way*." The well known and repeated fractures of the machinery at Cold Bath Fields form an admirable illustration, in the case of the Tread-wheel, of this general maxim. While THE VERY MANY ACCIDENTS, some of a more and some of a less important nature, recorded both in a preceding portion of this introduction, and also in the appendix, speak at the same time to the facts of the minor liabilities of getting mischievously out of play ‡; and also § the serious casualties capable of resulting from carelessness, illness, or ignorance.

* See the returns, given in the postscript, showing that THREE MEN have ALREADY been KILLED; that ANOTHER HAS LOST HIS ARM, &c. &c. &c.

† By order of the House of Commons, April 2, 1822.

‡ See the preceding pages, and the Appendix, *passim*.

§ See the preceding pages, and also the Appendix, pp. xxviii. xli. lxxx. xciii. cix. cxi. xcxi. cc. *et passim*.

The most frequent and uncontrollable of the liabilities of the Cold Bath Fields wheels getting out of play, causes them to RECOIL an inch or more, by which retrograde jerk, unless the treaders instantaneously drop off, their toes are caught between the treadle and the slanting boarding above. In a conversation with Mr. Timothy Bramah, in September last, that very intelligent engineer expressed, to the writer, his conviction that, from the relative position of the wheels at Cold Bath Fields, too GREAT A STRESS WAS CONSTANTLY LAID ON THEIR AXIS. He remarked, that instead of placing six wheels on one length of axis *, he would have given a separate axis to each, and placed them consecutively. Such is the much safer arrangement adopted at Brixton. Mr. B. admitted that the comparative CHEAPNESS, SIMPLICITY, and consequent FREEDOM FROM LIABILITY TO ACCIDENTS, rendered the *handcrank* infinitely preferable to the *foot-wheel*, as an ENGINE OF LABOUR.

The cause of the revulsion or recoil of the Cold Bath Fields wheels, as the engineer himself believed, was the number of treaders in one yard, whose wheel axis passes into the opposite yard, suddenly becoming improperly distributed on the wheels by part of them getting off at the end nearest the opposite yard. Some cause of this kind, evidently DEPENDING on several wheels revolving on one axis, instead of each revolving on its own, produces, and will continue to produce, at any wheels constructed like those at Cold Bath Fields, this *very dangerous* recoil. In a letter received by the writer from a friend who well understands mechanics, he dwells on "the gross mechanical absurdity of 1000 feet (more or less) of axis for 24 wheels; and let but a screw give way, or a tooth of the cog wheels break, and the whole 24 are liable to be deranged, &c."

* There are 24 wheels; and 4 wheel-shafts, connecting with the main one, each bearing 6 wheels.

Again, in another letter, "the most objectionable part is the length of axis (connected by universal joints, screw boxes, &c.) partly running UNDER GROUND and subject to a proportionate degree of humidity." This enormous length of axis is constituted of shafts of CAST IRON connected together by screw boxes. In corroboration of the doctrine that *all huge structures of machinery are from their nature* liable to serious accidents*, which should therefore forbid their being applied to the *punishment* of our erring *fellow creatures*, part of the evidence, taken before the Parliamentary Committee on the Holyhead roads, steam-boats, &c. already alluded to, will be here in point. To the question—"There† have been some accidents to the engines?" G. H. Freeling, Esq. answers, "Yes, there have; but I hope that will be prevented in future. It was, I think I may say, almost entirely to be attributed to the use of CAST IRON; the cross bars and the beams were of CAST IRON, and if any water was in the cylinder at starting, THE CHECK CAUSED THE CAST IRON TO BREAK. We have now got them made of wrought iron: but the lower beams of the engine, which are very large, are still of CAST IRON; *there must be SOME PART OF THE ENGINE LEFT TO GIVE WAY in case of any emergency.*" The Fifth Report of the same Committee contains this passage: "WROUGHT IRON is strongly recommended to be used in place of CAST IRON, and though *some of the witnesses have expressed doubts* of the practi-

* On Mr. Dent's own showing, *the mere contingencies of extensive machinery render such machinery unfit for the administering of punishment.* In the Tread-wheel too, which is equally liable to derangement with the steam-engine, how much more intimate is the connexion of the Treader with the machinery? A steam-engine attendant neither gets on, nor into any part of his engine; but one comes into personal contact with the Tread-wheel,—one either crawls over, or winds within its mighty cylinder.

† Page 15, Report 2.

cability of making *large shafts* of wrought iron, Mr. Donkin does not hesitate to say that ‘they can always be got quite perfect, *if a sufficient price is given* for them.’” To the question, “Do you consider, upon the whole, that cast iron is preferable to wrought iron?” Mr. J. Field, of the House of Messrs. Maudslay, answers, “*If* wrought iron can be depended upon to be perfectly sound in all its parts, it is unquestionably the best; but I have seen *several* instances wherein *wrought iron shafts* have broken.”—“What is the difficulty of forming wrought iron shafts?” “The same difficulty that exists in uniting all large masses of wrought iron, so as to be perfectly sound in all its parts, *besides* the great expense.” Mr. Timothy Bramah was asked, “would you make the main shaft of cast or malleable iron?” “Of cast iron, I think, unless very long.” “Are you aware that *several* of the cast iron shafts have broken?” “Yes.” “Can the cast iron shafts be made as strong as the malleable?” “I am hardly prepared to say; I have seen *many instances* of malleable iron of large dimensions very imperfect, in consequence of overheating; I should think there would be a difficulty in getting the shafts of a large size so perfect as the cast.”

Mr. Bryan Donkin, in reply to a question on the defects of wrought iron shafts, says, “I object to *cast iron* in *every* instance WHERE HEAVY CONSEQUENCES ARE DEPENDING ON THEIR BREAKING, because I have seen *many* instances where cast iron shafts have broken *repeatedly*.”

The strain to which the shafts of Tread-wheel machinery are subject, is a strain in a twisting direction, either by continued pressure, or sudden wrenching: a force it is less calculated to resist than a force acting on it in the direction of length. All the foregoing evidence touches upon one point which is common to the Tread-

wheel as well as the steam boat, viz. *the liability of shafts of either wrought or cast iron to break from over pressure, strains, or sudden checks and jerks.* It may be proper to inform the general reader, that *cast iron* cracks, splinters, or snaps, while wrought iron tears or rends. *To stand a severe frost, cast iron is not half so well calculated as wrought iron.* Since the machinery at Brixton and Cold Bath Fields has been erected, we have had
NO SEVERELY FROSTY WEATHER!

Some of the objections involved in the preceding paragraphs are, certainly, only thoroughly applicable to such immense piles of machinery as are to be met with at Cold Bath Fields, Brixton, and several other prisons; but if they be valid to prove the impropriety and *hazard* of continuing to work *wheels which give occupation to more than two-thirds of those who tread at the new mills,* they are valid for the suppression of the alien and DANGEROUS mode of thus ADMINISTERING PUNISHMENT BY THE MEANS OF MECHANISM, which has unfortunately and UNCONSTITUTIONALLY *crept in* among us.

The report of Tread-mills, contained in the appendix to the Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society, contains the following passage in reference to the Wheels at Cold Bath Fields prison.

“In the arrangement of the machinery, the shafts of the eight * Tread-wheels are described by the engineer to be connected together by means of ‘coupling’ boxes of cast iron, which enclose the ends of two contiguous shafts: THESE BOXES ARE CONTRIVED TO BE RATHER WEAKER THAN THE SHAFTS, THAT IN CASE ANY SUDDEN STOPPAGE SHOULD OCCUR WITH THE MACHINERY, OR ANY DEGREE OF IMPROPER FORCE BE UNEQUALLY APPLIED, THESE BOXES MAY BE THE FIRST TO GIVE

* More correctly, eight yards, and twenty-four wheels.

WAY, and by these means prevent any serious derangement of the machinery!! Four * accidents of this kind have occurred; these accidents occasioned a stoppage of the contiguous Tread-wheels, the shafts of which being *liberated*, naturally *let down* † the men on the wheels, to the floor, a distance of four feet. No ‡ entries occur of any injury to the prisoners, in consequence of this *accidental* occurrence."

Let the reader reflect that these wheels, to which no mill-work has yet been added, cost, inclusive of alterations for their reception and erection, £12,000.; and nevertheless could not be constructed free from a liability to derangement of NO LESS SERIOUS A KIND THAN SHOULD INVOLVE THE PRECIPITATING THOSE UPON THEM TO THE FLOOR BELOW. The fact is *conclusive* against administering punishment by the means of huge piles of machinery! Mr. Cubitt, in a communication to the Chairman of the Prison Discipline Committee, dated November 26th, 1823, contends that "the assertion in Sir J. C. Hippisley's recent publication, that the wheels have an elastic motion backwards, by which the feet and toes of the men on the wheel are exposed to be lacerated, or cut off, is wholly without foundation." Mr. Cubitt has presumed to assert that Sir John's objection is wholly "without foundation," and, *wholly without foundation* has he presumed to do so. By referring back a few pages, the reader will meet with an account of one of these recoils and its consequences, in precipitating all the females from the Wheel, which took place in the disorderly Yard, on the 18th of October, *in presence of* Sir John Cox Hippisley, the writer

* On October 11th, November 17th, December 21st, 1822; and on the 6th of May, 1823.

† Threw down.

‡ Then there is great neglect somewhere.

of these remarks, Mrs. Hearn, and Chapman, the turn-key ! On the same page he will read of a girl of the name of Matilda, whose knees were lacerated in consequence of her hanging by the hand-rail, on another of these knock-down occasions ; and he will perceive that both of the matrons, and also all the prisoners, stated that these recoils were often occurring, and must, of necessity, as *they had done in some instances*, catch and bruise the toes, unless the treaders instantaneously dropped off. Mr. Cubitt would be much better employed in devising means to prevent the possibility of such casualties occurring, than in roundly asserting they had not occurred, in the face of respectable eye witnesses to the contrary. The secret of Mr. Cubitt's premature declaration will perhaps be unravelled in the following line of his paper. " I have never yet received one *official* communication on the subject, either from magistrates or others." In the first place there was no necessity for such intimation, as an acting engineer is attached to the Cold-bath-fields establishment ; and secondly, there was no inclination. The effects of the Wheel have in several instances been studiously concealed from the daily attendants of the prison ! Of this the writer has certain knowledge.

Thus two distinct causes are in operation at Cold-bath-fields, for the occasional precipitation of the treaders from the Wheels : first, the rupture of the *screw boxes*, which, like pie-crust, are "*made to be broken !*" and secondly, the bad play of the wheels, causing a recoil, which presents to the performer the alternatives of having his toes smashed, or of *jumping backwards* off the Wheel, which generally ends in a dangerous tumble. It must not be forgotten, that no mill is attached to the Cold-bath-fields wheels, and that it would require some thousand pounds more to attach one, of proper capacity, to them.

Of the Tread-wheels in the CITY OF LONDON BRIDEWELL, The Prison Discipline Report says, "These wheels are only four feet in diameter, which is to be regretted, as it furnishes less mechanical advantage, and consequently renders the movement of the wheels *by no means* so steady as would have been the case, had the wheels been of a larger diameter."

"The rate of labour at the Wheel in THE OLD HOUSE OF CORRECTION AT BEDFORD, is subject to *much* irregularity, in consequence of the variable velocity given by different numbers of men upon it, and which is not guarded against by a *fly regulator*. Thus the velocity is found to vary from *twenty* to even *sixty* steps per minute!"

"The motion of THE BODMIN GAOL Tread-wheel is regulated by friction only, a very uncertain method. The Wheel is made of wood, and *from its rough manufacture revolves very unsteadily!*"

"The power of the Wheel in THE SOUTHWELL HOUSE OF CORRECTION has not been applied to any useful purpose, being expended by a regulating fly as at Coldbathfields."

"The velocity of the Wheel at THE BRIXTON HOUSE OF CORRECTION is *entirely* dependant on the operations of the miller, who has the means, at *his discretion*, of varying the rate of the machinery according as he feeds the mill-stones. The general rate is stated to be forty-eight steps per minute; but the *fly regulator* of the Mill is *not applicable* for the purpose of checking the velocity within any certain limit, which is a *material* disadvantage. It only comes into use when there is not corn sufficient to keep the Mill in full work. The machinery requires the best oil daily. No accidents of any kind are stated to have occurred for a *long period*." The main axis of the wheels is here exposed to a destructive humidity,

from being under-ground*. “The dietary is at present under the consideration of the magistrates.”

“The Wheels of THE NORTHALLERTON HOUSE OF CORRECTION are erected in *small rooms*, in consequence of which it has been found necessary to provide *very free ventilation*.”

“The compartments, or *rooms*, containing the Tread-wheels in READING GAOL, though furnished with open windows and railed grates, would be more effectually ventilated by having vent holes, or windows, as near the ceilings as can be contrived, by which means the warm air and exhalations (*which naturally ascend*) would more readily escape.”

“The Tread-mill in the WARWICK GAOL has only recently been completed, and has hitherto been *frequently* out of order. The power is not applied to any useful purpose.”

“A regulator is highly necessary to the Mill in THE NEWCASTLE BRIDEWELL, in order that the variable velocity may be reduced to a more uniform and less HAZARDOUS rate of exertion.”

“The Tread-wheel in the WYMONDHAM BRIDEWELL is erected in an arched recess to the south: *in summer, the heat of the sun is often oppressive*.”

“The height of the steps of the Wheel in KIRTON BRIDEWELL, which is eleven inches, if strictly accurate, renders it a FORMIDABLE Tread-wheel.”

“To prevent conversation among the prisoners on the Wheel in THE †GLOUCESTER PENITENTIARY, partition-

* By parodying a line of Dante, a little glimpse will be obtained of the winter chances of accidents to these and any other Wheels, whose main axis is similarly situated:

Frost nipp'd, and shrin'd in ice, the axis lay.

† At Gloucester gaol, “if any prisoner or prisoners are observed to be talking while on the Tread-wheel, they are deprived of their

ing boards have been fixed up, by which *that object* is effectually secured ; but there is less facility for the changes of relays in consequence : and *the labour appears less easy* ; the body not being able to vibrate under the exertion, and by which a greater freedom is afforded to the movements of the limbs."

"The screen of boards in front of the prisoners at the Wheel in the WINCHESTER HOUSE OF CORRECTION, appears rather too upright to allow of an easy forward movement of the men's knees in the act of treading. This circumstance obliges them to tread sideways, by which much room on the wheel is lost ; this is a fault which should be guarded against by engineers."

"In the CHELMSFORD HOUSE OF CORRECTION the velocity of the Wheels is regulated by no other means than as the mill-stones are supplied with corn : the consequence is, the rate of revolution varies from thirty-two to forty-eight steps per minute."

In the Prison Discipline Society's Appendix "Report on Tread-mills," from which the foregoing extracts are taken, though thirty-six prisons, being nearly the whole number where Wheels are in use, are enumerated, no mention is made of GUILDFORD GAOL.

There, as in many other Prisons, the Wheels are erected in a long, and high, ground-floor room, with a stone pavement, which is divided into four parts, or stalls, by wall partitions, and ventilated by four windows with pullies, each opposite to pigeon-holed, or some such, apertures in the brick-work. The Wheels are *properly* capable of holding thirty-two persons, or eight a piece ; but nine are generally crowded on them, on account of the average number of prisoners in the gaol

next turn of rest." What can come to pass after this ? We shall have prisoners punished for sneezing, or breathing above a prescribed key. Such despotic nonsense must excite indignation and loathing.

being often larger than the average number the wheels can employ. From this account, when on the 8th and 9th of February, the writer of these remarks visited the prison, the women had *enjoyed a respite from the Wheel for more than a week*. Whenever the supply of corn ceases, the men also *enjoy* a respite *, except for an hour or so in the morning, during which they pump water.

Thus out of thirty-seven prisons that have been enumerated, where Tread-wheels are in use, besides the *fifteen* here picked out, by way of sample, as containing imperfect, or improper machinery, or as being unadapted for the labour, from the Wheels being placed IN ROOMS, several are in want of fly regulators for their Mills, or MILLS FOR THEIR WHEELS; and some, in like manner, with others just pointed at, most improperly inclose their Wheels within rooms. "*Several instances have occurred,*" say the Committee of Prison Discipline, "of prisoners suffering much from exhaustion, in consequence of the TREADWHEELS BEING PLACED IN ROOMS†; which, *though apparently well ventilated*, have not proved sufficiently so, when occupied by a number of men, one beside the other, in continued exertion. *The position of the prisoners on the Wheels, in general, obliges them to breathe in the upper part of the room, to which the heated air and exhalations naturally ascend.*"

The writer of these remarks can, from *experience*, testify, that the Tread-wheel exercise is the very last exercise adapted for in-doors occupation. In close or hot weather, individuals toiling at such work, generally too

* A respite from this cause is mentioned in Mr. Jackson's letter, which has been previously given.

† At Cambridge County Gaol; London Bridewell; Northallerton House of Correction, and others.

at an elevation in which all the vapours and exhalations are collected far faster than they can escape, (as may be learnt by going out of the fresh air into the upper part of a theatre,) must be wearied past all just bounds. Thus, no Tread-wheel should be erected in a *room*; but no Tread-wheel should be erected in the open air, for fear of the consequences of exposure to very sudden heat and cold (which in a less degree also attach to the Wheels in rooms): therefore, no Tread-wheel should any where be erected.

We have already seen THE HUMAN BEING, under the effects of the labour, REDUCED, AS TO TREATMENT, TO A LEVEL WITH "HORSES OFF A JOURNEY," AND ONLY ALLOWED TO WET HIS OR HER MOUTH: next we behold him TREADING AT THE WHEEL WITH HIS FEET IN BANDAGES; or, is it credible? HIS LOINS SECURED BY A TRUSS: Then WE HAVE HIM "CRIBBED, CABINED, AND CONFINED," TRAMPING AWAY IN A SOLITARY CELL: At some prisons WE GAZE ON HIM THROUGH THE CYLINDRICAL GRATING OF HIS CAGE; and last, not least in disesteem, ARE WE TO BEHOLD HIM WORKING AND WALKING ON "ALL FOURS," after the manner of "the beasts that perish."—"A patent for certain *improvements* in the Tread-mill has been recently granted to Mr. Hase, engineer, of Saxthroe, near Aylsham, Norfolk. The Patentee, in his mill, substitutes, in the place of the common hand-rail, by which the prisoners hold themselves on the wheel, a revolving cylindric wheel of a small diameter. By means of this revolving hand-rail, the prisoners work with their hands, at the same time that their feet are in motion, and thus a more general exercise is given to the body. It is also *contrived* that the height of the steps shall be capable of variation, so as to *impose* a lighter or heavier rate of

labour. A Tread-mill of this description is now erecting at Walsingham Bridewell, under the superintendence of Mr. Hase." The writer hardly knows whether English feelings will be most revolted by this description, or by the "small pamphlet," with its "*logarithmic series*" (*i. e.* PUZZLE), "and sliding scale*," laid down, in a VERY INGENIOUS and *satisfactory* manner by Mr. Bate, mathematical instrument maker to the Board of Excise, and published by the Prison Discipline Society, as THEIR guide in the EQUALIZATION of the PUNISHMENT of the Tread-wheel! It is melancholy indeed to see benevolent individuals so sadly over-doing matters!

The open, ingenuous, and manly spirit of our countrymen must arise in all the honesty of its indignation to do away with such ramifications and multiplications of penal devices—devices which, in their detail, are only worthy the "ever-blessed" dungeons of the Holy Inquisition. Has our love of what is simple and "above-board" altogether left us? Without fear of contradiction it may be insisted, that such ingenuity in *penal* provision has never had its exemplar in England, since England has boasted of her freedom, and the blessings of her glorious Constitution! Better the savage, because simple, relics of the punishment suggested by, and only adapted to a state of Nature and nudity: better the cat or the thong dripping with the blood of *a human being*; better the UNNATURAL, BESTIAL, and DEPRAVING practice of WHIPPING, than such exquisite † complication of

* See the Society's pamphlet, entitled "Description of the Tread-Mill."

† "A machine of gigantic and most complicated structure."—*Sir John Hippisley, on Prison Labour.*

"IT IS PERFECTLY TRUE, that the labour of the Tread-wheel, unless it be regulated with great care, may, to use the language of

penal contrivances! As soon as these scenes present themselves in their true colours to the eye, every English heart will exclaim with the Poet,

—"Portentous, unexampled, unexplained!

————— What man seeing this,

And having human feelings, does not blush,

And hang his head, to think himself a man?"

The consideration, that to render tolerably perfect, and useful, the Tread-wheel machinery at present in existence, will cause *an enormous addition to the enormous expense already incurred*, is a supernumerary consideration, of great weight, for pausing at this particular crisis of its strongly disputed utility. MATTERS MUST NOT BE CARRIED WITH UNSEEMLY PRECIPITATION ON EXPARTE EVIDENCE: the least that can be done is, to grant A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE INTO THE WHOLE QUESTION; a Committee, too, in the list of whose members no zealot for the discipline,—no one who, like Mr. Holme Sumner, has unequivocally prejudged the matter at issue,—shall be included. The term, EXPARTE EVIDENCE, has been used, and most correctly used. With Mr. Briscoe, it may be truly

an able and experienced Governor of a prison (in a recent communication with the Committee) 'become, in the hands of some, AN ENGINE OF TERRIBLE OPPRESSION.'—*Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society*, p. 36.

"This new and formidable engine of terror."—*Briscoe on the Tread-wheel*.

"A species of torture intruding itself under the semblance of labour."—*The same*.

"This rack of the nineteenth century."—*New Monthly Magazine*.

"A species of torture."—*Morning Chronicle*.

"This gigantic nuisance." "A torture fitted only for the polluted dungeons of the Popish Inquisition."—*John Bull Paper*.

said, that “the testimony of medical gentlemen attached to prisons does not appear to have been requested *till* the expense of the machinery had been incurred, nor obtained TILL THEY HAD RECEIVED A BIAS IN ITS FAVOUR.” The nation, with whom the Tread-wheel is in growing disrepute, will never be satisfied to have it legalized on the sole evidence of gaol surgeons and visiting justices; and much less so, when they know that the death-bed declaration of one individual at least*, the testimony and, what is of much more conclusive importance, *the appearance* of multitudes of others; *the OATH* of a person who has had to administer the punishment, and the concessions of many more,—are in direct and startling opposition to these reports; when they shall find, as they will do, that of those who have rendered an account of the salubrity† of this discipline, many are convicted on their own testimony of a want of proper feeling, and a proper exercise of discrimination in their superintendence of its administration; when they shall see these gentlemen allowing ruptured prisoners,—and others with ulcerated, varicose‡, or bandaged legs,—prisoners of three-score years and more,—

* The first man who was sent from the Guards to Brixton Wheel, and who died in the military hospital at Westminster, declared, when in a dying state, that the Wheel was the cause of his being deprived of life.

† “The grand and foundering difficulty is to account for its terror without involving its injuriousness.”—*Good's Supplementary note.*

‡ Let it be put to any man of common understanding, whether the testimony of a surgeon, who holds that varicose veins are more likely to be prevented than produced at such a labour as that of the Wheel, can be worth one tittle on this question! Yet it is the surgeon to one of the largest Tread-wheel prisons (Brixton), who put forth this extraordinary assertion.

prisoners infected with the venereal disease,—prisoners, of whom they state, that they have always experienced more or less pain since such or such a limb has been broken,—prisoners, in fact, in every state of comparative weakness or unfitness for such a trying toil,—to fag at the Wheel!! Would not a practitioner in common life ruin his practice in a very short time, who should recommend a person with bad legs, or one who *needed the protection of a truss*, to walk up the Monument only six or eight times a day? Is the report of a surgeon worth one jot of attention, who shall not have sense to know, or shall want resolution to act on the knowledge, that *a heated woman's milk, in nine cases out of ten*, turns sour; and, therefore, if given to her infant, *proves a sort of poison, instead of a nutriment*.

Only let the reader refer to pages 18, 19, 23, 26, 35, 44, 45, 50, 52, 54, 57, and others, of this introduction; let him mark the pains Mr. Jackson took to make a wholesale mistake; the disagreement on the point of diet; and the blindness with which Mr. Hutchinson (who certainly has conducted his share of the controversy in a most gentlemanly and amicable manner) miscalls his examination a *defence* of the *mildness* of the Tread-wheel labour; and let him say if the evidence of gaol surgeons, on the Tread-wheel question, be not insufficient* and EX-PARTE EVIDENCE in the most comprehensive ac-

* The surgeon of a House of Correction, after going round with a party some short time ago, injudiciously dropped the following remark: 'Well, I declare, I have seen more of the prison to-day than I ever saw in my life.' The writer heard this uttered.

The chairman of the late committee on the Millbank Penitentiary is alive to another obstacle in the way of the public's coming at the whole truth, in questions of this nature. His remarks are of high importance, and must be borne constantly in

ceptionation of the term. But it is not merely *EX PARTE*, it is *INTERESTED*; and because it is interested, is one main cause why it is *exparte*.

To legalise the *new punishment of terror*, unsupported by any less interested evidence, and impeached by much that is entirely disinterested, would be as unpardonable as to go to war to avenge a private wrong, or to allow the testimony of known monopolists to decide the question of a liberal system of commerce!

In expressing a strong sense of surprise, that neither Mr. Peel, nor any of the advocates of the discipline seem to grapple with the whole question raised upon it, but limit their attempts at defence to one, if not subordinate, certainly not superior consideration, it naturally comes in the way to sum up, in a few words, the positions which the foregoing pages tend to establish.

First, Then, the novel discipline of terror, enforced by the Tread-wheel, is the invention of an incompetent authority, and if not positively illegal, is, indisputably, unconstitutional.

Secondly, This discipline is too trying for the average strength of prisoners, bodily and mental: and

mind, when dealing with the alleged absence, in some prison journals, of complaints against the new discipline, by visitors.

“In some of the best prisons, books are kept, in which such observations as occur to strangers may be inserted; but persons who have been round a gaol, and have been treated with civility by a gaoler, are generally disinclined to repay the courtesy they have experienced, by recording any thing that may have the appearance of a reflection, either on the prison or its management; and the entries in such a book will commonly be found to contain only so much of the truth as is complimentary: the observations, which might really be useful for the correction of abuses, or of negligence, only reach the ears of the Visiting Magistrates when they become the subject of common conversation, unless the observer shall happen to write a book.”—*Holford on Criminal Prisons*.

Thirdly, It is too dangerous.

To the first objection, it is the interest, as well as the duty of the legislature, to give the most deliberate attention.

The second subdivides itself into,—The physical severity, which is grounded on the unnatural nature of the labour, and aggravated or diminished by the quantity enforced, and the food supplied;—and, the mental severity, grounded on its peculiar ignominy, which is the same in quality, however much varied in quantity.

The third is rather conceded than contested by the advocates of the discipline: but it never should be conceded, because such a character should never attach to compulsory labour. Are we to set no bounds to punishment? Is not the compulsion, in itself, sufficiently penal, that we are inhumanly to add the terrible ingredient of danger? *The higher standards of voluntary labour, with all philosophic minds, will ever be esteemed far too high for the regulation of that which is compulsory.* Mr. Peel, then, would only act considerately and justly by the public, and wisely by himself, to propose some delay, till it be settled, not merely whether the Tread-wheel injures the health of prisoners, which is but one point, and a point at present very, very, far from being decided; but till the allowed liabilities of all machinery to derangement, fracture, &c. can be shown to be capable of very material obviation in the NEW MACHINES OF TERROR; and till the facts, and reasonings, already accumulated against the policy of a punishment so “full of ignominy” be shown; the former to have arisen from extraneous causes, and the latter to be founded on wrong views of human nature, and utter mis-statements of human experience! This is no ques-

tion to be dismissed with a snap of the fingers, or adjusted by gaol surgeons, who, to say the least of them, are biassed as well as interested parties!

It is a question of incalculable moment.—Perhaps it may begin to be so esteemed, now that *an intention to assassinate* seems derivable from no other source, but that of exasperation at having been sentenced to the Wheel: Now, that a Noble Marquis, (well known for habits of close reasoning), and the Patron Society of the Discipline, though both approving of it, found their approval on utterly opposed grounds:—*The former individual* congratulating the country, that “by good fortune a punishment had been discovered, carrying with it no valid objection; inflicting no injury on the health; and entailing no corruption on the morals; FULL OF IGNOMINY *, and meeting, as it were, the wishes of the Legislature, which had long desired to find A † PUNISHMENT THAT MIGHT BE SUBSTITUTED FOR BANISHMENT AND DEATH:”—*The latter Society*, who set out with patronizing the punishment *in toto*; after finding from experience, that “there are many sorts of labour better adapted to females,” and then retracting on other points; having just come to THE DELIBERATE CONCLUSION, that “to subject convicts committed for *long periods of imprisonment*, day after day, to this discipline, is inconsistent with the views of the best writers on the Penitentiary system,” &c. Here we behold the Noble Marquis hailing

* On reflection, the Noble Marquis will most probably allow, that for “a punishment FULL OF IGNOMINY,” to “entail no corruption on the morals,” is an ethical impossibility!

† “Might there not be a Tread-mill for those whose punishment is remitted by royal mercy, after capital conviction and sentence?”
—*Letter of Sir Gilbert Blanc.*

the punishment (*from truly humane motives*), AS A SECONDARY PUNISHMENT; while the Prison Discipline Society esteem it an appropriate punishment for none but that "great proportion of offenders, sentenced to hard labour for SHORT PERIODS OF IMPRISONMENT." These respectable, but conflicting, testimonies form indeed

"Dignus vindice nodus."

In such a state of affairs, to press the adoption and legalizing of the punishment before an understanding is come to between its divided advocates, WHAT SORT OF PUNISHMENT IT IS! Whether it be of a secondary nature, and a fit substitute for death? or of reformatory powers, and calculated to make the vagabond fly from his idle and dissolute habits, and the thief dispense with thieving? Indeed, in such a state of incertitude, to press forward to legislate, is to act precipitately, and take a leap in the dark. The difference of opinion on the subject, between Lord Lansdowne and the Society, is new to the nation; it has not had time (supposing it were at all willing to countenance the discipline) to consider which has right on their side; and it will not be done justice to if delay be not granted for the solution of the dilemma, or the satisfactory establishing of the assertion made by the opponents of the discipline, that this dilemma is invincible—That the discipline must be abandoned!

Those who advocate the new punishment on the score of its operating by TERROR*, must go along with Lord Lansdowne, who is bound, on his own showing, to ex-

* "We have at all times exceedingly doubted the policy of those expedients which are meant to operate *in terrorem*; and have ever thought of them as most fearfully hazardous experiments on the principle and feeling of the lower orders."—*Chalmers's Civic and Christian Economy of Great Towns.*

empt all vagrants, and unfortunate females, and petty thieves, and minor criminals, from its *secondary* grasp; who, in fact, can only vote for its application TO THOSE WHO SHOULD BE TRANSPORTED OR HUNG! But a month, or three months, or six months, at the Tread-mill, is not equivalent to transportation or hanging. Therefore, those who are fit objects in his lordship's estimation for the punishment of the Tread-mill, should be sentenced to it for LONG PERIODS OF TIME.

But some attention must be paid to the very decided objection of the Prison Discipline Society against convicts being sentenced to the Wheel for long periods of time; an objection founded on a conviction, which the society, from its experience, may safely be allowed to form, that *the labour, continued for a long term of imprisonment, would undermine the health.*

No Christian community can ever countenance a punishment adapted to kill by inches; nor in fact any punishment that must make progressive inroads on the health. When a criminal is hung, he is put out of his misery at once. The nation that countenances killing by slow degrees is lost to all sense of justice, and immeasurably depraved. The punishment, then, as calculated to make inroads on the health, should not be adopted in the case of criminals sentenced to long terms of imprisonment; therefore it is not fit for a secondary punishment; for used so as to make it partake of such a character, it would go far beyond what such a punishment should.—If the punishment be full of ignominy and operate by terror, and it is unanimously allowed to do so, is it not infinitely disproportioned to the crime of the destitute female—the *crime* of not having five shillings in her pocket—to the *crime* of not being able to give an account of oneself—to the crime of an assault without or with battery—to the crime even of picking a pocket?

If such states of destitution or such petty delinquency be too harshly dealt with, they will only be checked by *the woeful alternative of increasing the higher orders of crime.*

The harassed, hunted, miserable being, feeling himself “more sinned against than sinning,” will, as was done to Mr. Drummond, tell the magistrate to his face, it shall be his “care to commit a crime next time, which shall get him transported, rather than work at the Wheel,” or, perhaps, as the wretched woman, already mentioned in these pages, will harbour the most blood-thirsty resolution of revenge.

Would our ancestors 300 years ago, have considered a month’s misery at the Tread-wheel NOTHING MORE than a proportionate * EXPIATION for walking the streets in a destitute condition; the miserable victim of necessity; and the animated *requisite* of human appetite? Considering, then, what the punishment of the Tread-wheel is allowed to be, it is without dispute more—much more—than a sufficient atonement for minor delinquency, or suspicious misfortune.—Justice forbids its use, equally with self-interest. The course of this reasoning, therefore, proves that the Tread-wheel is *not a fit punishment for any class of criminals*: and this reasoning, let it be remarked, is prosecuted on *the data alone*, which are to

* The following paragraph from the Bath Herald of the 29th of November, will elucidate a very customary application of the terrors of the Tread-wheel.

“A notorious street-walker, of the name of Ann Merrott, was on Tuesday committed to Shepton Mallet House of Correction, to hard labour for one month, as an idle and disorderly person, by Edmund Anderson, Esq. She was found WANDERING ABOUT THE MEWS AT A LATE HOUR, in the parish of Bathwick.—The same day a VERY SUSPICIOUS LOOKING man, of the name of Wilson, was committed by the same magistrate, for one month, as a rogue and vagabond.”

be found in the conflicting opinions of Lord Lansdowne, and the Prison Discipline Society.

In the case of short terms of imprisonment, the point of health has not been touched upon. But these pages will bear incontestible evidence, that much injury to the health has been effected, especially as far as females are concerned, long before the expiration of terms of imprisonment for "*one month!*"

After what has been substantiated against the Tread-wheel, it might, perhaps, very properly be left to the mercy of the reader; but the writer cannot resist the sense of the duty he owes his king and his country, and which impels him to notice in the severest possible manner, the shocking abuse that has frequently been made of this novel and ignominious and bad punishment of the Tread-wheel.

The most frightful departures from all law and common sense are those which compelled untried prisoners and parish paupers * to toil at the Wheel.

The absurd idea of sending GENTLEMEN to the same ignominious hard labour, for gambling; for simply doing what is winked at, and tolerated and encouraged in all possible manner of ways, by large portions of every grade in society, was almost as unconstitutional, and infinitely more mischievous. Had the system been persevered in, bloodshed to a fearful extent would infallibly have been the consequence.

In one county, a GENTLEMAN has been sent to the Tread-wheel for merely *obstructing* a constable in the execution of his duty; and in another, TWO MEDICAL MEN have been consigned to the same *degradation*, for stealing

* "Several paupers were last year committed to Bury gaol, for refusing to work at the Tread-wheel, introduced into the Cosford House of Industry."—*Sir J. Hippisley on Prison Labour*, p. 84.

(as it is called) a dead body. On the former case, it may be remarked, by way of contrast, that an individual in another county, for seriously *assaulting* a magistrate (not a constable) who is a baronet, and a member of parliament, and who was in the execution of his duty, was merely and most properly imprisoned, for a short period of time, and fined; and a student of the University of Cambridge, who was convicted a few weeks ago of *swindling*, was only sentenced to imprisonment for a long period of time; yet a young gentleman, on *very equivocal testimony* of his having obstructed a mere *constable* in the execution of his duty, is sentenced to the Tread-wheel! HALF A DOZEN SUCH INSTANCES, IF REDRESS COULD NOT BE OBTAINED FOR THEM, WOULD INVOLVE THE COUNTRY IN CIVIL CONVULSION! The identical principle which justified the sentencing of a man to an ignominious punishment for *no crime*, for *no offence partaking of moral turpitude*, for nothing more than what is done every day, and atoned for every day, at the cost of some twenty or thirty shillings, the same hideous principle would justify the sending the OFFICERS, IN EITHER SERVICE, TO THE HALBERDS AND THE CAT O' NINE TAILS.

The case of the medical men is quite as cruel, though their offence was more serious than that of the first-mentioned VICTIM. They were in pursuit of scientific knowledge, of that peculiar knowledge which should enable them *to save human life*; and for this laudable anxiety, which carried them somewhat beyond the bounds of propriety, (they themselves, as perhaps the only alternative, personally opening the grave), they are consigned to *ignominy*, and THAT STATE OF OUTRAGED FEELINGS WHICH IS STRONGEST

TO FORM THE ASSASSIN OR THE SUICIDE.

Such *indignities* are not prescribed by any law of God or man ! They are beyond all human toleration.

There is *not a particle of reason* why the country, from one end to the other, should not be as convulsed at this civilised barbarity, as it would be were it to hear that a court martial had sentenced A COMMISSIONED OFFICER TO BE WHIPPED ! *The same principle* * alone, could give either result—the principle of degrading a man, and doing violation to his rank in life, without his having done any violation to it himself. If Parliament pass this matter over without making the agents in it sensible of their cruel and unconstitutional temerity, without exacting from them the most humiliating atonement, not a gentleman in the land will be safe from the chance of degradation ; and a gaol dress ; and prison diet ; and the severe and *infamous* labours of the Tread-wheel.

Hitherto the Tread-wheel punishment has been discussed relatively to both male and female, without any exemption being claimed for the latter ; but here, under the head of abuses of this bad punishment, must be registered its application to women. One indisputable result of this punishment, as far as women are concerned, is so shocking in itself, that it is too great a trial of a man's temper to look on and see womankind still subjected to this loathsome discipline. Let the following letter, written by a Berkshire magistrate to the John Bull paper, speak in behalf of the sex, and let not the appeal be made in vain.

* It is an evil which cannot be too deeply deplored, that THE PRINCIPLE involved in this illegally legal outrage, was overlooked in the late debate.

The Morning Herald of the 1st of March speaks in similar and very strong terms of the PRINCIPLE which was so unaccountably overlooked.

“ SIR, Maidenhead, Feb. 3, 1824.

“ I think it my duty as a Magistrate of this county, and one who takes a very active share in the business connected with it, to address you on a subject most interesting to all friends of humanity, and on which as a father, a brother, a husband, and let me add as a *man*, I feel most deeply interested, and on which, I trust, I have expended much not wholly useless labour.

“ To say that I cordially agree with you in your very correct and but too faithful pictures of the revolting spectacle of the exposure of women to the *degrading* labour of the Tread-mill, is merely to say that I am endued with the common feelings of humanity, and the propensities of my nature; but I must tell you that nearly two years since I endeavoured, though at an humble distance, to urge the arguments you have so forcibly advanced, and I must say for the credit of my county, or rather of my brother Magistrates, though the arguments were less ably wielded, they were more effectively felt.

“ For these eighteen months last past, *no prisoner* has been permitted to afford the shocking spectacle of a tortured female, whose throes are exposed to the public gaze for the gratuity of a shilling to a turnkey. I thank God, and I thank my brother Magistrates, for listening to my arguments, which indeed were scarcely necessary to men of their calibre and manly feeling, that this most revolting exhibition *is at an end*. I was first led to exert myself on the subject by seeing the revolting cruelty of MOTHERS WITH INFANTS AT THEIR BREASTS being forced to abandon their charges, and wear themselves down to a state utterly unfit to support their innocent babes, while at the command of a turnkey, (who, to do him justice, felt generally as I did the impropriety of the sentence) when their turn to work came on, they were forced to quit

their natural duties, to expend their strength, and power of nourishment, on this new rack—this hellish device for females.

“Let me in this one instance hold out my own county for an example, and let me implore those magistrates of other counties who do not see the matter as I do, to yield to the general feeling, if not to reasonable argument, or even clamour (if they choose so to call it). If not, I say,

‘Take physic, pomp, and feel what wretches feel.’

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

A BERKSHIRE MAGISTRATE.”

And what does the John Bull say? “A woman is a woman, and whatever her crimes may be, HER SEX SHOULD BE HELD SACRED—in point of degradation, the flogging of a negress is not by one hundredth part so afflicting as the labour of the Mill to an Englishwoman; in point of actual cruelty, it is not to be talked of in the same day.—Flogging (AND GOD* FORBID WE SHOULD ADVOCATE IT ANYWHERE,) is a local, painful, but brief and innocuous punishment—the toil on the Wheel is continuous, wearing, and destructive equally of *character* and *constitution*. But we know that we shall carry our point—the feeling which actuates us is an English feeling—a feeling of human nature; and we are confident that feeling *must* eventually prevail in the quarter to which our appeals are necessarily directed.”

* That portion of the Government which defends, against the spirit of the age, the punishment of whipping, can with no justice be compared to those who descend from the rank of gentlemen to wield the besom. What calls for the beastly practice of whipping at one public school more than another? To their credit, several public schools have abolished it. Why then should the fine spirited boys of ——— or ——— be still subjected to this *ignominious* infliction? Mr. Peel denounced it in the last session of Parliament.

In but ten prisons out of above forty, are women put to work on the Tread-wheel; why then should not the sex be instantly rescued from a toil, whose mere physical consequences declare it to be inhuman and indecent? Will the public accept with satisfaction or contempt the Reports of visiting justices, who are coolly allowing human nature to be lowered to its very lowest degree of wretchedness, and weakness; who thus daily uncover its nakedness?

To pass to a portion of the subject which may be discussed with more temper, it will be expedient, before closing these introductory remarks, to notice the grand argument in favour of retaining the punishment of the Tread-mill, despite of all the powerful objections urged against it. This argument has been "its effects in diminishing crime!" "Its moral effects!" As far as the writer has traced these moral effects, they consist in a frightful mass of lying, deception, rebellion, and revengeful feeling, engendered by the universal "abhorrence" of the labour—effects which, as before observed, have "DOUBLED the trouble" of the surgeon to the Brixton House of Correction, and been used as a plea at a Quarter Sessions why an increase of salary should be allowed him. As to its diminishing crime, the writer has examined the Appendix to the Report of the Prison Discipline Society, just published, and though the subjoined result of that examination is of course, (from many causes which contribute to give that result not being fully developed,) by no means a *certain* guide as to details, yet one general fact it establishes, that *at nine-tenths of the prisons where Tread-mills are in existence, the average of commitments has been very much on the increase, and, on the contrary, at nine-tenths of the prisons where the Tread-mill is not, or was not in existence, the average*

*of commitments has been considerably on the * decrease !!!*
 A careful examination of the ensuing analysis of commitments, &c. is most earnestly requested. The returns, as has just been observed, are supplied by the Appendix of the last Report of the Prison Discipline Society, which varies almost as to each prison in the quantity and kind of information which is furnished. Very many returns make no mention of the scale of commitments, while others are remarkable for other important omissions.

But suppose the Tread-mill does operate by terror to deter from crime, the question must be distinctly answered—does it operate by a just and lawful terror? for mere terror may be instilled by boldly disproportioning punishment to crime, and cutting heads off for the cure of thievish propensities.

That it does not deter from crime, as the evidence in the introduction and other parts of the volume on the subject of recommitments fully proves, is NO PROOF WHATSOEVER that it is not in experience a very great severity. Rogues will run, and do run any risks, or else how

* “And here it may be noticed, that in the preceding, or ‘Third Report of the Committee,’ when stating, (page 16.) that the *recommitments* to inferior gaols vary from fifteen to fifty per cent.’ the following is introduced as the *average of recommitments* to prisons distinguished for their good management—*Preston, four per cent.; Wakefield, four per cent.; Bury, five per cent.; Devizes, the general average, three per cent.—for felons only, one per cent.; Knutsford, two per cent.; Bodmin, three per cent.; Ipswich, three per cent.; Lewes, six per cent.; Worcester, two per cent.; Leicester, three per cent.* But it is not less fair to observe, that in the prison at Bury, alone, was the Tread-mill at that time erected; and that at Devizes, and at Worcester, the Hand Cranks were in action; yet even Bury does not take the lead of the enumerated prisons, for a relative paucity of recommitments, and consequently there are other disciplines that may vie with the Tread-mill even on this score.”
 —Sir John Hippisley on Prison Labour.

comes it to pass that many of them are continually re-committed to be whipped?—Temptation is more powerful than fear!

The *Tread-mill* in the new House of Correction at Bedford was erecting in 1821, and set to use in January 1822.

Commitments.

		first com- mitments.	recommit- ments.	third com- mitments.
In 1821	225	} of which {	206	17 2
1822	258		234	23 1
1823 up to Oct. 2, 149			127	17 5

General increase.

No *Tread-mill* in the Chester Castle county gaol is YET ERECTED.

Commitments.

Year ending August 1821	220
_____ 1822	177
_____ 1823	97

Very large decrease.

In Bodmin BRIDEWELL no *Tread-mill* exists. Prisoners' clothing, shirts, shoes, stockings, blankets, and sheeting are made. "A thrashing machine was at work, at which six prisoners were employed."

Commitments.

In 1820	362
1821	225
1822	287

General decrease.

In Bodmin COUNTY GAOL is a *Hand Crank-mill*, turned by eight men, and a *Tread-wheel* employing ten. The former

seems to require *very severe labour*. The latter is not yet applied to any useful purpose.

Commitments.

In 1820 132

1821 120

1822 178

Large increase.

No Tread-mill exists in Derby County Gaol, Borough Gaol, or House of Correction.

Commitments.

To the County Gaol.

In 1820 71

1821 78

1822 58

To the Borough Gaol.

In the year ending Michaelmas 1821 97

1822 91

To the 5th of April 1823 59

To the House of Correction.

In 1820 96

1821 103

1822 81

Large general decrease.

The *Tread-mill* in the Dorchester County Gaol and House of Correction has been in operation since the 12th of January, 1822.

Commitments.

In 1819 394

1820 399

1821 457

1822 471

Increase.

The *Tread-mill* in Durham Gaol has been in operation since April, 1822.

Commitments.

	Felony.	Misdemeanors.	Total.
In 1820	86	174	260
1821	61	198	259
1822	63	303	366

Very large increase.

The *Tread-mill* is not completed at Halstead Bridewell.

Commitments.

In 1822	174
1823	214

Large increase*.

The *Tread-mill* in Horsley House of Correction was completed on the 17th of December, 1822.

Commitments.

In 1820	279
1821	250
1822	398

Very large increase.

No *Tread-mill* exists in Northleach House of Correction.

Commitments.

In 1820	281
1821	280
1822	286

Trifling increase.

No *Tread-mill* exists in Littledean House of Correction.

Commitments.

In 1820	107
1821	92
1822	82

Decrease.

* This is the only case among those given by the Prison Discipline Society, which are ALL here placed before the reader, of a large increase in a prison where no Mill existed.

The return from the Winchester House of Correction, dated July, 1823, says, without specifying when, "A large corn-mill has *recently* been erected; it is worked by TWO TREAD-WHEELS and TWO CAPSTANS: on the former, two gangs of twelve men work; and the latter take from sixteen to twenty men each."

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	544
1821	.....	580
1822	.....	565
General increase.		

The *Tread-mill* in Hertford House of Correction has been in operation since the 1st of August, 1820.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	169
1821	.....	154
1822	.....	225
Very large increase.		

No Tread-mill exists in Hertford County Gaol.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	116
1821	.....	102
1822	.....	133

Trifling general increase.

No Tread-mill exists in Newgate Gaol.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	2360
1821	.....	2124
1822	.....	2185

Large general decrease.

No Tread-mill exists in Giltspur-street Prison and House of Correction.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	4612
1821	.....	4408
1822	.....	4174

Very large decrease.

The *Tread-mill* in Cold Bath Fields House of Correction has been in operation since the Midsummer of 1822.

Commitments.

In 1820 3322

1821 3379

1822 4398

Very large increase.

No *Tread-mill* exists in Tothill Fields Bridewell.

Commitments.

In 1820 2404

1821 2456

1822 2218

Very large decrease.

No *Tread-mill* exists in Shrewsbury County Gaol and House of Correction.

Commitments.

In 1821 886

1822 700

1823 569

Very large decrease.

The return from the Stafford County Gaol and House of Correction does not state when the *Tread-mill* was erected there. It was, however, not in operation when the first official returns were sent in to Mr. Peel in the beginning of 1823. The number of "Prisoners committed for trial at the assizes," is,

In 1820 199

1821 192

1822 77

Large decrease.

On which it is remarked, "the excellent discipline established within these two or three years in this prison, and especially the introduction of the *Tread-mill*, have, there is

little doubt, materially contributed towards these important effects." But the Tread-wheel was not in operation till 1823, and "these important effects" closed with 1822.

The *Tread-mill* in the Ipswich County Gaol and House of Correction has been in operation since about, January, 1822.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	118
1821	.....	121
1822	.....	293

"The *great increase* of commitments in 1822 is accounted for by the circumstance of the establishment of the House of Correction within the Gaol."

The *Tread-wheel* in Beccles County House of Correction "has been *recently* erected."

Commitments.

From Michaelmas, 1821, to	
Michaelmas, 1822	..... 128
From Michaelmas, 1822, to	
Michaelmas, 1823	..... 118

Allowing for a diminution of 8 for non-payment of fines in 1823, the numbers are reduced within 2 of being equal.

No *Tread-mill* exists in Horsemonger County Gaol.

Commitments.

In 1820	.....	1290
1821	.....	1327
1822	.....	1269

Large decrease.

No *Tread-mill* exists in the Southwark Borough Compter.

Commitments.

In 1821	.....	1834
1822	.....	1451

Very large decrease.

The Tread-mill in the Lewes County House of Correction was brought into operation on the 17th of September, 1822.

Commitments.

In 1822 143

1823 134

Very trifling decrease.

A *Tread-wheel* has been recently introduced in the Brecon County Gaol.

Commitments.

In 1821 49

1822 58

1823 50

Very trifling decrease.

No Tread-mill exists in Cowbridge House of Correction.

Commitments.

In 1822 100

1823 109

Very trifling increase.

No Tread-mill exists in Hereford County Gaol. In 1822 there was a diminution of commitments, compared with 1821, to the number of 81.

The Gaol Bill, which is now before the House of Commons, contains a clause, proper and just enough in itself, making it illegal to put *untried* prisoners to the ignominious *penal* labour of the *Tread-wheel*! The punishment of the Wheel is yet without the sanction of the legislature; it is in no way, directly or indirectly, legalized. If Mr. Peel should see much force in the foregoing arguments, he will perhaps not press this clause, and from this important consideration—that if it be carried,

the punishment will be indirectly *legalized*, after a sort of side-wind fashion. But it would much better comport with the dignity of Parliament in no ways to commit itself in recognising *a punishment which is not yet understood, whether it be of a secondary or much inferior rank*; and which, when it shall be understood, Parliament may consent to abolish, as unsuited to the age, and ill calculated for the purposes it is solely provided to effect. It would also be in more natural order, and save all chance of such a “do* and undo” dilemma, for Parliament to inquire, First, Whether its own privileges have or have not been invaded by the introducers of this novel “in terrorem” punishment; and, Secondly, Whether, apart from that question, the punishment is worthy of being legalized?

The first step to make the punishment legal should assuredly be a direct, not an indirect step. *Recognize the broad principle, and then provide for its application.* That there is no need for precipitately making a law on this point to protect untried prisoners, will be instantly seen, when it is stated, that inasmuch as the punishment of the Tread-wheel is without law, or not legalised, Mr. Peel, as the head of the magistracy, has it in his power to order the total suspension of the punishment all over the country; surely then, if it were necessary, he might restrict its application. But after what has fallen from himself and Lord Liverpool, there cannot be a bench of magistrates in the kingdom that would persist (at their peril) to send untried prisoners to the Wheel.

On the 19th of February, Mr. Peel, in reply to some remarks of Mr. Hobhouse, which occurred in a discus-

* The late Marriage and the present Vagrant Acts are *sufficient* memorials of too hasty and undigested legislation.

sion on a motion made by the honourable Secretary for leave to bring in a Bill to AMEND the Gaol Act, of last session, said, that "the Tread-wheel was moved by weight*, not by exertion." Mr. Peel has, doubtlessly,

* "From the results of his (M. Coulomb's) experiments, it appears, 'that a man ascending a flight of steps, if by any means he could make use of his exertion, by throwing his own weight so as to raise another weight,' or perform any work thereby, he could exert a greater quantity of force for the day, than would be the case, if employed at almost any other effective labour. This observation, he adds, appears to me of the greatest importance in directing mechanics, in the construction of machines, intended to be moved by men."

It is remarkable how completely the Tread-wheel illustrates the truth of his problem; and a comparison of the amount of daily labour performed by a prisoner at the Brixton Tread-wheel, with the results of Coulomb's experiments, affords an interesting illustration of the justness of his conclusions. By Table 2, p. 21, a prisoner at Brixton, in summer, EXERTS A FORCE equal to that of raising his own weight over 15,000 feet in a day; which being multiplied by the weight of his body (taken at 150lbs.) equals 2,250,000lbs. raised one foot per day. This result, for the sake of comparison, being taken at 10, the following will be the relative value of the several kinds of labour, detailed in Coulomb's experiments, when compared with that performed by the prisoner at the Brixton Tread-wheel.

The daily labour of men employed in carrying loads

up stairs, as	-	-	-	-	3½ to 10
Ditto, strongest man employed, as	-	-	-	-	4 to 10
Ditto, at pile-driving, as	-	-	-	-	2½ to 10
Ditto, stamping coin at the Paris Mint, as	-	-	-	-	1¼ to 10
Ditto, drawing water out of wells, as	-	-	-	-	2¼ to 10
Ditto, working at the hand-crank or spindle-wheel, as	-	-	-	-	5¼ to 10
Ditto, digging the ground with the spade, as	-	-	-	-	1¼ to 10

"Description of Tread-mill" published by the Prison Discipline Society. At page 26 of which, it is stated, that *weight, not force*, is required of the labourer, while at page 29 the foregoing note occurs. The two statements are the antipodes of each other.

by this time, perceived the error of this assertion. The simple facts of the profuse perspiration, and the temporary aching which are allowed on all hands to be excited by the labour, would be enough to refer to in refutation of the mistake. If the Wheel were worked by weight, and not by exertion, it would be worked or weighed down, just as a scale is weighed down, by the simple act of stepping on to it. The light man, as Mr. Peel said, certainly only contributes according to his lightness, and the heavy man according to his heaviness, as far as the moving power of weight is concerned; but not the remotest proportion in the relative contributions of exertion exists. And why? Because the legs, or the lungs, or the inside, or the general powers of the light and heavy man shall bear no relative proportion to their weight. Yet each at the Tread-wheel has to *lift his weight*: he has to climb up stairs; and, moreover, up *retreating stairs*. Now perhaps there are

“The same degree of labour would kill one man, which to another would be only pastime. From this source we may apprehend the most horrid abuses in the continuance of those Tread-mills. We may be very sure, that the most atrocious cruelty will often be inflicted upon those, who, with strength below the average standard, are placed on those penal engines; while, in the case of those whose strength is much above that standard, they will hardly operate as a punishment at all.”—*Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica*.

“Among the recommendations of the Tread, we continually hear of the ‘equality of the labour.’ This assertion seems to have been hazarded without any estimate of the *relative strength* of individuals, or the nature of the machine itself.”—*Sir J. C. Hippisley on Prison Labour*.

“The inequality of the punishment is remarkable.”—*Briscoe’s Letter*.

Surely Mr. Peel will no longer maintain the “equality of this punishment?”

not two individuals in the world who, being exactly of the same weight, would walk up stairs all day long with exactly the same facility. That the facility is regulated by the weight, will not be contended for one instant.

As to "weighing each person at the commencement of the work, and at the end of three weeks," it may be well asked, why not, instead, at the end of THREE MONTHS? *No just judgment can be formed on such insufficient data!* That "almost every prisoner increased in weight" in the long run, will be shown to be incorrect by one of the stoutest champions of the discipline. Mr. Drummond, in his reply to Mr. Briscoe, gives the weight of eighteen or nineteen prisoners in Guildford gaol, and, with the exception of two (or three at the utmost), they had *lost most considerably in weight*. Again, by turning back some pages, loss of weight will be found to form a distinguishing feature of the Lancaster gaol returns. When it shall be made known that *at Cold Bath Fields House of Correction, the largest Tread-wheel prison in the kingdom, the prisoners are not weighed*; then, by that fact, coupled with Mr. D.'s concessions and the Lancaster gaol returns,—a plea will be established for calling for longer time and further experiment,—a plea founded on the showing that the data as to weight are at once contradictory, and very far from being ample or conclusive.

The following anecdotes will perhaps assist Mr. Peel in forming an estimate of the mode of examination of prisoners pursued by *some* of the advocates of the Tread-wheel labour. A prisoner, on being asked by a friend of the writer's, how he felt in health? after hesitating, as if influenced by a degree of fear, exclaimed, "Do you wish me to tell the truth?" The answer was, of course, "The truth without fear, and nothing but the

truth." This man complained bitterly of the exertion, and had evidently received harsh treatment at some former period for speaking against it.

Another prisoner was asked by a magistrate who is favourable to the discipline, "Do you think, if you had FOUR TIMES the food, you should be affected by the labour?" A more ingenious trap, for such an answer as was desired, was never baited!

On a review of all that has been brought forward, Mr. Peel may perhaps be induced to allow that the New Discipline's *sins of commission* are, *its severity, its danger**, and *its ignominy*; which are all aggravated by *one heinous sin of omission*, viz. its not giving any habit† of industry, but, on the contrary, having a direct tendency to weaken such habits or forbid their formation. At the same time, the deplorable picture of the unequal penal law that it sets in action, will prove that it is indispensable to the common weal,—that not one moment's delay should take place, either in enforcing, and also regulating by law, the universal adoption of the Tread-wheel, or of suspending its present varying and little-understood‡ mode of application!

* Within the last ten days the Wheel at Shepton Mallet has broken, and all the treaders have been thrown off. This, the writer is informed, is the second time it has broken.

† "An idle and monotonous motion of the feet has no tendency to establish any useful habit."—*Briscoe on the Tread-wheel*.

"As a means of exercise, I do not apprehend the Tread-mill to be any thing like so good as the Crank-mill."—Opinion of G. Holford, Esq. M.P., Chairman of the Committee on the Penitentiary at Millbank.

‡ *The Number of the Edinburgh Review*, published within the last few days, in a notice of Mr. Headlam on Prison Labour, says, that "as far as they yet know" the Tread-wheel is a very good punishment, but that they shall return to consider the subject again, or words to that effect, confessing *utter indecision* on the subject.

IF MR. PEEL BE NOT SO FULLY AND HEARTILY CONVINCED OF THE PROPRIETY OF THE FORMER STEP, THAT HE CAN RECOMMEND IT TO PARLIAMENT, HE HAS NO OTHER JUST ALTERNATIVE WHATEVER BUT TO PURSUE THE LATTER.

Believing that these positions have truth for their basis, the writer of the pages looks forward with sanguine expectations of witnessing the truth prevail. To the Legislature, his earnest and concluding petition, couched in the words of our own immortal bard, is this:—

“ Do all you gods,
In general synod take away its power;
Break all the spokes and fellies of its wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hills of heaven
As low as to the fiends.”

AFFIDAVIT.

MRS. SARAH HEARN, late Superintendent of the Yard for disorderly Females in Cold Bath Fields House of Correction, makes Oath, and saith, that whatever, in a Pamphlet, just published, entitled "Thoughts on Prison Labour," is deposed to in her name, and respecting the aforesaid Yard, is the truth.

SARAH HEARN.

Sworn before me at the Mansion House, London, this 28th day of February, 1824,

R. WAITHMAN,

Mayor.

JAMES CALAHN, of 8, Kelmell Buildings, Orchard Street, Oxford Street, saith, I was convicted at the Sessions House, Clerkenwell, of AN ASSAULT, and ordered to be imprisoned six months to hard labour. I worked *on* the wheel for about *three months*, when I had such pains in my loins, I complained to the doctor, who ordered me *off for a week or more*. I then went *on* again for about *a month*; but finding the pains again return, I applied to the doctor, who again ordered me *off for about ten days or so*. I went to *work again* for about *fourteen days*, but was so much in pain in my loins and legs, that I could not get on, and was ordered to be kept *off entirely*. I went out about three weeks afterwards. I was in good health when I went into prison, and never felt any of the pains I

allude to before. I have now been discharged twelve months, the 17th instant, and DURING THE FIRST FOURTEEN WEEKS WAS SO BAD AND WEAK FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE WHEEL AND NOTHING ELSE, I COULD NOT DO ANY WORK, BUT WAS UNDER THE DOCTOR'S HANDS. Since then I have several times got work, but can seldom stand to it more than ten days or a fortnight, when I am obliged to leave off (and sometimes take to my bed). Before I went in I could do very hard work, but can now do only very light work, and I am sure it is from having been compelled to work on the wheel. Two or three times from the wheel going back, all the men either dropt off, or were thrown off. Several men have worked till they felt so weak as to complain to the doctor, when he has made them go on again, by saying, "they should be flogged if they did not." I left prison on the 17th of March, 1823.

MICHAEL RYAN, of 14, Church-street, St. Giles's, saith, I was convicted in July, 1822, at the Sessions House, Clerkenwell, of AN ASSAULT, and ordered to be imprisoned twelve months to hard labour. *About three months* after I had been on the Wheel, I complained to the doctor that I had such pains in my loins, chest, and legs, that I could not work: he ordered me on again, but in about a week, I complained again, and he ordered me *off for some days*. I was again put on, but could not work, and was *off and on* for three months (about a week or so at a time). Whenever I worked for two or three days (after the first three months), I found the pain so great I could

hardly get on. About four months before I came out, I got to work in the garden. I have since been in for four months also for AN ASSAULT; *although always used to hard work—this is the hardest I ever was at in my life*: this last time I was mostly put to pick oakum—for I was RELEASED FROM INABILITY TO WORK THREE TIMES: the two first, a few days, and the last time about five weeks; and I trod the last fortnight. When I went in I was in good health, and could work at any thing; but now am so hurt by the Wheel, that even if I walk a mile or two I feel knocked up, and my flesh seems “all sore.” *This I never felt before going to the Wheel*, and it has occasioned me to be unable to take hard work. I have been used to labour at gas-pipe laying, and excavating ground, working for the New River and Grand Junction Companies. I have now got easier work to do, near the new chapel, Somer’s Town. When I told the doctor I could not work, he always “blew up so,” and said he would get me flogged. I SAW MICHAEL HAYES FLOGGED FOR REFUSING TO WORK, and I was ordered, or at least, told I should be flogged myself, but the sentence was remitted. The treading has often made me so GIDDY as to be obliged to get off before my turn, which can only be done by letting oneself drop down on to one’s feet, to the floor below. The Wheel jerked backwards several times; and after one of these jerks, we were off it for about three days. Several had their toes pinched, as I had. I left prison on the 1st of January, 1824.

These two Depositions are of the most *decisive* importance. They are made by individuals who have been subjected to the *ignominious* labour of the Tread-wheel ; not for any *moral turpitude* ; not for any *degrading offence* ; for nothing more than a little Irish hot headedness ; yet such a tendency has the *New Prison Discipline* to beget prison offences, that one of these men, (Ryan), for the *original sin* of a little fighting, was, in the course of events, put in jeopardy of prison whipping. TWO MORE HONEST BEINGS THAN THOSE WHOSE DEPOSITIONS ARE JUST GIVEN, PERHAPS, NEVER BREATHED. Their characters are free from the minutest portion of guile ; they have not even about them what is vulgarly called in the low Irish “blarney.” It is shocking to reflect that these men have ever been sent to such an ignominious punishment as that of the Tread-wheel. Ryan can both read and write ; is a sharp, clever man ; and in appearance, when not in his working dress, far above his station in life. He would be supposed to be a decent shopkeeper, small farmer, or a person of a similar rank in life.

Having thus pointed out that these depositions may be relied upon, inasmuch as they are *not the depositions of thieves or vagabonds*, but on the contrary, of HONEST LABOURING MEN, who can have good characters from their employers ; another and distinct reason why they may be believed, will be found in the nature of their contents. These depositions are definite, and enter into such particulars, that if they contain untruth, nothing on earth will be easier than to detect and expose it. When to this it is added, that as might be supposed, from the labour to which they have been brought up, they are men of a stout frame and make, and of hardy constitutions, the inference to be drawn to the discredit of the labour is conclusive and irresistible.

APPENDIX.

FOR the purposes of this compilation it is not necessary, indeed it is hardly possible, to go further back, for matter on the subject of the effects of the then totally novel Tread-wheel Discipline, than *the Second Report of the Prison Discipline Society*, published, subsequently to a general meeting of its subscribers and friends, in the Freemasons'-Hall, on the 23d of May,

1820.

In this Report the following sentiments, on the nature and effects of the wheel labour, are expressed :

“ The difficulty of providing suitable employment for prisoners has deeply occupied the committee, but, *they have not been able to arrive at any conclusions which are of universal application.* Preference should certainly be given to those trades, the knowledge of which may enable prisoners to acquire a subsistence on their discharge ; but there is one species of hard labour, arising from the introduction of STEPPING MILLS, which may furnish constant occupation to a considerable proportion of the prisoners. The advantages derived from the use of these mills have already been *very conspicuous*, as well, in a pecuniary point of view, as *in the moral benefits* resulting to the prisoners, an object to be principally kept in view ; for though any given employment of prisoners be unproductive, yet the gain to the community will eventually be considerable by the reformation, and consequently

the reduced number of offenders. The committee therefore think that labour should be carried on in prisons, even at a loss, rather than that they should be without employment; they conceive also, that ALLOWANCE SHOULD BE MADE TO PRISONERS, SUFFICIENT TO STIMULATE THE EXERTIONS OF THEIR INDUSTRY, yet NOT SO LARGE AS TO COUNTERACT THE DREAD OF IMPRISONMENT. Under this head the committee wish to notice, that a STEPPING MILL of a superior description, for the exclusive employment of prisoners, has been lately constructed by Mr. William Cubitt, civil engineer, of Ipswich, by whose liberality and kindness they have been furnished with drawings and illustrations of its machinery, and a report explaining its peculiar power and effects; all which the committee have annexed to their publication of the 'Rules for the Government of Gaols.' Of this Mill it may be observed, that it secures the two objects hitherto so difficult of attainment in Prison Discipline—the immediate employment of those ignorant of all trades, and the constant exertions of the whole body. Not only can every prisoner work at the Mill, but every prisoner, so employed, must work. It is adapted to those of no capacity, and obliges those of all capacities to do their best. *Wherever these Mills have been erected, they have been honoured by the approbation of the intelligent observer; and the committee are persuaded, that their economical advantages will be soon discovered in the quantity of work performed, and the quantity of mischief prevented."*

To this remark, that "The committee regret to state, no material improvement has taken place in the prisons of the metropolis, since the publication of their last Report," the following note is attached.

"Since the date of this Report, the magistrates for the county of Middlesex have resolved to erect a Discipline Mill, on Mr. Cubitt's improved principle, at Coldbath-fields prison, for the employment of all the MALE, convicted prisoners, at constant labour, *a measure which is calculated to produce the most salutary effect on their moral habits.* This plan has been greatly promoted

by an able letter, on Prison Discipline, addressed to the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, by G. B. Mainwaring, Esq."

This letter, which is added in the Appendix, bears rather upon the general question of hard prison labour, than upon the merits or demerits of the Tread-wheel exercise. Whatever mention the writer makes of *this compound means of punishment and reformation* will be seen in the ensuing paragraph of his correspondence.

"Idleness, we are told, is the root of all evil. Speaking of its force upon criminal habits, we may truly say, that it is the consequence, as well as the source, of crime. The feverish life of a criminal so debilitates and impairs body and mind, that he becomes idle almost against his will, and unable to follow up the better resolutions of a transient remorse; therefore, the surest means of his reformation will be found in giving him a habit (a mechanical habit) of industry, and in *reproducing energies* which have been lost by crime and debauchery. I might here, I think, safely leave this subject; but if I am asked in what manner I would produce this habit, I say by hard labour; and that that labour is the best which is the most active labour, which shall really work the body, and subdue (properly disciplined) the mind; and, considering (as we must at first do) the objects of our attention to be unwilling agents, we should place them in a situation where, however unwilling, they must (whilst employed) be working. For this purpose, of all the labour that I have seen or heard of, as a primary means of industry, as well as actual punishment, the Stepping Mill work is the most desirable. I have recently had an opportunity of observing its efficacy in the gaol at Bury, which, at the same time that it shows a prison combining punishment and reform, exhibits a thriving and *cheerful* manufactory."

A page, occupied by Mr. Cubitt's report of the completed, or progressing erection of Tread-mills, in various prisons, is all the additional matter in this Report which directly meddles with, or appertains to, the topic of the Wheel Discipline.

IN the *Third Report of the Prison Discipline Society*, published, subsequently to a general meeting of its subscribers and friends, in the Freemasons'-Hall, on the 2d of June,

1821,

“ The committee state, with great satisfaction, that further experience has fully confirmed the hopes entertained of the effects of the Tread-mill, described in the society's last Report, as *invented* by Mr. Cubitt, of Ipswich.” In a note, on page 187, attached to a concise “ account of Discipline Mills,” drawn up by Mr. Cubitt, the committee describe “ The *object* of the Discipline Mill to be, the adoption of a *kind of hard labour to which every one would have a NATURAL dislike*, and yet such as every one can perform without previous instruction, and to be founded on the following principle: viz. that of making use of the joint efforts of all the prisoners, as a first moving power to some branch of manufacture, suited to the local circumstances of the county in which the prison is situated; for instance, in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex, and some other counties which are exclusively agricultural, the manufacture of flour seems the most eligible; whilst in Lancashire, Yorkshire, &c. throwing, twisting, and spinning mills might be worked by the same power; and in other parts, machinery for pumping water, driving lathes, &c. &c. might be set in motion in like manner. The operation of the convicts is *precisely the same* as that which is now effected by the *ordinary powers of wind, water, steam, or horses*; and they have no *concern or connexion with the object of the machinery* or manufactory, *more than any of the above-named agents*; for there would be no difficulty in establishing a mill, or manufactory, near the boundary-wall of a prison, through which a single shaft or axle would have to pass, and thus communicate the power.”

Exclusive of a few observations about the Mill, in connexion with Bury gaol, which will be noticed in another place, the foregoing extracts constitute the whole of the Society's recommendatory and explanatory notice of the Tread-mill, contained in this

Third Report. A part of a letter from a magistrate of Hertfordshire, and Mr. Cubitt's report, enlarged to a page and a half, constitute the remainder of the matter which bears on the subject of the new discipline.

Extract from the John Bull Paper of the 7th of July,

1822.

“ AMONGST the ameliorating societies, that for the ‘Improvement of Prison Discipline’ appeared one of the most amiable and kind, and the good men spoke with tears in their eyes, and brought tears into those of their auditors; they declared that ill-usage and oppression were never intended to form parts of the punishment of prisoners—that to a free-born Briton the *privation of liberty was, in itself, a full and entire reward for crime.*

“ After all we heard on the day of the meeting we allude to, we were a good deal surprised to find, that under the sanction of this most *humane* society, a thing called ‘the MILL’ is about to be introduced into all the prisons in England. It has already been brought *into play* (for as work it is useless) in the House of Correction of Middlesex, and *has caused a rebellion in the gaol!!*

“ In addition to a *perpetual jumping upon planks*, there is, we believe (at least in that erected at Brixton), a kind of flapper—not indeed made of sticks and bladders—but a bar, which gives the patient, who flags in his *useless toil*, such a thump on the back of his head, as makes him more lively than could otherwise be expected. There is a vulgar joke in the cant-dictionaries, which phrases the conclusion of the culprit's existence, ‘Dancing on nothing;’ but as *that* performance is not supposed to take place in the stage of proceedings to which we allude, we set our faces against this system of ‘Dancing *for* nothing,’ about to be universally adopted in all our prisons.

“ Amongst many mistaken expressions, the English univer-

sally use one, as respects justice—they talk of a man's being brought to justice, when they anticipate his being hanged, without knowing whether he be guilty or not;—justice, say they, will overtake him sooner or later, speaking of some confirmed villain, as if justice were always and necessarily vindictive and sanguineous—so it is with the word DISCIPLINE. The idea conveyed by *prison discipline* is hard work, and hard whipping, and upon *that* mistaken view of the word we conclude the society we have noticed, is founded; for, if the subscribers read discipline as we have defined it, and we believe they do, nothing could entitle them more properly to the character of *improvers* of it than the introduction into use of this BARBAROUS AND SHAMEFUL MILL.”

Article from the Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction, for the 2d of November.

THE Tread-mill at Brixton, that “terror to evil-doers,” has excited so much attention, that the Proprietors of “The Mirror” think a correct view and description of it cannot fail of being acceptable to their readers. The Tread-mill is *the invention* of Mr. Cubitt*, of Ipswich, and is considered a great improvement in Prison Discipline; so much so, that since its beneficial effects have been experienced at Brixton, Mills of a similar construction have been erected at Cold-bath-fields, and several places in the country.

Our engraving exhibits a party of prisoners in the act of working the Brixton Tread-mill, of which it is a correct representation. The view is taken from a corner of one of the ten airing yards of the prison, all of which radiate from the Governor's house in the centre; so that from the window of his room he commands a complete view into all the yards. A building behind the Tread-wheel shed is the Mill-house, containing the necessary

* This gentleman's name has given rise to some jokes on the subject, among such of the prisoners as can laugh at their own crimes, who say, they are punished by the *cubit*.

machinery for grinding corn, and dressing the flour, also rooms for stoving it, &c. On the right side of the building, a pipe is seen passing up to the roof, on which is a large, cast-iron reservoir, capable of holding some thousand gallons of water, for the use of the prison. This reservoir is filled by means of forcing-pump machinery below, connected with the principal axis which works the machinery of the Mill:—this axis or shaft passes *under the pavement* of the several yards, and, working by means of universal joints, at every turn, communicates with the Tread-wheel of each class.

This wheel, which is represented in the centre of the engraving, is exactly similar to a common water-wheel; the tread-boards upon its circumference are, however, of considerable length, so as to allow sufficient standing-room for a row of from ten to twenty persons upon the wheel. Their weight, the first moving power of the machine, produces the greatest effect when applied upon the circumference of the wheel at or near the level of its axle; to secure, therefore, this mechanical advantage, a screen of boards is fixed up, in an inclined position, above the wheel, in order to prevent the prisoners from climbing or stepping up higher than the level required. A hand-rail is seen fixed upon this screen, by holding which they retain their upright position upon the revolving wheel; the nearest side of which is exposed to view in the plate, in order to represent its cylindrical form much more distinctly than could otherwise have been done. In the original, however, both sides are closely boarded up, so that the prisoners have no access to the interior of the wheel, and all risk of injury whatever is prevented.

By means of steps, the gang of prisoners ascend at one end, and when the requisite number range themselves upon the wheel, it commences its revolution. The effort, then, to every individual is simply that of ASCENDING AN ENDLESS FLIGHT OF STEPS, their combined weight acting upon every successive stepping-board, precisely as a stream of water upon the float-boards of a water-wheel.

During this operation, each prisoner gradually advances, from

the end at which he mounted, towards the opposite end of the wheel, from whence the last man, taking his turn, descends for rest, another prisoner immediately mounting as before, to fill up the number required, without stopping the machine. The interval of rest may, then, be portioned to each man, by regulating the number of those required to work the Wheel with the whole number of the gang; thus, if twenty out of twenty-four are obliged to be upon the Wheel, it will give to each man intervals of rest amounting to twelve minutes in every hour of labour. Again, by varying the number of men upon the Wheel, or the work inside the Mill, so as to increase or diminish its velocity, the degree of hard labour or exercise to the prisoner may also be regulated. At Brixton, the diameter of the Wheel being five feet, and revolving twice in a minute, the space stepped over by each man is 2193 feet, or 731 yards per hour.

To provide regular, and suitable employment for prisoners sentenced to hard labour, has been attended with considerable difficulty in many parts of the kingdom: *the invention of the Discipline Mill has removed the difficulty, and it is confidently hoped, that as its advantages, and effects become better known, the introduction of the Mill will be universal in Houses of Correction.* As a species of prison labour, it is *remarkable for its simplicity.* It requires no previous instruction; no task-master is necessary to watch over the work of the prisoners, neither are materials or instruments put into their hands that are liable to waste, or misapplication, or subject to wear and tear: the internal machinery of the Mill being inaccessible to the prisoners, is placed under the management of skilful and proper persons, one or two at most, being required to attend a process which keeps in steady and constant employment from ten to two hundred or more prisoners at one and the same time; which can be suspended and renewed as often as the regulations of the prison render it necessary; and which imposes *equality of labour on every individual employed*, no one upon the wheel being able in the least degree to avoid his proportion.

The arrangement of the wheels, in the yards radiating from

the governor's central residence, places the prisoners thus employed under very good inspection—an object known to be of the utmost importance in prison management. At the Brixton House of Correction, with the exception of the very few confined by the casualties of sickness, or debility, all the prisoners are steadily employed, under the eye of the governor, during a considerable part of the day.

The *classification*, also, of the prisoners, according to offences, &c. may be adhered to in the adoption of these discipline wheels; the same wheel, or the same connected shafts, can be easily made to pass into distinct compartments, in which the several classes may work in separate parties. In the prison from which the drawing is taken, a Tread-wheel is erected in each of the six yards, by which the inconvenience and risk of removing a set of prisoners from one part of the prison to another is obviated.

As the *mechanism* of these Tread-Mills is not of a complicated nature, the regular employment they afford is not likely to be frequently suspended for want of repairs to the machinery; and should the supply of corn, &c. at any time fall off, it is not necessary that the labour of the prisoners should be suspended, nor can they be aware of the circumstance: THE SUPPLY OF HARD LABOUR may therefore be considered as almost unfailing.

It is unnecessary to occupy much time in proving the *advantage* which the invention of the Stepping-Mill presents as a species of *preventive punishment*. Although but very recently introduced, and hitherto but sparingly brought into action, the effects of its discipline have in every instance proved eminently useful in decreasing the number of commitments. As a *corrective punishment*, the discipline of the Stepping-Mill has had a most salutary effect upon the prisoners, and is not likely to be easily forgotten; while it is an occupation which by no means interferes with, nor is calculated to lessen the value of, those branches of prison regulation which provide for the moral and religious improvement of the criminal.

By an excellent contrivance, when the machinery of the Mill

has attained its proper speed, certain balls rise by their centrifugal force, so as to draw a box below the reach of a bell-handle, which will then cease to ring a bell, placed in some convenient situation for the purpose. But should the men at the wheels cease to keep up the requisite speed in the Mill-work, the balls will descend, and a projecting pin on the box, striking the handle, placed in the proper situation for that purpose, will continue to ring the bell, till they go on again properly; and by this means, a certain check will be kept on the labourers, and the governor or task-master apprised, even at a distance, that the full work is not performed.

[It will be observed, in perusing this article, that it is introduced by an engraving of the Mill. J. J.]

ORIGINAL COMMUNICATION.

[*From the Literary Gazette of the 9th of Nov.*]

THE TREAD MILL.

Reflections, Metaphysical, Physiological, and Moral, excited during a protracted Commitment to the Labour of the Tread Mill.

“Down! thou climbing sorrow!”—LEAR, A. 2. S. 4.

IN order to introduce myself with due formality to the humane reader, I have to observe that I was found guilty of the crime for which I was arraigned—in the emphatic language of the Recorder, “after a patient and impartial trial, by the testimony of respectable and unvarying witnesses, by a mild and intelligent Judge, and by a merciful and considerate jury;” and was sentenced to six months’ hard labour in the Tread-Mill. My first appearance on those boards was in March last. On the evening previous to my debüt, the Keeper came to me and said, that on the following morning, at half-past seven, my attendance

would be required in company with other performers. There is always considerable interest produced by new situations and modes of employment ; and on that occasion the interest partook more of alarm than of curiosity. My inquiries were directed to ascertain if there required any particular talent to comprehend, or dexterity of limb to execute, the task that had been assigned. The Keeper assured me that the performance was adapted to the meanest capacities : “ Sir, it only consists in putting the best foot foremost ; you have only to consider yourself in a marching regiment—it requires no previous study ;” adding, that in one particular it might be compared to swimming, which is never *forgotten* ; and that the latter result was the object of the contriver. At the appointed hour, in the morning, I ascended a few steps, which conducted me to my appointed station on the Mill. Our society was select, and clad in the same uniform ; and it gave me sincere pleasure to find that neither competition nor jealousy existed, although we all wore the yellow stocking. A profound silence was maintained for the first three hours, when the person who worked on my right hand said, “ They intend to convert this into a corn-mill.” The person on my left overhearing him, replied, “ It is a cursed contrivance for corns ; my feet are blistered already.” Throughout the toilsome travel of the day I observed, with satisfaction, that no man made a false step. At half-past four in the afternoon the day’s performance concluded.

By degrees I became better acquainted with my associates, the majority of whom concurred in reprobating the invention ; they considered it impossible to effect a *moral reformation* by teaching a man to be a footpad. But there were *some so physically callous*, and morally unrelenting, that the discipline seemed to make *not the slightest impression on their bodies*, or minds. A fellow who was a lamplighter laughed at the labour ; he said it was much easier than his own trade, and he should consider the period of his commitment as a holiday. A short, thickset lad, who was a pot-boy, declared that drawing beer all day, and the greater part of the night, was much more fatiguing. A chimney-sweeper said it was a clean and genteel profession ; and a radical affected to

admire the invention, because it proceeded on revolutionary principles. A humorous chap, who was classically educated, and had a poetical turn, called the Mill the *gradus ad Parnassum*, and the labour, scanning. Suffice it to say, that the same unvarying and monotonous rotation continued during the period of my commitment.

It now remains to communicate the reflections that occurred while I was a working-bee in this hive of reform. For the first week the treading was distressing, and accompanied with considerable pain and stiffness in the calves of the legs and muscles of the thighs; this, however, gradually diminished, and in the course of a month I performed the labour with alacrity, and only viewed it as a species of training. *The appetite was much increased*; but for this salutary symptom there was no extra provision, the means of satisfying the increase being denied. *As the toil proceeded, the thread of life was spun from a staple progressively finer, and when the six months had expired, a very delicate filament appeared to connect together the body and the soul.* This labour, with restricted diet, would be a certain remedy in cases of obesity; and the Mill might be safely recommended to the Court of Aldermen and their deputies; masters and wardens of companies; churchwardens, overseers, and sidesmen; butchers' wives, and landladies in the districts of Wapping.

That the Tread-Mill, under proper regulations, may become a valuable agent in the cure of chronic disorders, there is every reason to expect; and it is to be hoped that valetudinarians may be accommodated with some establishments for this purpose. In wet weather, under proper shelter, sufficient exercise might be taken in the open air, without the chance of catching cold; and as the circular wheel resembles the cylinder of a hand organ, a trifling expense would furnish a set of delightful tunes, commencing with solemn adagios, and progressively advancing to the gayer movements of a waltz. Time, and the rapid march of intellect, will at some future period develope the improvements of which this *salutary* engine is susceptible.

The effects produced on the mind by the operation of the

Tread-mill are highly interesting, and deserve to be accurately communicated. Although it may be described as the dull, unvaried *toil that excruciates the spirit*, and renders the passing moments tiresome and disgusting, yet it has very peculiar effects on the intellectual powers. As perception is in a great degree quiescent, there are abundant opportunities for reflection. The eye dwells only on the boards that form a paling to intercept the view; conversation is prohibited, so that the ear is unoccupied except by exclamations, short sentences, or *curses*,

“Diverse lingue, horribili favelle,
Parole di dolore, accenti d’ira.”

DANTE, *Inferno*, Canto 3.

Independently of the strict injunction to preserve silence, there is a physiological reason for the stillness that prevails; in all states of exertion, where the labour exhausts the strength, *mum* is the order of the day—the respiration is too actively employed to permit a sufficient supply of breath for continued articulation. That faculty of the mind which is termed attention becomes wonderfully improved, and in consequence the memory is enabled to revert to the former incidents of life with the greatest accuracy, and keep the immediate subject of thought steadily in contemplation. One of my comrades, who was a strolling player, rehearsed many parts, while in the act of treading, and, by his own account, with greater facility than he had ever done before; and this he explained by ascribing it to the relief he experienced, while “plodding” round about “his weary way,” in fixing his attention on those dramatic scenes with which he had heretofore stored his memory. He pleasantly called it learning *by rote*.

The reader and the public will now expect that I should detail the practical operation of this discipline, and intended castigation, *on the moral character*; and this explanation I will cheerfully give, as far as its effects on myself and others with whom I have conversed may be considered a fair criterion. It is supposed that idleness is the source of vicious propensities, and inferred that a return to industrious habits will engage the mind in honour-

able pursuits. This is the ordinary mode of reasoning ; but it is founded on false premises. The life of a thief, so far from being inactive, is a series of vigilant, laborious, and hazardous enterprises. He is compelled to exert his faculties in the contrivance of stratagems to circumvent the most wary, and to elude the pursuit of justice. When other mortals are at rest, and enjoying the blessings of sleep, he prowls about, regardless of the inclemency of the weather ; and conceals himself in ditches that he may spring upon the traveller. If employed in the fabrication of bank-notes, or in counterfeiting the coin, his exertions are more laborious and longer continued than those of the honest artisan. Cupidity is the stimulus to his unremitted toil, and the fear of surprise and apprehension banishes the refreshment of sleep. Ever on the alert to avoid detection, he is compelled to seek by-paths, and traverse immense tracts, that he may more effectually screen himself from danger ;—he shuns the garish eye of day, and often fasts till nature is nearly exhausted. When there is a reward proclaimed for his caption, he views his own species with distrust, knowing that the thirst of gain will induce even his associates to betray him ; and he feels that he can no longer confide in the wretched female on whom he has lavished his plunder. Mankind appear to have conspired against him, and he regards his fellow as an antagonist. It is not idleness that is the cause of his delinquency ; for the propensity to thieving, in all its departments, is a stimulus that constantly goads him to practice ; it is, the eagerness to attain promptly that which he considers the object of his wishes—the desideratum that appears to constitute his immediate happiness. A child steals gingerbread—a schoolboy robs an orchard. When the sexual feelings are developed, the incentive to gratification is increased, and urges to more hazardous attempts. The apprentice drains his master's till, or appropriates the money he has collected in his service, to decorate his person, that he may indulge with greater facility in some low amour. The exhilaration kindled by fermented liquors, or the produce of distillation, presents a new source of pleasurable feeling. Under the influence of wine, the

bashfulness and timidity inseparable from chastity and decorum are utterly dispersed; the tongue acquires extraordinary facilities of expression, scorns confinement to the dulness of fact, and sallies into the gayer regions of falsehood and imagination.

Among all the conveniences that can be enumerated, especially with the community to which I belong, *a lie* is justly entitled to the preference. It is an indispensable requisite in the character of a thief, and has presented abundant scope for the ingenuity of gentlemen of the long-robe to detect it by cross examination. Its excellence depends on the readiness with which it is produced, and on the unblenching effrontery with which it is maintained. Young beginners generally hesitate, colour up, and look down; the eye of a proficient rivets your attention by a point-blank regard. The emoluments of all professions, and the profits of trade are founded on this convenience; and the science of producing belief in the mind of another, delicately termed persuasion, is the true "*moyen de parvenir.*" Thus *the desire of gratification produces the activity which distinguishes the restless life of a rascal.*

Speaking from the moral benefits I have derived from this Mill, my expectations are not raised to any high degree; it may in the outset be felt as a punishment, but this, like the nap of a new coat, soon wears off, and by habit becomes merely a salutary exercise. It may possibly be employed with advantage for the correction of beggars, who are really idle; but *to reform thieves it is wholly inadequate. It tends to confer no character, and operates by degradation.* Personally, I feel that I have performed my task; *it is no employment by which, when at large, I can obtain a living. I was discharged in a state of destitution, and must continue the practice of peculation to subsist. My principles are unaltered, and I am condemned to herd with the most abandoned of my species.* In the lapse of forty years I have been an inhabitant of the various prisons, repeatedly tried at the different assizes, often whipped in the press-yard at Newgate, and more publicly at the tail of the tumbril. Once my stubborn neck has bowed in the pillory, and my golls bear the record of

incandescent iron. I have been twice transported, and now with philosophic composure, as the boon of approaching age and infirmity, wait my turn at the gallows.

. Nullum

Sæva caput Proserpina fugit.

LAURENCE LARCENY.

The John Bull Paper of the 15th of December, among its notices to Correspondents, says—

WE shall certainly inquire into the case of the “whipping,” and we agree with our correspondent, that the *Tread Mill* savours somewhat of a *New Toy* in the hands of certain persons. The anecdotes shall not be lost.

*Article from the * Council of Ten for the 1st of January,*

1823.

THE TREAD-MILL.

BEFORE, in this article, speaking of *the tread-mill*, upon general principles, we consider it due to ourselves to point out to our readers how completely we have been supported by the occurrences of the last two or three weeks, in all we said on the monstrous

* This publication, which appeared monthly, has been dropped since June, 1823. It was conducted by a Master of Arts of Christ Church, assisted by three or four University men.

injustice, and fearful impolicy of making it an *engine* of punishment in the case of persons captured in the gambling-houses of the metropolis. It will be recollected, that sixteen individuals were, a short time ago, brought up from one of these places of resort, and convicted as rogues and VAGABONDS, upon the oaths of the officers, that they *must have been* gambling, inasmuch as the implements of gambling were at hand, and a terrible bustle was audible, as they approached the innermost shrine of the VAGABONDS' devotion.—Upon these depositions, which were summed up with peculiar effect by that meritorious *staff* officer, Ruthven, who, from having *seen* play in *France*, was enabled to enlighten the worshipful magistrates as to the mysteries of roulette, and the chances of rouge et noir:—and who that saw his dexterity, or admired his address, when turning to T. Halls, Esq. in an impassioned tone of voice he exclaimed—“Ορκιος δε σοι λεγω”—Your worship!—who, indeed, could hesitate to declare that these VAGABONDS were, as the act expresses it, “*found playing* at unlawful games of chance?” No one; nor did T. Halls, Esq. He, just man! condemned the VAGABONDS, forthwith, to imprisonment and *the Tread-mill*. How mischievous are the effects of eloquence sometimes! How completely it put it out of the head of the worthy magistrate that some of the servants of a “hell” never can be found playing, because it is their business, as the deponents might have testified, to be ever found watching! How entirely it caused him to overlook the fact that persons might be present from curiosity, as one of the gentlemen of the long-robe declared he had been, on occasion; very properly informing us, that his curiosity had cost him nothing the last eighteen years!—How absurdly—“unkindest cut of all!”—it prompted him to insinuate that there were sundry “pickers and stealers” among the VAGABONDS; because, as some of them were conscious of empty pockets on entering pandæmonium, and were, nevertheless, announced to the world and the Keeper of the House of Correction as “found playing,” to reconcile the statement with the fact, they must have *borrowed* of their neighbours or “the bank.”—How totally must

it have shut his eyes to the probable consequences of an appeal, and darkened the vista of quashed convictions

To return to our own justification, it must be premised, that the sixteen VAGABONDS appealed to the Quarter-sessions against the conviction, and the conviction was, without hesitation, QUASHED ; not merely for its finding some of the sixteen guilty of that of which they were not guilty, but because, as the chairman, Mr. Const, very wisely declared, "There were other and properer means of punishing such offenders, than that attempted to be adopted in this case." We beg two or three of our correspondents, who have misinterpreted our remarks on this subject, in our fifth and sixth numbers, to examine well this opinion of Mr. Const, and his brother magistrates. The operation may be somewhat facilitated by casting their eyes over a new CARICATURE of THE MAGISTRATES' MILL, at which some of the first personages in the country, with the SOVEREIGN himself, are represented as working ! —We would say, put the *real* authors of the CARICATURE in solitary confinement, were we not afraid that T. Halls, Esq. and another magisterial character, by name, George, Rowland, Minshull, would be understood by the public as the persons whom we should propose thus to chastise. Now, when our correspondents have taken due time for consideration, they must discover, or we strangely miscalculate their common sense, that what Mr. Const said, in the name of the magistrates, on the impropriety of dealing with this given vice, in that given way, is NEITHER MORE NOR LESS than what we had already and repeatedly said. Really some people argue as if there were no degrees of punishment, and that severity could not be too severe, nor *inequality of application the curse of a law*.

We sorrow when we assert it, that the spirit of gambling seems to be inherent in human nature. Gambling is nearly as old as society :—any community, then, that agrees to attempt the eradication of any branch of this vice, must not tolerate some other branch of it equally pernicious. BURGLARY must not be committed to get at the players of rouge et noir, while parliament

votes for lottery after lottery. The very word lottery signifies a game of chance, a gambling speculation ! But supposing the lottery were suppressed, according to the wishes of all thinking people, still, since gambling is an epidemic, the measures to be adopted towards removing it, or narrowing the sphere of its contagion, must be very judiciously selected, to the end that they may restrain some persons, and yet have no tendency to exasperate every body. Had the late attacks upon the gambling-houses been made in the height of "the season," among "the captured" would have been men of title, and men of the first consideration for family or property.—Would the magistrates have DARED to have sentenced any such characters to the *Tread-mill*?—It is laughable to make it a question ! We use the term *dared*, deliberately, and will show how it is the only term fit for the occasion. Let it not be supposed that we are advocating one punishment for the great, and another for the little "*participes criminis*," in using the expression "*dared*."—No, we put it thus to show, that inasmuch as they would not have DARED to *sentence men of consequence to the Tread-mill*, it is monstrous injustice that they should have DARED to sentence any persons to a punishment to which the whole frame and feelings of society would have rendered it IMPOSSIBLE for them to sentence *others*, though *equally offending* ! The impossibility of the punishment's being applied *equally* to all offending in the same manner, proves the consummate stupidity of those who had the temerity to make trial of it.—We are completely astonished that the legislature should have given such a power a momentary being ; and we think the legislature must be covered with confusion of face to see a Quarter-sessions' bench knocking that power on the head, as a power likely to create all manner of mischief. *The senate of Great Britain should be ashamed of such an inequitable, anomalous, and antisocial enactment as the new Vagrant Act* : according to some lawgivers, one would be led to imagine that racing-stands, betting-rooms, and high play, were to rouge et noir, roulette, &c. &c. as misdemeanours to capital crimes. We are utterly astonished that, with the Alien Act in their hands, the government did not interfere in the case of the pro-

prietors of "the hells," who were proved to be foreigners, and cart them out of the country at once.—There can be no question, that the keeper of "a hell" offends "contra bonos mores" infinitely more than a frequenter of his house.—But *even for this great offender, the Tread-mill is the last punishment that it is either politic or just to adopt.*

As to the *Tread-mill* per se, we are so convinced by our instinctive sensations, and every observation we have made, that it is *an extreme severity*, that, if our reasoning against it as a punishment at all, be not acquiesced in, we trust to establish that none but very serious delinquencies should be visited with its pains. For our parts, we recoil from the sight of *human beings, treading away, like squirrels or white mice, round a circle of steps.* We do not like our species to be put to labours that remind us of blind horses in mills, or the more derogatory toils of turnspits! A punishment may degrade human nature: we believe *this punishment degrades it.* This view of the matter is taken by hundreds besides ourselves. What else causes it to be looked upon as of a *branding* nature? What else makes it a joke and a by-word with the public? What renders it such excellent sport for caricaturists and playwrights? Why should a mechanic or a labouring man resent as the grossest indignity any taunt of their deserving the tread-mill? Would their blood boil in like manner were one to assure them that they deserved to go to prison? *The Council of Ten stand forward in the face of the country to protest that the punishment of the Tread-mill is intrinsically a degrading punishment!!*

PUNISHMENTS, ESSENTIALLY DEGRADING, DO NOT REFORM, BUT DEBASE! And is this a punishment to be left in the hands of justices of the peace, to be inflicted on any human being whatever above the rank of a thief?

It would be much more for the good of the country, if his Majesty were to put into certain wiseacres' hands a few writs of supersedeas, in return for their procuring him a birth at their *Ixionic wheel.* The very rising of our indignation as we write, is a testimony to the abuse, if not to the utter impropriety, of the tread-mill.

It is lamentable to see well-meaning individuals so *transported* with the idea of causing the lazy, the erring, and the vicious to work, as that *they overlook altogether the nature of the employment which is provided*. We will leave for a future opportunity any further objections we may have to take to the Mill as a punishment at all, and confine ourselves through the remaining paragraphs to protesting, that THE PUNISHMENT OF THE TREAD-MILL IS A PUNISHMENT NOT TO BE TRUSTED IN THE HANDS OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.—That they have abused this power of punishment already, yes, grievously abused it, witness the Caricature we before mentioned, and the quashed conviction! Witness the committal we reported in our last of a reduced HALF-PAY OFFICER, who was begging (rudely, we allow) for three months to the Mill! When a broken-down gentleman is compelled to turn beggar, what must the exacerbation of his mind be! How small his proficiency in the art of begging! Witness the twelve houseless beings sent to keep him, who had borne a commission in the army, company, for SLEEPING IN A BRICK-KILN!—It is in vain to tell men who make use of their senses that the twelve were notorious characters; wise men would argue, if notorious characters find, that for merely SLEEPING in the warmest place, under the naked sky, which they can select, they are liable to penalties which would await them if they were “waking unto mischief,” they will awake unto mischief with a vengeance. Better to let criminal inclination find a vent in petty delinquency, than by dealing too severely with such delinquency only put an end to it by increasing the more desperate orders of crime. But the justices might be half pardoned had they confined the excesses of the zeal they share in common with the five shilling PIECE officers, to characters having no calling in life, and perhaps unable to prove that they had ever lived by the sweat of their brow. Where, however, shall pardon be found for them for sending to the Mill an artizan, in regular employ, because one night when drunk, “as his betters had been before him,” he swaggered, as a drunken man must, and talked great things about slaughtering his master.

The social state in England requires that the magistracy of the land should be endowed with wisdom ; and when any part of it betrays alarming symptoms of dotage or old womanishness, it will not, it cannot be, endured !!

If, because the Mills are built at great expense, it would be shocking—(infinitely more shocking, we should call it, to act upon such a motive)—to unbuild them, or leave them unworked, let us at least commence a return to sound principles, by confining to a jury and judge the power of inflicting *so severe a punishment* : get over, what the public have had the sense to discover from the first, and what they assert in a voice, audible by any person not labouring under deafness of intellect, that the Tread-mill is a punishment essentially degrading ; that it brands the victim of it, and may attach a nickname to him, which if he belong to many classes of labouring life, would stick to him all his days, and exasperate his feelings without ceasing : that it must break, or madden the spirit of any one who, feeling himself an honest man, sees himself at the task of thieves for the errors of intoxication, or the misfortune of being out on a *pilgrimage* for employ ; and for that *good* reason unable to satisfy suspicious *strangers* of his harmless, antivagrant intentions : get over these undeniable facts, and then we will think little of *the physical severity of a discipline particularly well calculated to bring on hernia, and promote, in many constitutions, swimings in the head !!*

When we consider how being out of employ MAY render a poor, yet honest man, houseless ; MAY force him to sleep even in a brick-kiln ; MAY send him wandering the streets, and astray from his parish, or those parts in which he is known, it is intolerable to think of the risk he runs of being metamorphosed into a vagrant, and debased, if not ruined, by the punishment of the Tread-mill. Have the Middlesex magistrates yet to learn, that to threaten a man with infamy makes his blood boil almost as much as to cover him with it ? Is it endurable for a gentleman to be threatened with a horsewhipping ?—*Is it endurable for an honest man to be threatened with the Tread-mill ?*

We should mistrust certain magistrates were it simply for the hankering they evinced after *their new toy*, in the case of the actors and audiences led captive, so frequently, of late, by the five shilling *piece* officers : this hankering, too, entertained *after* it became pretty evident that the *only* money taken in the business was by the captors. Let a stop be put to unlicensed acting for gain, but let not the Tread-mill be concerned or threatened in the affair. It is the height of stupidity to threaten what you cannot, or ought not to perform.

We have frequently given a left-off coat to an unfortunate man, whose talents for acting were more than second rate, but who, his person, poverty, and debility of constitution excluding him from regular engagements, has often joined a strolling company, or taken a chief character on the boards of a private theatre. This poor fellow possesses ten times the talent of many a magistrate, and the acuteness of his sensibility haunts him as his shadow ;— he is too proud to be dishonest, and too ingenuous to be a liar ;— yet this poor fellow might have been captured, many's the time, had the attacks been made at certain unlucky conjunctions of the stars, in sundry private theatres, and had the captives been sent to the mill, been sent, we should have prophesied, *to cut his throat*. We record this fact to show that the place in which parties are found must not always prescribe the measure of punishment. Curiosity, ignorance, neglected or unfortunate talent, may collect, in an unlicensed theatre, be it barn or workshop, the most dissimilar characters in the world. Some may be without excuse, some may have every excuse for their presence. There will generally be some persons in such a place whom it would be an outrage on the feelings of the public to see sent to the Tread-mill.— A lumping conviction, therefore, must not be thought of.— How then would the magistrates act ? Oh, they would commit the actors and the least respectable part of the audience ! The actors, perhaps, that portion of the delinquents of the acutest sensibilities ; and the least respectable folk, labouring under the imputation of little repute, not from any badness of character above their play-loving compeers, but from not having friends at hand to speak to character, and

testify to their honesty and sober habits. All this argument is not used to confound "*ignorantia legis*" with innocence, or to shield transgressions of the law from punishment *adequate* to the degree of mischief and evil-meaning; and yet it all tends to corroborate the case we make out against the *magistrates'* Mill-wheels.

We do not know to what other purposes, besides *making so many pair of legs ache*, some of the mills may be *consecrated*, but of the more than 200 MEN-power, expended for seven or eight hours daily, at the twenty-four wheels of the Cold-bath-fields mill, the product has been hitherto—nothing, but *beaten—air*. We visited this mill since commencing this article, and *the system* seemed *so slave-driving* that we cannot recal or mitigate any thing we have said. AS LATE AS THE 16TH OF DECEMBER, THE TREADERS IN ONE OF THE YARDS MUTINIED; TWO MAGISTRATES FROM HATTON-GARDEN WERE SENT FOR, FOUR MEN INSTANTLY WHIPPED: THE OTHER YARDS BEING OBLIGED TO SEND TWO DEPUTIES A-PIECE, TO WITNESS AND REPORT UPON THE FLAGELLATION, AND THE YARD, BY THESE MEASURES, WAS AGAIN INDUCED TO WORK!!

A friend informs us that a short time since there was a refusal to tread among the prisoners in Reading jail. If, too, his report was correct, the jailer and his assistants reduced them to obedience by blows: we should be glad if any of our readers could enlighten us as to the correctness or incorrectness of this last portion of our information. The jailers in Cold-bath-fields value their places too much to dream of such remedies; though, they assured us, they have had great trouble with prisoners dropping off, to be HELPED on, &c. &c. Before the magistrates and others connected with Cold-bath-fields came to their senses, as we give God thanks they have, with respect to the atrociousness of putting women to such a task, the poor wretches made resistance in all manner of ways to working on the Mill. *If the Mill be so essentially obnoxious to prisoners, that they will, from time to time, risk and incur whippings and other forcible measures, the Mill is a nuisance and an oppression.* This will be our decision, till we are made to believe that *whippings* are *necessary to make them*

pick oakum, beat flax, and work at common trades or occupations. We suspect that *it is not work at which the prisoners kick, but at a task they feel to be revolting to their minds and trying to their bodies!* These whippings, however, will not do for repetition; there is something too summary and severe in them, something smacking of the Inquisition and torture, something that gives one a sensation of arbitrary power, and mock trials, with closed doors. Prison discipline must, we grant, correct prison offences—**BUT PRISON OFFENCES SHOULD NEVER BE PROVOKED BY PRISON DISCIPLINE.** In taking leave of our subject, for the present, we must again express our wonder at the Executive for not putting the Alien Act in force on some late occasions; and again congratulate our friends, that the line of argument we have all along adopted with respect to the POLICE dealings with gamblers, is the line of argument which it has been found necessary to pursue in practice, though at the cost of a police conviction, the wisdom of certain stipendiary magistrates, and the character for any thing but carelessness and want of discriminatory foresight on the part of the legislature!

We keep back a great part of our matter upon gambling and *the Tread-Mill*; as we wish to see, in the first instance, what will be the success of the appeal from the *late* sentence of Mr. Halls. With regard, generally, to the Tread-mill, as a punishment, we shall leave our pages open to all; as we are fully aware that it is a subject on which conscientious men may hold the widest difference of opinion.

Extract from the Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction, for the 4th of January.

THE CHINESE TREAD-WHEEL.

“THE public will, perhaps, be surprised to learn, that *the much-talked-of Tread-mill*, of which we have so accurate an engraving and description, in the first number of the Mirror, *is borrowed from the Chinese!*

“ We would not have our readers to mistake us, or to suppose that the Chinese are so depraved as to require such steps as those of a Tread-mill to be taken for the reformation of offenders. To cast such an imputation on this singular people would be enough to make them refuse sending us another pound of tea, or at least to require that we should be sent to the Emperor to expiate our offence by the kouto, or some much worse humiliation. In saying that the Tread-mill is borrowed from the Chinese, we allude to the mechanical principle on which it is constructed. This principle is applied by the Chinese to a chain pump, and is one of the modes used for raising water from rivers for irrigating their lands.

“ The Chinese, ignorant of the principle of the common pump, raise water either by a machine resembling the Persian wheel, or by a chain pump, the chambers of which, instead of being cylindrical, are universally square. Of this pump, the engraving is a correct representation, and the slightest glance will show its similarity to the Tread-mill.

“ In the Chinese Tread-mill, or Tread-pump, the inside of a hollow wooden trunk is divided in the middle, by a board, into two compartments ; a chain made to turn over a small wheel or roller, at each extremity of the trunk, is fastened to flat and square pieces of wood, nicely fitted to the capacity of the cavity. These, called lifters, move with the chain round the rollers, and raise a volume of water proportionate to the dimensions of the hollow trunk. The power to work this machine may be applied different ways. When it is intended to raise a great quantity, sets of wooden arms, in the form of the letter T, are affixed to the lengthened axis of the rollers, and smoothed for the foot to rest upon. The axis is made to turn upon two wooden uprights, rendered steady by a piece of timber stretched across them. Men, by treading upon the projecting parts of the wooden arms, supporting themselves at the same time by a cross beam, give a rotary motion to the chain, and the lifters, being attached to it, raise up a constant and abundant stream of water.”

[The article from which this extract is made, is headed, as its contents specify, by an engraving of the Mill which it describes.]

Paragraph, copied by the Courier of the 18th of January, from the Chelmsford Chronicle.

INVENTION OF AN IMPROVED TREAD-MILL.

MR. RICHMOND, who is engineer to the gas works here, and whose mechanical inventions so evidently point out his just ideas of the principles of mechanics, exhibited, on Tuesday last, through the medium of Mr. Hopper, the county-surveyor, to the magistrates assembled at the Shire-hall, the model of an improved Tread-Wheel. It was desirable that the motion of the Tread-Wheel should be *accelerated, or retarded at pleasure*, without the necessity of the connexion of the flour mill; and that it should likewise be made applicable to the punishment of any lesser, or greater number of prisoners. Another object was also sought, that of making it *more or less laborious*, so as to apportion it to the delinquency and sentences of the parties put to work. The Mills already erected are generally upon the principle of revolving 120 times in an hour, or twice in a minute. The present improvement will enable *the governor of a prison to regulate the velocity to his own desires; to make the labour easy or oppressive*, and all this without the necessity of connecting the works with machinery for grinding; or it may be converted to any such use at discretion. The model itself must have required much time, as it is finished in the most complete manner. This improved Mill moves with a triangular action; having levers and weights; the balls attached to which regulate the opening and shutting of flyers, which are attached, so as to increase or decrease the weight upon the centre, and by that means render the labour greater or less. The simplicity of the movements will tend much to protect it from a probability of frequent defect.—The Bench were *much pleased* with the production, and expressed their approbation in very flattering terms to Mr. Richmond, for the ingenuity of his invention, and the peculiarly clear manner in which he had illustrated it by his model. We have heard some observa-

tions as to the propriety of the speculation which the county has been driven into in order to afford labour; and whether it produced loss or gain, was not a consideration; *the quantity of flour manufactured*, the complainants say, *is thrown into the market, and has its weight in the depression of the article*; whilst a capital is necessarily employed out of the county purse; it will therefore be accomplishing a most important object as regards the public, and *give infinite satisfaction to the Magistrates of counties, if labour can be found, even without profit*, as such was never the object so much sought; the prevention of loss being the grand desideratum. Mr. Richmond's improvements promise to produce such results, and we sincerely hope he will reap his merited reward. As a proof of the manner in which the project was received, a Tread-mill, with such improvements, was directed to be put up, without loss of time, in Halsted Bridewell! *The idea of the Tread-mill is of Chinese origin*, in which country they are used for drawing water, &c. An index, or a sort of clock, nicknamed a *tell-tale*, is proposed to be affixed to the new Mill, by which the Governor can ascertain the number of revolutions in a given time, whether he may be present or not.

Paragraph from the New Times, of the 6th of February.

THE Bury Gazette states that in Swaffham Bridewell, about *fifty prisoners*, a short time since, *revolted, and refused, for a time, to work*, but on a *remonstrance* of the Governor, they returned to their "never ending,—still beginning," task.

ACCIDENT AT THE TREAD-WHEEL.

Copied from the John Bull Paper of the 23d of March.

FRIDAY se'nnight, one of the prisoners in Aylesbury gaol met with a serious accident in leaving the Tread-Wheel: his head

was so much injured by being jammed between the wheel and the post, that faint hopes are entertained of his recovery.

Article from the New Times of the 24th of July.

NOTHING is more honourable to modern times than the spirit of benevolence which actuates so many of our voluntary Associations. From this source has arisen, among others, the Society for the Improvement of *Prison Discipline*, which, while it aims at apportioning punishment to criminality, is laudably anxious to avoid breaking down the moral structure of the mind, or the physical constitution of the body.

We need hardly observe, that of all the expedients employed for this purpose the *Tread-Wheel* has been considered the most efficacious. "It seems impossible to me," says Mr. Western, in his valuable Pamphlet on Prison Discipline, "to observe attentively the prisoners when at work upon this machine, without discerning in their manner, proof of the influence which a continuance of such labour must produce. *They retire from it in the evening in that state of fatigue of body and exhaustion of the animal spirits, which renders them far less inclined to mischief than when in the full possession of vigour and a restless spirit.*" We are by no means inclined to dispute the justice of these remarks; but it is obvious that they leave untouched a very important consideration; namely, the *health* of the offenders subjected to this punishment! Now, a *magistrate of great experience* (Sir John Cox Hippisley) has recently argued this point at great length, in his correspondence with the Home Department, just published; and the impression on the mind of this gentleman is, that *the Tread-mill is generally injurious to the health, and often hazardous to the life of the prisoner*; and in this opinion he is supported by some eminent physicians and surgeons whose names he mentions.

To say that such an opinion is entertained by enlightened

men, after deliberate investigation, is at least *enough to induce every humane mind to pause*. However desirable it is to subject daring offenders to that degree of laborious, and toilsome exertion which may tame their unruly dispositions, and fit them for reform, no one can desire to entail on the unhappy sufferer bodily ailments, or to expose his life to serious hazard. We do not venture to form any decided judgment from the hasty perusal which we have been able to give to Sir John Cox Hippisley's correspondence; but it certainly contains matter of sufficient importance to deserve the consideration of the philanthropist. It is alleged that machines, similar in mechanical principle, though somewhat different in construction, had been long ago employed for commercial purposes, but generally *laid aside in consequence of the accidents they had occasioned*. At the warehouses of the India Company were formerly three or four *cranes worked by Tread-wheels*; but they have been taken down, *one man having broken his leg, two having received severe hurts, and many others having suffered bruises*, in working the machinery. In Cold-bath-fields prison (it is stated) *four fractures* of the machinery occurred in little more than *three months*, precipitating all the prisoners on their backs, from a great height, with considerable injury to many of them. It is further asserted, that severe exhaustion of the general frame, and violent strains of particular muscles have been known to take place, and to be succeeded by effects highly injurious to health, such as ruptures, and other local affections of the most painful nature. Such are the allegations of the Worthy Baronet, who, from *motives of laudable humanity*, has been led to examine into this subject. It may be that a more extended inquiry will remove these impressions; but in the present state of the question we should have considered ourselves inattentive to our public duty, had we not taken an early opportunity to bring the subject under the consideration of our readers.

If it should, eventually, be discovered that Sir John Hippisley's objections are well founded, still it may be possible to adopt other and equally efficient modes of compulsory labour for the purposes of prison discipline. The worthy Baronet assigns to the *Hand-*

mill a decided preference over the Tread-mill, and the former it appears has long been employed in some of our gaols.

Article from the New Times of the 26th of July.

THE TREAD-MILL.

WE select the following passages from Sir John Cox Hippisley's Correspondence on this modern *engine* of punishment.

Extract of a Letter from Sir W. Blizard, President of the College of Surgeons.

“ The communications Nos. I and II. contain also, principally, my own anatomical and physiological ideas of the comparative effects of the two species of labour. I will, however, add one or two other remarks. On the TREAD-MACHINE the *abdominal muscles* are kept in constant action, and the *extensor muscles* of the back always on a stretch. Now, for free respiration, the *abdominal muscles* and *diaphragm* should act alternately. Free respiration is necessary for the due *aeration of the blood*; and a proper aeration of the blood, by the vessels of the lungs, is required for the proper *condition* of the blood, with reference to *every important* function of the body, and forms the most powerful preventive of *typhus* fever. For the foregoing reasons, the exercise should be as much as possible in the open air.

“ The preference expressed in the extracts is *founded well* on the consideration of *fitting the muscular power of the arms to future labour*, and hence the more ready performance of duties for subsistence, and a preventive of inducement to criminal means of obtaining it!

“ The HAND LABOUR *can be better graduated to all the relative circumstances of age, condition, health, disease, power, &c. than that of the feet.* The favourable bodily effects recited will produce equal benefit relating to the *brain and intellect*, and may even so far impress the mind as to be conducive to an *alteration*

of evil disposition, thus answering the great ends of such confinement. The *prison labour* on this account, *when humiliating, should not be public*; for shame is of such a nature, that when wounded to a certain degree, despair may be the consequence, and the unhappy creature be impelled even to the most shocking acts!"

From Dr. Good to Sir J. C. Hippisley, Bart. dated Dec. 3, 1822.

"There is no end to answering all the follies, and caprices to which the Tread-mill must give rise from its *intrinsic* demerit. It may be altered again and again, and varied *ad infinitum*, but whether the supposed improved form which you advert to, as taking place in a Northern county (by which the men work in the *inside* instead of the outside of *the wheel*), or any other, become the rage of the day, it must still be *essentially* objectionable, as founded upon *an essentially wrong principle*, and which, therefore, *no modification can right*—I mean that of the subverting the order of nature, and *making the feet take the place of the hands*! In the scheme you allude to, there is this additional absurdity, that while the feet perform all the labour, the hands and arms are in utter idleness. This form does very well for turnspit dogs and squirrels, which use their fore feet as well as their hind; but it is most preposterous for *mankind*, to say nothing of the moral effects of degrading them into mere *automata*.

"The question which, I understand, is very often put forth, whether any of the maladies that are predicted so freely, and confidently by medical practitioners, against the Tread-mill, have any where *yet* taken place, is at first sight plausible, but it is nothing more, for it will not bear reflecting upon a single moment. In the case of *women* the mischievous effects have been *actually proved*, and hence at this moment, the Tread-mill, as I am told, is abandoned at Cold-bath-fields, as far as relates to them. For the same reason it is equally abandoned as to all those who have ruptures, or *hydroceles*, or an obvious *tendency* to such. But by far the greater number of THE PREDICTED EVILS ARE SUCH AS COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE FROM THE SHORTNESS OF THE

TIME THE MACHINES HAVE BEEN AT WORK IN ANY PRISON ; but which, to the eye of the Pathologist, are as *certain* as if they were at this moment in full force. Such, I mean, as *lumbago, weakness of the kidneys, cramps, rheumatisms, and stiff joints of all kinds, as well of the hands, from an uniformly fixed position, as of the legs and feet.* These are all chronic affections, and may require years before they *fully* develope themselves. How long is it after the liver is first affected before the structure of the organ becomes, in many cases, seriously injured, or the general health destroyed ! The *poison of lead* is often operating for years before the *limbs and bowels are rendered paralytic*, and the worn-out husbandman that is bent double with *cramp and rheumatism*, is never attacked suddenly, but slowly and insidiously. Yet in all these cases, the discerning physician beholds the result as clearly from the first, and before a single complaint is uttered, or even felt, as when the mischief has worked itself into maturity ; and to his warning voice the intelligent Magistrate will yield as readily, and while the evil may be prevented, as to a sight of the evil itself, and when yielding can be but of little use. The grand evil indeed is, as I before stated, that *this mighty and monstrous machinery* should have been at any time assented to without due consultation with medical authorities, whose opinion ought to have been taken and acted upon, although it could in such case only have been given *prospectively* ; and what is the value and character of that argument which contends that these machines are now at work upon *experiment*, and to put the *concurrent* opinion of physicians and surgeons to the test ! Such is the nature of the labour, that no Committee of Magistrates chooses to risk its continuance for more than a *quarter of an hour* at a time, and at Edinburgh for more than *seven minutes and a half* ! What is the cause of this limitation ? The question is of great importance, and, when candidly examined, all controversy must, I apprehend, be at an end."

“ *Extract of a Letter of Mr. Farnham Flower, Surgeon of Chilcompton, Somerset, dated Nov. 29, 1822.*

“ I do not find, from any information I can collect, that there is the least reason to alter my opinion expressed in my former letter ; on the contrary, I am more convinced that the *Tread-mill* is a species of labour by which the *muscular fibre* may be *most seriously injured, if not rendered totally unfit* for any of those employments to which individuals (the unhappy inmates of gaols) are obliged to have recourse for their daily support. You ask me what I consider the average of *ruptured men* ? Some say one in seven ; but, to be beyond the possibility of contradiction, I will say one in ten, as applying to the labouring classes, though in the middle and higher orders the proportion of course is considerably less. I mention this difference, to show that it arises from the greater bodily labour in one than the other ; and may exemplify it by observing, that ruptures are more prevalent among thatchers and masons’ labourers than any other description of men : their mode of labour *upon ladders* corresponding so much with that of the *Tread-mill*, we shall find the same muscles employed, and consequently have a right to infer that the same effects will be produced. Surely this of itself is a *reason for pausing* before prisoners be consigned to a labour, the effects of which may totally incapacitate them for future exertion. Of course the object in the erection of either Mill is the infliction of punishment by hard labour. In such a view, I must contend that the hand-mill possesses a most decided advantage—in the *quality* of that labour, and the means of regulating it without distress to the constitution—beyond what the *Tread-mill* possesses. All men having a *tendency to rupture* (as I before observed to you), must assuredly suffer by labour upon the *Tread-mill* ; and particularly *tailors* and *shoemakers*, by the sudden change from a sedentary to so active and laborious an employment. And, with respect to *females*, the *Tread-mill* must, to the minds of professional men, present dangers of a most formidable aspect, especially in cases of *such as have borne children !*”

Article, from the Old Monthly Magazine for the 1st of August.

SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRISON DISCIPLINE.

By favour of the Committee of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline, we are enabled to introduce to our readers a view of the famous Tread-mill in use at the House of Correction at Brixton, in Surrey, and lately introduced into other similar establishments. As man is the creature of habit, it is palpable that nothing can be more desirable than that persons *fairly tried and condemned* to punishments, *justly proportioned* to their obduracy and turpitude, should be employed while in prison, or habits of idleness will be engendered, instead of being corrected. It has been a problem of great difficulty to find such employment as adapted itself to uninstructed muscular exertion, without entangling itself with the details of produce and sale; but, at length, Mr. Cubitt, of Ipswich, has contrived a Mill to grind corn, and raise water for the prison use, to be worked by treadles, in performing which no previous instruction is requisite. Benevolence can object nothing to the use of such a machine, provided it is not employed as *an instrument of torture, or as a means of rendering labour DISGUSTING*; for, although idleness is the root of all evil, yet idleness is not the sole cause of crime, and the inability to obtain employment as often leads to vicious courses as the desire to evade it. When punishments are legally apportioned to repetitions of offences, and first transgressions in many descriptions of crime are visited with only cautionary punishments, then less sympathy will attend convicted persons than at present; but, when the law so little discriminates as to inflict capital punishments on children, and on youths who have not arrived at years of discretion, the common sense and universal sentiment of mankind revolt, and punishments lose their effect by their misapplication!!

The engraving exhibits a party of prisoners in the act of working one of the Tread-wheels of the Discipline Mill, recently erected at the House of Correction for the county of Surrey,

situated at Brixton. The view is taken from a corner of one of the ten airing yards of the prison, all of which radiate from the governor's house in the centre (which is seen in the drawing at the opposite end of the yard), so that from his windows he commands a complete view into all the yards. The building which appears in the engraving behind the Tread-wheel shed is the mill-house, containing the necessary machinery for grinding corn, for which purpose there are four pairs of stones, &c. On the right side of this building, a pipe is seen, passing up to the roof, on which is placed a large cast-iron reservoir, capable of holding about 6500 gallons of water, for the service of the prison. This reservoir is filled from a well behind the mill-house, nearly 200 feet deep, by means of a forcing-pump, connected with the principal axis which works the machinery of the mill. This axis, or shaft, passes *under the pavement of the several yards*, and by means of universal joints* at every turn, communicates with the Tread-wheel of each class.

The Tread-wheel, which is represented in the centre of the engraving, is exactly similar to a common water-wheel; the stepping boards upon its circumference are of sufficient length to allow standing-room for a row of fifteen persons†. The weight of these persons—the first moving power of the machine—pro-

* It is by means of these universal joints upon the main shaft connecting the Tread-wheels with the machinery of the mill or pumps, that the relative position of each may be varied so as to suit the plan of almost any prison. On this subject, it may be proper to observe, that the mill-house should be so placed as to exclude as much as possible any thoroughfare in a prison, by the passing and re-passing of carts with corn and flour. When the mill-house is situated outside the boundary-wall of the prison, every inconvenience of that kind is avoided, and the security and quiet of the prison are promoted. Care should, however, be taken, that such building be detached from the outer wall, lest the security of that boundary be impaired.

† Twenty inches is the common allowance of standing-room to each man. There are at present ten Tread-wheels erected in this House of Correction, one in each yard; two of these wheels are capable of holding six persons each; two, nine persons each; four, fifteen persons each; and two wheels, eighteen persons each;—making up altogether one hundred and twenty-six persons.

duces the greatest effect when applied upon the circumference of the wheel at or near the level of its axle ; to secure, therefore, this mechanical advantage, a screen of boards is fixed up in an inclined position above the wheel, in order to prevent the prisoners from climbing or stepping up higher than the level required. A hand rail is fixed upon this screen, by holding which they retain their upright position upon the revolving wheel *. The nearest end is exposed to view in the plate, in order to represent its cylindrical form much more distinctly than could otherwise have been done. In the original, however, both ends are closely boarded up, so that the prisoners have no access to the interior of the wheel, and all risk of injury is prevented. A light shed protects the prisoners, as well in wet weather as from the heat of the sun in summer ; and it is *so constructed as not to interfere with the governor's view of the prisoners*, nor to lessen the security of the yards.

The tread-wheel is set to work in the following manner. The party of prisoners ascend at one end by means of steps ; and, when the requisite number are ranged upon the wheel, it commences its revolution. The effort, then, to each individual of the party, is simply that of ASCENDING AN ENDLESS FLIGHT OF STEPS, the combined weight of the prisoners acting upon every successive stepping-board, precisely as a stream of water upon the float-boards of a water-wheel. This operation is maintained without intermission during the hours of labour, by the appointment of a certain portion of the class to relieve the party on the wheel. These changes are performed at regular intervals determined by signal : when the prisoner at one end

* It was discovered, in one recent instance, that, in consequence of the hand-rail projecting too forward, the prisoners had the means of leaning or resting upon it ; by which loss of weight, the working of the wheel was checked, and the labour to the prisoners became much lightened. To obviate this, it was found necessary to have the hand-rail made sufficiently narrow, and so fixed upon the screen of boards in front of the prisoners, as fully to afford them the means of supporting themselves upon the wheel, but without allowing them the means of evading the labour.

of the wheel descends for rest, another at the same moment ascends at the opposite extremity of the wheel*. By this method, the proper number of men on the wheel is continually kept up, and the work is equally apportioned to every man. The degree of labour to each prisoner in a given time is also determined with great precision, by regulating the proportion of working and resting men one to the other; or, which amounts to the same thing, the relative proportion of those required to work the wheel with the whole number of the class; thus, if ten out of fifteen men are appointed to be on the wheel, each man will have forty minutes' labour, and twenty minutes' rest, in every hour.

In order to guard against interruption to the regular employment of the prisoners on the Tread-wheels, which might happen from the supply of work in the Mill at any time falling short, a fly-wheel is attached to the principal shaft in the mill-house, which is represented in the frontispiece on the roof the building. The fly-boards of this wheel are connected with a pair of regulating balls, which, as the velocity of the wheel increases, tend, by their centrifugal action, to expand the fly-boards; by these the requisite degree of resistance is presented to the motion of the Tread-wheel machinery, and the labour of the prisoners suffers no interruption†.

In the application of human exertion to this species of mechanical labour, there are two objects to be considered as affecting the measurement of such exertion: first, the rate or velocity with which the exertion is maintained; secondly, its duration. The

* At the Bridewell in Edinburgh, these changes are announced by means of a bell attached to the machinery; the bell is capable of being set so as to give the signal at intervals of any length that may be desired.

† At Cold-bath Fields prison, a regulating fly is attached to the Tread-wheel machinery, by which the power derived from the action of about 240 prisoners is expended in the air. The resistance presented by the action of a fly increases with its velocity; and, after a certain time, that resistance becomes so powerful as to prevent all farther acceleration, when the motion of the machinery remains uniform.

rate of exertion maintained by a prisoner on the Tread-wheel will be determined by *the velocity of its revolutions, and by the height of the steps*; thus, if a prisoner treads upon the steps of a wheel which are eight inches asunder, and if the velocity of its revolution be fifty steps per minute, he will have to move or lift his own weight over $33\frac{1}{3}$ feet per minute, or maintain a rate of exertion equal to 2000 feet of ascent per hour. To complete the measure of individual labour, the duration of this rate of exertion is next to be considered. This will be affected by the proportion of resting and labouring prisoners, in which a class or gang may be appointed to work on a Tread-wheel, and by the number of hours which the regulations of the prison require for daily labour at different seasons of the year. Thus, if two-thirds of a class are appointed to be on the wheel, and one-third to be off as relays, and if the number of hours of general labour for the day be ten, as in the summer season, the duration of actual labour to each man for that day will be $6\frac{2}{3}$ hours, with $3\frac{1}{3}$ hours of rest. Then, if the rate of exertion, 2000 feet per hour, be multiplied by the actual duration of it, viz. $6\frac{2}{3}$ hours, we shall have a result of 13,333 *feet ascent* as the measure of each man's labour at the wheel for the whole day. This measure in feet ascent may, therefore, be taken as the most simple and correct standard for determining any quantity of actual exertion performed by a person working at the Tread-mill.

The quantity of mechanical power exerted in this instance would, without doubt, be measured more scientifically, by taking the product of the weight multiplied by the space over which that weight has been moved or lifted in a given time: but by leaving out of the calculation the weight of a man, the measure becomes far more simple, and equally accurate for the purpose in view. To complete, however, the above calculation, so as to indicate the mechanical power exerted by each man on the tread-wheel, we have to multiply his weight, which may be taken at the usual average of 150lbs. by 2000, the number of feet that weight has passed over in the hour, which gives 300,000; this number being multiplied by $6\frac{2}{3}$ the length of time that rate of

action has been maintained for the day, the result is found to be 2,000,000lbs. raised one foot, as the mechanical measure of daily exertion. The diameter of the Tread-wheel does not form any part of the above calculation. The mechanical power of course depends upon the diameter of a wheel; but, as great power is not the leading object in the erection of these machines, it is found that the most convenient sizes for Tread-wheels are from four to six feet diameter; and the height of the steps from seven to eight inches. Wheels of larger diameter occasion increased expense, and occupy greater space in the prison. There might, however, be some advantage in having one or more of the wheels in the prison of different diameters, as they would afford the means of varying the rate of exertion to a class, when occasion might require it.

To the principle of hard labour (says Sir John Cox Hippisley in his recent publication on this subject), as fairly intended by the Statute, so far from being an enemy, he is a most zealous friend; but, during a considerable portion of a long protracted life, having been much occupied in the duties of the provincial magistracy in the counties of his usual residence; and having for many years, as a visiting justice, given an especial attention to the most considerable House of Correction in the county of Somerset, he has viewed, with more than an ordinary interest, the extreme to which this reaction in the public feeling has led; and, particularly, the popularity it has given to the *very expensive* *

* The expense incurred at Cold Bath Fields, including such alterations of the prison for the reception of the machinery as were by Mr. Cubitt deemed advisable, has exceeded 12,000l. There is, as yet, no mill-work of any sort attached to it; and, if mills and the necessary buildings be added, it is estimated that the additional expenditure will scarcely fall short of a moiety of the sum already expended! In a Treatise on Mechanics by Dr. Olinthus Gregory (Professor of Mechanics in the Royal Military Academy of Woolwich) will be found a description, accompanied with plates, of a Tread-wheel in every respect analogous to that introduced by Mr. Cubitt, for which Dr. Gregory states that Mr. David Hardie, of the East India Company's Bengal warehouse, obtained a patent. But Mr. Hardie himself, in point of fact, had no pretension to the discovery of the principle, it being no other than that of a wheel long used by the Chinese in

and enormous machinery of the tread-wheel ; which he has found from his own repeated investigations, and those of many enlightened and intelligent friends who have engaged in the same inquiry, to be highly mischievous in its principle, and baneful in its effects, to those who are so indiscriminately sentenced to it ; and, consequently, AN INSTRUMENT WHICH NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY CAN COUNTENANCE, WHEN ITS EVILS ARE FULLY LAID BEFORE THEM.

But, desirous of ascertaining the present state of the tread-wheel machinery in the East-India warehouses, Sir J. C. Hippisley availed himself of the obliging intervention of a friend who had recently presided in the chair of the East India Company, and who procured a minute report, drawn up by the principal officers of the warehouse department, upon all the points of inquiry. The chief officer of the Bengal warehouse states, that—" of the five cranes, one was erected in that warehouse, and is still in use—the part of the warehouse which it serves not being provided with any other crane ;"—but a note is subjoined, announcing, " that *Edward Doe had his leg broken by working at this crane, and that Joseph Eames also received a severe injury in the leg from working at the same crane, which incapacitated him from labour for some weeks ; and were relieved by the East India Company.*" He farther states " that another of the cranes was erected in the warehouse of the assistant private-trade warehouse-keeper ; but a note is here also annexed by the officer of that department which tells us " that *the men have often received bruises when working the wheel, and that it was considered more dangerous to work than at the capstan : that Dennis Leary received a severe hurt while working at one of them, and was*

the irrigation of their plantations. Mr. Hardie's Machinery was applied to a crane instead of a mill, and is described by Dr. Gregory,—“ as a wheel, on the outside of which are placed twenty-four steps for the men to tread upon, at a situation where the steps are found at a height equal to that of the axis, or where the plane of the steps became horizontal.” Five cranes of this description have, according to Dr. Gregory, been at work at the East India warehouses, and Mr. Hardie's patent was obtained in 1803.

pensioned by the East India Company; and finally, that *the cranes were taken down last summer.*"

From the investigation the following facts appear to be *incontrovertibly* established:—

1. That, from the enormous height, extent, and complication of the machinery of the Tread-wheel, there appears to be an insuperable difficulty in constructing it of *iron*, whether cast or malleable, *sufficiently pure and powerful* to support the incumbent load or strain that is often imposed upon its shafts, with their *subterraneous ramifications*, to a perilous extent, without breaking: that such accidents have already taken place in different prisons, and *not less than four times, in little more than three months*, in the House of Correction in Cold Bath Fields, with precipitation, from a considerable height, of all the prisoners employed at the time, who were thrown on their backs, with considerable injury to many of them *.

2. That, from the peculiar motion of the limbs for which alone this machine was intended, which is that of treading on tiptoe up an endless hill, with the body bent forward †, and the hands rigidly and unremittingly grasping a rail for support, an exertion is produced, *so exhausting* to the animal frame, that scarcely any committee of visiting magistrates have ventured to enforce its use for more than a quarter of an hour at a time; while at the House of Correction at Edinburgh, seven minutes and a half, or just half this period, is the utmost that is risked.

3. That in consequence hereof *a most distressing thirst, debilitating perspiration, and actual loss of flesh*, are often produced, and especially in warm weather, during every successive round of working, short as the period is; as has been frequently experienced in the prison in Cold Bath Fields, and is admitted to have occurred at Edinburgh and various other places; and that, in order to support such exhaustion, a fuller and richer diet has

* Other similar fractures have since taken place in the same prison, one of them since part of these sheets have been in the press.

† Such was their position at the Cold Bath Fields Prison, when visited by the writer in May, 1822.

been humanely allowed in several prisons, particularly at Edinburgh and North Allerton.

4. That not only severe exhaustion, but *strains upon the organs and muscles immediately called into exercise*, in many cases highly injurious to health, *have actually taken place* on various occasions, and, in the opinion of a large body of physicians and surgeons of the highest rank and respectability who have minutely examined into the subject, are necessarily *threatened at all times*.

5. That, in consequence of such straining and over exertion, many of the female prisoners have been *suddenly obliged to descend from the Tread-mill*, in the prison in Cold Bath Fields, in the midst of their task-work, accompanied with circumstances of the *most repulsive indelicacy*, insomuch that the female prisoners confined within these walls, as well as in most other prisons, have been of late, altogether, or in a great degree, exempted from this kind of labour!!

6. That the concurrent testimony of numerous medical practitioners of high character and extensive experience has proved that habitual labour of a like description, as that of mariners, and even of a lighter kind, as the ladder-treading in thatching, and among masons' labourers, miners, &c. has a gradual tendency to produce ruptures, and varicose veins, or nodulous tumours on the legs; and, in numerous instances, has actually produced them. Whence it has been reasonably apprehended by other practitioners of great talents and attainments, who have particularly attended to this machine and its effects, that a stated and longer employment upon it than has hitherto been experimented in any prison, in consequence of its being of novel introduction, will necessarily give a still greater tendency to the same injuries, and, in the end, more certainly and more extensively induce them among those who are sentenced to *its morbid discipline*.

7. That on this account, prisoners, labouring under the above affections, and especially under ruptures, or consumptions, or a tendency to such complaints, are, in the Cold Bath Fields prison, or were till of late, as also in other prisons, altogether exempted from the punishment of the Tread-wheel.

8. That for these and similar reasons, the unhappy culprits whose fate it is to be committed to prisons where this *trying* discipline is in use, to adopt the impressive language of the Prison Discipline Committee, “ have a horror of the Mill, and would sooner undergo, as they all declare, any fatigue, or suffer any deprivation, than return to the House of Correction when once released.”

9. That, in consequence of the above mischiefs found practically and essentially to appertain to the Tread-wheel, its employment, *notwithstanding its enormous expense in erecting*, is of very limited extent, and cannot or ought not to be exercised over more than one half of the delinquents to whom it was originally appropriated: female prisoners, as observed above, being already considered as unfit objects of its discipline, as are also those who are labouring under consumptions, ruptures, and various other weaknesses, or a tendency to such weaknesses.

10. That, while it is regarded as a leading principle of justice in all countries, to proportion the kind and degree of punishment to the kind and degree of criminality, the discipline of the Tread-wheel offers, not merely one kind alone, but *one degree alone*, of infliction upon prisoners of every class: so that the beggar, the poacher, the shoplifter, and the house-breaker, are, under its dominion, all and *equally sentenced*, so long as they continue in confinement, *to the same kind and the same undistinguished degree of severe and perilous suffering*; though nothing can be more manifest than their respective gradations of delinquency.

11. That it is hence absolutely expedient for the purposes of the first principles of justice, as well as for those of carrying into practical effect the salutary application of hard prison labour, in the full spirit as well as letter of the Statute, that means of discipline of a very different description from that of the Tread-wheel should be resorted to!

12. That the discipline of the hand-crank-mill, or machinery, already employed in the National Penitentiary on the banks of the Thames, as well as in numerous other prisons, when it has received those improvements of which it is so obviously susceptible,

and which are now in actual preparation, with all the facilities for enforcing and graduating the infliction of hard manual labour, appears to offer a considerable approach to this desirable object ; affords to the workers *the natural position* of standing firm upon the feet, and on firm ground ; calls into full exertion the muscles of the hands, arms, and chest ; divides the exercise equally among those organs that are *intended by nature* for muscular motion, instead of limiting it to those that are either *never designed, or not ordinarily designed*, for such purpose ; increases the general health and strength, instead of counteracting them ; and hereby prepares every prisoner, so worked, for applying himself, with greater facility, to a variety of handicraft and other trades after his discharge from confinement than he possessed before his commitment to prison ; and renders, in fact, the habitual use of hard manual labour a great and permanent good, instead of what may possibly be a serious and lasting evil !

Letter, inserted in the Medical Journal for the 1st of August.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE TREAD-MILL.

By BENJ. HUTCHINSON, Esq. Addressed to the Rev. JOHN THOMAS BECHIN, Prebendary of the Collegiate Church of Southwell, and WILLIAM WYLDE, Esq. Visiting Justices of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, at Southwell.

GENTLEMEN,—Having had the honour of holding the important and responsible situation of surgeon to the Nottinghamshire House of Correction at Southwell, during the last twenty-eight years, I cannot but feel peculiarly interested in every the most minute circumstance connected with the improvement and preservation of the health of the unfortunate inhabitants of that excellently-managed prison.

Influenced by these impressions, I have the honour of addressing to you such observations as have been elicited by a

recent perusal of Sir John Cox Hippisley's "Supplementary Note on the Use of the Tread-Mill in Prisons;" and I trust you will allow me to add, that these few remarks are submitted to your perusal with every delicacy of feeling, resulting from *the well-known and highly respectable character* of the author of this "Supplementary Note."

I believe the axiom is universally admitted, that bodily exercise is essentially requisite to the preservation and improvement of health, so long as the bounds of moderation are not encroached upon. It is also *equally manifest*, that exercise taken too violently is attended with the *same* disadvantages as a total want of it! On this subject I am convinced that I need not fear any opposition of opinion, and it will therefore be unavailing to dwell longer on its discussion.

The first objection, of a medical character, to the use of the Tread-wheel, in the "Supplementary Note" above alluded to, states that, in the Coldbath-fields prison, there was scarcely an individual of the group who did not complain of pain in the back of their legs, in their shoulders, thighs, and in the parts in conjunction with the groins. *I freely admit that the operation of the wheel is productive of certain muscular pains, the natural effect of considerable muscular exertion*; not, however, to an extent exceeding that, which I imagine is not only *highly salutary*, but in every respect *truly desirable!!* As to the accident on the machinery, by which the boys at work on another wheel in the same prison had their feet miserably crushed, I can only assert that accidents of this description have not happened in the Nottinghamshire House of Correction; neither do I see any probability of their occurrence, excepting by the extreme carelessness of those on the wheel.

I confess myself happy in this opportunity of adding my feeble testimony to *the justly-merited eulogiums* contained in Sir John Cox Hippisley's "Supplementary Note," *on the talents and erudition of Dr. Mason Good*, with whose professional writings I have been long and well acquainted, and from which I have derived very important information: they fully entitle him to the

grateful feeling of his brethren, and to the literary credit so fairly and honourably awarded him. It cannot, therefore, be otherwise than a matter of regret to be compelled to differ essentially from his opinion on a subject, neither admitting nor embracing any speculative or theoretical argument, but depending solely on accuracy of statement and attentive observation. I shall therefore, I trust, gentlemen, stand excused for thus noticing what I conceive to be the erroneous opinions of Dr. Good on the much-agitated topic of the use of the Tread-wheel, as an instrument of punishment in our prisons.

Dr. Good agrees in opinion with the gentlemen composing the Committee for Prison Discipline, that the Tread-mill is an object of peculiar terror. I also am of opinion with Dr. Good, that the objects incurring this punishment have a dread of its *fatiguing* labour, probably in the exact proportion that was wished and expected by those who suggested this highly beneficial *mode of obviating the repetition of crime*. One among the multitude of Dr. Good's objections to the use of this Mill is, "the tortuous and irksome attitude of treading upon the TOES up an endless and nearly perpendicular hill; the heels, which should chiefly bear the weight of the body, rendered useless; the natural line of gravity dislocated; the hands forced into a rigid and benumbing grasp; and the extensor muscles of the legs for ever on a painful, and, necessarily therefore, on a mischievous and morbid stretch." My answer to these strong observations of Dr. Good is the result of an accurate and most attentive inspection of the effects produced by the exercise of the Tread-mill: I must therefore be excused in offering an opinion of a diametrically opposite nature. I am compelled to declare, that the attitude is neither "tortuous" nor "irksome," and that, by an examination of the prisoners on the Tread-mill, it will uniformly be observed that the weight of the body by no means rests on the toes, excepting by the will of the prisoner; but that, on the contrary, nearly two-thirds of the length of the foot are engaged in performing this exercise of ascent,—very essentially relieving, therefore, the muscular and tendinous exertion, and extension, which would be

requisite, were the toes only made the points of the superincumbent weight: and, indeed, I am fully prepared to state that *exercise, conducted in the manner pointed out by Dr. Good, could be continued but a very short time, and would be productive of never-ending lameness and misery to the prisoner who had suffered this torture!* A very great relief is also offered to the experienced Mill-treader (an experience fully obtained by the practice of a very few hours), in his ability to change at pleasure his position on the wheel, to a *lateral, dorsal, and semi-dorsal* position. In the lateral position of his body, he is enabled to place the whole length of his feet on the stepping-boards, thereby affording very great relief from fatigue to the various large muscles and tendons of the thighs, legs, and feet, and securing him from any *severe spasmodic contraction of those parts, the probable consequence of long-continued exertion.* The natural line of gravity, during the operation of the Tread-mill, is by no means dislocated: in many instances, indeed, I have observed that it has not been in the slightest degree interrupted, the body preserving the same line as in any other act of locomotion. It has never occurred to *me* to hear any complaint of the hands being forced into a rigid and benumbing grasp: neither, from the degree of force requisite to support the body, can I imagine that any such effects can ever be produced. My experience has also taught me that the extensor muscles of the legs have *never* sustained any “mischievous and morbid stretch;” and I must beg permission to declare, that, from a long and attentive consideration of the effects of muscular motion, it is impossible to conceive that any such inconveniences are at all likely to be the result. That the Tread-wheel is an instrument of peculiar terror, cannot but be considered an argument of the most forcible kind in its favour. So long as punishments excite no dread, their efficiency in the prevention of crime cannot be otherwise than comparatively trifling and nugatory. The concluding observations of Dr. Good, in Sir John Cox Hippisley’s “Supplementary Note,” are followed by a letter from one of his distinguished medical friends, senior physician to the King, and formerly a physician in the navy. This gentleman, Sir

Gilbert Blane, is *in no respect* adverse to the use of the Tread-wheel; he merely thinks that there can be no necessity for making this the exclusive mode of punishing the inmates of our prisons: he appears to imagine that the Tread-wheel might operate as a severe punishment for offences of a more aggravated nature, and the hand-crank, or winch machinery, for those of minor atrocity.

The surgeon of the prison at Shepton Mallet entertains some fears that the operation of the Tread-mill may render the prisoner unable to work at any other labour for some time after his discharge from prison, from the effects produced not only upon his arms, but upon the principal muscles of the body! After the most attentive examination of the prisoners who have laboured at the Tread-Mill, I shall deem myself *fully* authorised to assert that no such pernicious effect need to be apprehended. The extension of the muscles of the arms is neither so great nor so long continued, as to produce any morbid or deranged action in these important parts of the human frame. These remarks are the result of accurate observation, and not elicited by any preconceived theory, or predilection for the instrument of punishment under consideration.

With your permission, I will now, gentlemen, beg leave to make a remark on the extract of a letter from the chairman of the Quarter Sessions of the county of Surrey, dated the 30th of December, 1822, intimating that he had made inquiry of the governor of the House of Correction at Brixton, whether he ever knew, or heard from any of the prisoners under his care, that the labour of the Tread-mill had affected their limbs or muscles in any way so as to be injurious to them? That his reply was prompt and distinct: he said he never heard of such a complaint, nor indeed of any complaint of the kind, from any of them; and that *a woman who went to work with a rheumatic complaint* had declared that her rheumatism was completely cured. On *this particular case* I have to remark, that a man of the name of Pearson, a prisoner in the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, made a complaint to me, about ten days past, of suffering most severely from chronic rheumatism in one of his lower limbs, ac-

compained with some tumefaction of the joints, and indeed of the whole structure of this limb. Among other means of relief proposed, I told him that he should be excused from the labour of the Tread-mill a few days; and I was giving the necessary directions to the turnkey, when the man particularly requested that he might be allowed to continue his exercise on the Wheel, as his pains were very considerably alleviated during this movement of the limb; and he has regularly continued it with manifest advantage.

I perfectly concur in opinion with the surgeon of the Brixton House of Correction, that varicose veins of the lower extremities are much more likely to be *prevented* than produced by exercise of this description! That hernia, or other injury to the bodies of the prisoners, cannot be the consequence of the Tread-mill exercise, more frequently than labour of any other description, is *equally clear*; the muscles and other parts of the human frame, the seats of these accidents, sustaining no violence, and no unnatural action of any description.

Dr. Good again, in an extract of a letter dated January 17th, 1823, says, that Mr. —, the surgeon of the Brixton House of Correction, will never advise the discipline he has recommended, that of walking on *tiptoe* up high and *almost perpendicular* hills, to any patient of his in his private practice. I shall again take the liberty of repeating that, had Dr. Good attentively examined the real state of the mode of stepping on the Tread-mill, he would immediately have discerned that what I have before advanced is the plain and positive fact, that *two-thirds of the foot is engaged* in performing this labour of ascent; that walking on *tiptoe* up high and almost perpendicular hills, is not the exercise produced by this instrument; and that *accidents, of any description, can be the effect only of the extreme of carelessness and inattention on the part of the prisoners.* On this subject, the opinions of Sir Gilbert Blane, Sir William Blizard, and of Dr. Good, are entitled to, and will doubtless obtain, that share of attention and respect to which their talents and characters confer so just and well-merited a claim. My own sentiments and assertions

are the result of actual observation, and of close and diligent inquiry during my professional attendance and duties on the sick prisoners of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction. They are respectfully offered, gentlemen, to your consideration, under the assurance of your interest in every matter connected with the discipline, and the health of those unfortunate offenders against the laws of their country.

I believe it to be the almost unanimous opinion of the medical officers of the navy, with many of the most respectable of whom I have had frequent opportunities of conversing, that seamen are not more subject to varicose affections of the legs, or to herniæ, than any other class of people accustomed to the laborious exercise of their muscles; and *the fair and very impartial statement of Sir John Cox Hippisley* on this particular point, appears in perfect unison with my own observations.

The copies of the communications made to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, respecting the use of Tread-wheels in Gaols or Houses of Correction, which were ordered by the House of Commons to be printed in March, 1823, consist of communications from twenty different counties, in which the use of the Tread-wheel had been then adopted. The result of this mass of most respectable evidence speaks loudly in favour of the highly salutary and safe operation of this *mode of preventing a REPETITION of crime*. It *very clearly* points out the absence of any the most insignificant accidents, but what were the effects of carelessness on the part of the prisoners; and that this species of labour tends to the preservation and improvement of the health of the prisoners, rather than in any respect to injure it, either by inducing herniæ, varicose swellings of the legs, pectoral diseases, or internal affections of any denomination.

In a statement ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, the 2d of May, 1823, entitled "Further Papers relating to the Penitentiary at Milbank," Mr. Copland Hutchison gives the following testimony in favour of the operation of the Treadmill:—"I consider it my duty, therefore, to make this statement to the committee, and to refer them to my Quarterly Report,

dated October 4th last, where it will be found that I have adverted to this subject, and also in communications to the committee of an earlier date. The Pump and Mill now in operation in the Penitentiary give exercise only to the muscles of the arms and trunk; whereas, such a machine as the Tread-mill would give exercise to every voluntary muscle of the body, and, in my opinion, would greatly contribute to the preservation of the health of the prisoners in this establishment."

Allow me, gentlemen, to conclude with the assurance, that, in giving you the trouble of perusing this letter, I am actuated solely, I trust, by a proper sense of my duty as medical attendant of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction; a part of which duty I believe myself to be discharging by submitting to you my opinion of the salutary operation of the instrument in question. I am fully aware that I am opposing the sentiments and assertions of gentlemen whose talents I must admire, and by whose labours and learning I have been essentially instructed. Yet permit me to repeat, that I trouble you with a detail of facts only; the subject admitting neither of discussion nor argument.

I have the honour of subscribing myself, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

BENJ. HUTCHINSON,

Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Southwell, June 1, 1823.

REVIEW of Correspondence and Communications addressed to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, concerning the Introduction of Tread-mills into Prisons, with other matters connected with the subject of Prison Discipline. By SIR JOHN COX HIPPISEY, Bart. 8vo. pp. 228. London, 1823.—From the Literary Chronicle of the 2d of August.

IF, like some of our contemporaries, we did not pander to the taste of the day by giving a view of *that classical machine, the Tread-Mill*, in the Tom and Jerry style of slang, it was because

we are not of the school of Pierce Egan, and we did not think the Tread-mill a literary subject; nor shall we, in the review of the work before us, deviate from that sober criticism which we trust will ever distinguish the pages of *The Literary Chronicle*.

The employment of the Tread-mill in our prisons involves two important questions,—the one of Medical Police; the other of Constitutional Liberty. The law which condemns a prisoner to hard labour may authorize the fixing of that labour; but humanity, which ought to be the spirit of all laws, demands that it should not be injurious to the health of the offenders; and if the Tread-mill may be a proper punishment for culprits who have been tried and convicted, *it is against the spirit of our constitution and the whole tenor of the English laws, to inflict its punishments on those who have not been tried*, and who are, until convicted, presumed innocent in law!! Safe custody, in such cases, is all that the outraged laws demand.

Both these questions have been discussed in Parliament, and by the press; and, although neither of them has been satisfactorily settled, *we find judges on circuits praising Tread-mills wherever they meet with them*, and recommending them to such towns as have not adopted them. Magistrates on the bench, in the exercise of their summary and discretionary power, make the Tread-wheel the subject of their jokes. One man is sent to “revolve” his follies or his crimes at Brixton; a second, who may have made a false step, is sent to take a “new step” at * * * * *; and a third is told he shall have justice administered to him by the “*cubit*,” (alluding to the name of its inventor, *or rather adapter* to prison discipline). If a few Irishmen have been using their fists on one another, the great chance is that they are sent to get a “milling” in Cold Bath Fields, in the Tread-wheel; and, in order to prevent crime from ascending, whole dozens of minor offenders are compelled to ascend the Tread-mill. The newspapers have exhausted their jokes on this new species of punishment,—the stage has pantomimed it,—ballads are sung in every street upon it,—and there is scarcely a person to be met with, among the high or low

vulgar, that is not either theoretically or practically acquainted with the Tread-mill !

It would, perhaps, have been well, if, before it had been so strongly recommended, or so extensively applied, *that an inquiry had really taken place into its advantages or disadvantages*. As to its moral effect, we confess, we entertain no very favourable opinion. To the hardened offender it is but a mere amusement ; while the more respectable unfortunate, finding himself degraded by the association with wretches of all classes, loses all respect for himself, and too often sinks into the depravity which he first deprecated, but which has at length become so familiar as no longer to excite horror or disgust.

The condemning untried prisoners to the Tread-mill is so revolting, so repugnant to the principles of justice, did we not know that men “ armed with a little brief authority, play such antics before high heaven as make even angels weep,” we should be surprised that it should ever be thought of. To the honour of humanity, however, but one minister and one bench of magistrates,—those of the north riding of Yorkshire,—can be found to vindicate so odious a practice.

The question as to the effect the Tread-mill has on the health of the prisoners employed in it is not so easily settled ; for doctors are not unanimous upon it, and “ who shall decide when doctors disagree ?” Senators, magistrates, and gaolers, have all praised the Tread-mill, and are *generally* very indifferent as to its effects, further than the repression of crime ; there are, however, always some individuals to be met with, who, without joining with the million, think for themselves ; of this class is Sir John Hippisley, and, in the work before us, he has *very clearly* stated the case, and supported his opinion by *very satisfactory evidence*. As a visiting justice, during a long life, he has had many opportunities of observing the nature and effects of prison discipline, and—

“ He has viewed, with more than an ordinary interest, the extreme to which the re-action in the public feeling has led, and particularly the popularity it has given to *the very expensive and*

enormous machinery of the Tread-wheel; which he has found, from his own repeated investigations, and those of many enlightened and intelligent friends who have engaged in the same inquiry, to be highly mischievous in its principle, and baneful in its effects to those who are so indiscriminately sentenced to it; and consequently *an instrument which neither the Government nor the people of this country can countenance when its evils are fully laid before them.*"

Sir John, after stripping Mr. Cubitt of the merit of invention, and showing that it is little more than a copy of the walking-wheel of Dr. Gregory, quotes that gentleman's opinion, that "the walking-wheel is attended with imminent danger, and being a very defective engine, employed either without necessity or expediency, those persons who use them are responsible to humanity for *the shocking disasters* they frequently occasion."

In the East India Company's warehouses, where tread-wheel machinery is used, several accidents have occurred. From remarking on the general principle and tendency of this species of mechanism, he proceeds to the Tread-mill, and cites many instances of its injurious effects. He shows the indecency of employing females in it, and the particular and serious injury it does the sex;—in this he has the authority of Dr. Mason Good. Mr. Copeland, the surgeon, considers the Tread-mill as likely to induce hernia; and the opinions of these two gentlemen are supported by other medical men of great celebrity. It is true, that other physicians and surgeons are of a different opinion, though we confess we think *the evidence preponderates, not only against the physical, but the moral effects of the Tread-mill*, WHICH, WHEN THE TEMPORARY POPULARITY GIVEN TO IT BY SOME CASUAL CIRCUMSTANCES HAS PASSED AWAY, WILL, WE DOUBT NOT, BE COMPLETELY EXPLODED!! The worthy baronet recommends a hand-crank-mill as more applicable (and certainly less objectionable) to prison discipline.

Letter, extracted from the Bath Herald of the 2d of August.

[*The following has already appeared in a contemporary print ; and we, at the request of the County Magistrate, who is well known to us, have great pleasure in giving it insertion.*]

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

To the Editor of the Bath Chronicle.

July 28, 1823.

SIR,—I observe that in your last *Chronicle* you have adverted to the charge of Mr. Phelips to the Grand Jury at the Sessions at Bridgewater, which anticipated “the beneficial influence of the *Discipline Mills* nearly completed, in two of our county prisons.” The worthy chairman must feel himself gratified by the concurring sentiments of Mr. Justice Park, expressed in his recent charges to the Grand Juries, at the assizes at Oxford, and Worcester.

In the *New Times* of the 24th inst. the opinion of Mr. Western, an experienced magistrate, and M. P. for Essex, is quoted. “It seems impossible to me (says Mr. Western) to observe attentively the prisoners, when at work upon this machine, without discerning in their manner, proof of the influence which a *continuance of such labour* must produce. They retire from it in the evening, in that state of *fatigue of body, and exhaustion of animal spirits*, which renders them far less inclined to mischief, than when in the full possession of vigour and a restless spirit.”—“We are by no means (observes the Editor) inclined to dispute the justice of these remarks. But it is obvious that they leave *untouched* a very important consideration, namely, the HEALTH of the offenders subjected to the punishment.” The Editor then proceeds to state the opinions of a magistrate of this county (Sir J. Hippisley), “who has recently argued this point, at great length, in his correspondence with the HOME DEPARTMENT, just published. The impression on the mind of this magistrate is, that the *Tread-*

wheel is generally injurious to health, and often hazardous to the life of the prisoner *; and in this opinion, he is supported by some eminent physicians and surgeons whose names he mentions†. However desirable it is to subject daring offenders to that degree

* Independently of the monstrous anomaly of placing females upon the Tread-wheel, it is contended that the deleterious effects in the robuster sex are likely to manifest themselves even after a considerable lapse of time; and this opinion is upheld by the concurring testimony of professional characters in high estimation. The “fulness of time” is wanting to sanction the opposed evidence on the face of the returns to the Home Department. “We appeal (it is observed in a note to Sir J. H.’s correspondence) to additional time and additional experiments, as absolutely necessary to a developement of all the evils which *inherently* and *essentially* appertain to this kind of discipline.” What is apparent to the eye and confirmed unfortunately by the evidence of reiterated casualties, is a fact predicted, *in limine*, by the engineer himself who first devised the application of the Tread-wheel as an implement of prison discipline. “No one employed upon it (says Mr. Cubitt) can, for an instant, cease from the regular step, without *dropping down to the floor below him*.” This “drop” may, however, as likely take place from the visitation of spasms, or other casual ailments, as from voluntary neglect: or the effect may be produced, as it has been produced (*thrice* within nearly as many months, in one prison), by the failure of the shafts. The result necessarily is the verification of Mr. Cubitt’s *hypothesis*—the falling from an elevation of five or six feet, *backwards*, upon the floor; and *fractures*, or even DEATH, may as well be the consequence as the contusions which have been, by the admission of the prison surgeon at Cold-bath Fields, *numerous* and *severe*. It remains to be unfolded in the records of our penal jurisprudence, by what authority *such a discipline* is substituted under the pretext of PRISON LABOUR.

† With reference to one of these professional gentlemen, who accompanied Sir J. H. in his several examinations of the Tread-wheels, and of the officers and prisoners of the House of Correction at Cold-bath Fields, Sir J. H. has, in his recent publication, p. 122, introduced the following note:—

“A professor of the law, a correspondent of much consideration, who has filled distinguished offices, and whose knowledge of medical subjects is almost proverbial, thus expresses himself in a letter to Sir J. H. with reference to *Dr. Good’s Study of Medicine* (a work in five octavo volumes)—‘Hard at work on Dr. Good’s volumes. You know I have been a medical reader all my life. As far as I have gone, I am indeed highly gratified; great learning, admirable classification, luminous reasoning. The interspersions, too, of singular anecdotes, historical allusions, quotations, &c. enlivens the *sombre* of technical didactics.’ Dr. Good’s work has been specially recommended by the ARMY MEDICAL BOARD to the attention of their medical departments in every part of the world.”

of laborious and toilsome exertion which may tame their unruly dispositions, and fit them for reform, no one can desire to entail on the unhappy sufferer *bodily ailments*, or *expose his life to serious hazard*." The Editor further states the experiment and ultimate rejection of Tread-wheels (*precisely similar to those of the new prison discipline*), which were attached, as the moving power, to *cranes* in the warehouses of the East India Company; but where several fractures of limbs and other hurts were occasioned by them.—Also, the serious casualties that had taken place from the reiterated breaking of the shafts of the Tread-wheels at Cold-Bath Fields.

The subject of the Tread-mill has been taken up again in the same paper (the *New Times*) on the 26th inst., when a letter of Sir Wm. Blizard, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, is introduced, in which it is observed, that "on the Tread-machine the *abdominal muscles* are kept in constant action, and the *extensor muscles of the back* also on a stretch; that, for free respiration, the *abdominal muscles* and *diaphragm* should act alternately." After other details, Sir William contends, "that a preference should be given to the *crank* machinery, as fitting the *muscular power of the arms to future labour*."

This is followed by letters from Dr. Good and Mr. Flower (a professional gentleman of this county), both assigning their reasons for resisting the discipline of the Tread-wheel; but it is to be regretted that the letter of Dr. Good, of the 7th ult., which appears in the recent publication of Sir J. Hippisley, has not also the additional advantage of a wider circulation through the medium of the public prints. All the points at issue on this interesting question (for deeply interesting it must be held) are luminously discussed by Dr. Good, who has introduced also a communication from Mr. Wilson, M. P. for Cockermouth, chairman of the Westmoreland Sessions, and an acting magistrate for the county of Lancaster. This letter has reference to certain experiments made by the keeper of Lancaster Castle, with the statement of results, and, "if I mistake not (observes Dr. Good), will be found to form, upon this contested subject, a far more

important document than any one whatever contained in the *Government* returns; affording another proof, if proofs indeed were yet wanting, *how very unripe* the present season is, for casting up a general account of the whole crop of evils which belong to the Tread-mill machinery, and will probably show themselves *in its fulness of time*."

In a publication, the joint production of Dr. Paris and Mr. Fonblanque, which is considered a work of great merit, the following passage may upon this occasion be opportunely adduced:—"On the subject of the Tread-mill we are not enabled to pronounce any very decided opinion. The invention has not been in use long enough to determine, with any degree of accuracy, its *merits or defects*; that it is held in considerable dread by offenders is certain; and the fear of returning to it may operate favourably on that class for which it appears best calculated, *the regular vagabond*: but, it *does not give any habit of industry or teach any mode of labour* to the merely idle or casually culpable; and therefore ought not to be INDISCRIMINATELY applied to all cases. The punishment, too, is one of THE MOST UNEQUAL IN ITS OPERATION that can be conceived. A man who has been accustomed to running up stairs all his life, with good lungs and muscular legs, will scarcely suffer by it; while an asthmatic tailor, weaver, or other sedentary artizan, *will be half killed* by the exercise. For WOMEN, in certain stages, IT IS DANGEROUS AND INDECENT TORTURE—one which should be immediately forbidden, if not by the humanity of the magistrates, by *the wisdom of the Legislature*."

The publication of Sir J. Hippisley was preceded by the circulation of his communications with the Secretary of State for the Home Department, addressed to the Clerks of the Peace of all the English counties, previous to the Epiphany Sessions of the present year. "While the system of prison labour, and the instrumentality of the Tread-wheel (he observes), is open to such numerous and weighty objections, it will be found that an effort is here made to excite the attention of Government, and of the executive provincial magistracy of the kingdom, to a comparison between the labour of the Tread-wheel, and that of the Hand-

crank machinery, which consideration constitutes no part of the exposition given to the public in the official document under the authority of Government." The introductory observations, annexed to Sir J. H.'s correspondence with the Home Department, are concluded by a narrative of the introduction of the Tread-wheel into the House of Industry in the extensive division of Gosford, in Suffolk, and *the deplorable results of that inconsiderate effort*. He does not seem, however, to have been then apprised that the same discipline has been introduced *also in the House of Industry at Grimsby*. In the former instance a worthy magistrate who had volunteered the gratuitous office of chaplain, "feeling (as Sir J. H. observes) how vain and even absurd must be the attempt to enforce the mild precepts of the Gospel under the influence of so terrific an agent," at once resigned his sacred charge with that of his joint superintendence of the establishment. Avowing corresponding feelings with the reverend gentleman, upon the resolution taken by the majority of the magistrates for the erection of Tread-mills in our county prisons, Sir J. Hippisley also formally intimated to the court his desire to be no longer included in the list of visiting magistrates.

We thus observe, Mr. Editor, two of our provincial magistrates, who had severally presided in the chair of our general sessions, at issue upon the important question of this novel discipline. In support of his own opinion, Sir J. H., in his recent publication, has introduced a letter from another of our provincial magistrates, who filled the chair at the sessions for fourteen or fifteen years, and who, during that period, was well known to have given almost an unexampled dedication of his time to the internal police of the county. Of this magistrate Sir J. H. observes, that "*The Committee of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline*," in their THIRD REPORT, speak thus,—“The Committee have much pleasure in quoting the valuable testimony of that experienced magistrate, Sir JOHN ACLAND; who, in his evidence before the *Gaol Committee of the House of Commons*, observes, ‘PRISON LABOUR is the ground-work of all improvement, of general tranquillity, and hope of reformation in a prisoner’s habits

of life, and disposition of mind.—Give a prisoner *action by labour and employment*, and it will give him a determined direction towards a better system of life; *industrious habits* must be created, be the expense what it may; and the moral effects produced will compensate for all numerical loss that may be sustained.’ ”—Sir J. Acland’s letter follows—“ All things (he observes) go by fashion. —The Tread-mill is so much sanctioned by popular opinion, as a new mode of punishment, that the philanthropy of the day does not recoil at it; and it is to be carried on *throughout the prisons, without consideration; nay against a prudent one*:—presently we shall find the impropriety of it appealed against, and voted *cruel, dangerous*, and the like; and it will be ordered to be laid aside as *disgusting, and unsuited to the age we live in, and to the humanity due to prisoners*!”

“ The Hand-mill (I agree with you) is free from all such complaints, and the labour of it may be increased to any *quantum of power* necessary to produce hard labour, or be regulated to any degree of wholesome exercise. Can any one, who will exercise his reason by the help of a little *anatomical* knowledge, ‘halt between two opinions?’—The first *dangerous result* from the Tread-mill will open the *eyes of the blind* and unthinking.”—These results have been of frequent occurrence, especially in the principal house of correction in the metropolis. But, the consequences, so naturally and rationally anticipated by Sir J. Acland, have not, as yet, made an adequate progress: that they may soon be generally apparent, is the anxious desire of

A RESIDENT SOMERSET MAGISTRATE.

P. S. For those who look forward to the “beneficial influence” of the Tread-wheels now erecting in our prisons, it is proper they should at least be apprised by whose HANDS they, in a great measure, will be capacitated, so early to receive the *boon*, and to what extent they have been occupied. The new building destined for Tread-wheels in the House of Correction at Shepton is 98 feet in length, by 23 in breadth, and above 40 feet in elevation. Exclusive of the Tread-wheels and Mill machinery, it comprehends

also a chapel, of a capacity for 300 persons. The whole is expected shortly to be roofed in. In these constructions, eight or nine *town masons* have been employed, and some carpenter's work has also been executed otherwise than by prison labour; but, with those exceptions, the whole has been effected by the MANUAL LABOUR OF THE PRISONERS. In the bosom of time we must look for corresponding exertion resulting from the instrumentality of those organs, which are now so sedulously and even *juridically* put in requisition, to supersede the ordinary dispensation of Providence, which assigns "OUR HANDS FOR WORK,—OUR FEET FOR TRAVEL."

It is not less proper that it should be understood, that by this recourse to the MANUAL LABOUR OF PRISONERS, while an expenditure at the rate of 360*l.* a head in the construction of a county prison has been elsewhere incurring, the new buildings at Shepton, under the contract made with the county to be executed, exclusively, by *prison labour*, including every material, would fall considerable short of the expense of 10*l.* per head, comprehending also a chapel for 300 prisoners. That the whole expenditure incurred in *stone, lime, and labour* of the new buildings for the *Tread-mill, &c.* (exclusive of the roof, which is estimated at 84*l.*) has not exceeded 200*l.* And further, that the total expenditure incurred in the new buildings to capacitate the prison to receive 300 prisoners in single beds—a number not exceeded by six county gaols in the kingdom, and when scarcely fifty could antecedently be accommodated—will be completed at an expense to the county not exceeding 1700*l.* It is unnecessary to say more.

Letter, inserted in the Courier of the 5th of August.

THE TREAD MILL.

SIR,—In one of your recent papers, an extract is given from the charge of Mr. Justice Park, to the Grand Jury, of the Oxford Assizes, in which his lordship expresses his regret, that the Tread-mill has not been adopted in the county of Oxford; and observes, that “the objections made to this mode of punishment are unfounded, and that it does not prove injurious to the health of the prisoners.”

Allow me, by way of apology for the Magistrates of the county, to remark, that while the views thus thrown out are consonant with those which were generally entertained *on the first introduction of this complicated machinery* into our prisons, experience, instead of confirming them, has shown that *they were formed prematurely*; that the Tread-mill is, in every instance, and cannot avoid being, injurious to the health of the prisoners, as well in the *quality of its labour*, as in the *accidents* to which it is perpetually giving birth; that from its not furnishing *manual* but only *foot-labour* to those employed on it, *though it may give them a greater dislike than ever to a prison-life, it gives them no industrious habits for keeping out of it*, and in many instances renders them even less capable of honestly providing for themselves than before their committal to prison—on which, as well as on various other accounts, not only have the Magistrates of Oxfordshire, but of numerous other counties, avoided *plunging* into the very heavy expense which such a machinery necessarily entails, and preferred the hand-crank-mill, or some other hard *manual* occupation, in its stead.

The Tread-wheel machinery is well known to be almost perpetually breaking in the House of Correction in Cold Bath-fields, where it has been constructed with the utmost care at an expense

of 12,000*l.* already incurred to the county, although no Mill is yet attached to the works, which will cost half as much more; and the men and women at work upon the Tread-boards have been at least FIVE times precipitated upon their backs from a considerable height, in consequence of such accident; and the communications which have been lately made officially to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, from the several prisons in which the Tread-wheel has been established, give repeated proofs of its being injurious to the health of the prisoners employed on it, especially in the case of FEMALES; who, in consequence thereof, are now very generally withdrawn from it, though they are still worked at it in two or three prisons; and hence the Committee of *the Prison Discipline Society*, who at one time hailed its introduction among every description of offenders as a most salutary and unexceptionable mode of punishment, and reclamation, have of late felt it necessary to modify their recommendation, and to *dissuade its continuance in the case of women*. "There are to be found," say they, in their late pamphlet, "many descriptions of labour for women, which are much better adapted to female habits, than employment at the Tread-mill*." And on this account most probably it is, that Government has not thought proper to introduce any clause whatever into the new Gaol Bill (which has now nearly completed its course through both Houses of Parliament) that gives any express sanction to the use of the Tread-mill; but leaves its adoption or rejection entirely to the judgment of the provincial magistracy, as derivable from a due experience of its effects.

Sir John Hippisley, who is well known to be one of the oldest, as well as one of the most active visiting Magistrates of the West of England, has just published a book of "Correspondence and Communications" upon this subject, addressed to his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, which does not appear to have fallen into the hands of Mr. Justice Park, at the time of his address to the Oxford Grand Jury; but which

* Description of the Tread-mill, p. 27 (1823).

it is difficult to read, without concluding most cordially against the further use of this machine, either for males or females, except indeed in extreme cases of criminality.

This pamphlet contains a forcible description of the mischievous effects of the Tread-wheel, as drawn from a long and extensive observation of the distinguished writer, and a very ample correspondence with many of the most celebrated medical characters of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin. The following passage from his friend Dr. Good is highly interesting, as well from the novelty of the fact, as the importance of the issue which must flow from it. After stating from the official communication made from Lancaster Castle, the grounds upon which various prisoners are spared the labour of the Tread-mill, the learned correspondent proceeds as follows:

“ There is perhaps no prison in the kingdom in which the Tread-wheel has been worked more judiciously, or with a minuter attention to its effects, than at this last place of confinement. For not only have delinquents labouring under a *great variety* of constitutional affections been exempted, and a shorter daily period been allotted for work than the time usually assigned, but the visiting Magistrates have, from time to time, submitted the workers at the wheel to the test of a pair of scales, and thus actually put this kind of labour to an *experimentum crucis*. Mr. Smith, the surgeon, writing his official report in the month of February, being less than four months from the first employment of the machine, tells us, and tells us truly, that the prisoners, notwithstanding their *expression of dislike* to the work, ‘ have gained weight since they have been so employed.’ Had the history of this well-conducted prison, however, been followed down a little lower, a very curious and important fact, and a very different result, would have been put before the public. From the kindness of the very excellent Member for Cockermouth, W. C. Wilson, Esq. himself one of the most distinguished and active of the visiting Magistrates of Lancashire, and Chairman at the Westmoreland Sessions, I am now enabled to make the requisite addition, and to bring the history of the Tread-wheel in this prison

down to the present time. Mr. Wilson has been so obliging as to obtain for me a letter upon the subject from the keeper of the prison, of so late a date as May 26, which I will thank you to subjoin as a foot-note ; and which, if I mistake not, will be found to form, upon this contested subject, a far more important document than any one whatever contained in the Government returns ; affording another proof, if proofs indeed were yet wanting, HOW VERY UNRIPE THE PRESENT SEASON is for casting up a general account of the whole crop of evils which belong to the Tread-mill machinery, and will probably show themselves in its fullness of time."

" The ordinary period of the day's employment at the wheel, as estimated by the Committee of the Prison Discipline Society, is *eleven hours* ; which, allowing for the intervals of rest and refreshment, they reduce to *seven hours and twenty minutes*, forming ' the *time* of actual labour which falls to the lot of each prisoner for the day ;' during which period he walks over the wheel, according to another of their estimates, twelve thousand feet, or about *two miles and a furlong*, ' which is the amount or measure of labour performed by each prisoner on the Tread-wheel for the day ;' nearly coinciding with Mr. Dent's calculation.

" Now at *Lancaster Castle*, as we learn from the subjoined letter, the Visiting Magistrates, with becoming humanity, have adopted a smaller scale of labour than this laid down by the Committee of the Prison Discipline Society ; for they have never carried it higher, in extent of time, than to *ten hours and a half* for the day's employment, instead of *eleven hours* ; while, in the winter months, they have reduced it to *seven hours*. In other words, they have never compelled the prisoners to walk more than *two miles a day* ; and, in short days and cold weather, have been satisfied with their walking *a mile and a half*. And I now come to the very *extraordinary result* which the letter I refer to discloses (extraordinary I mean to those who have not duly contemplated the subject in all its bearings), by putting this slow and snail-paced labour to the test of a pair of scales, which have been employed as a direct SARCOMETER, to determine the amount

of struggle between the living powers of human flesh and blood, and the destroying powers of the Tread-wheel. While the pace is only *a mile and a half*, or a little more, for the day, it appears that the strain on the muscles has not hitherto been found so mischievous as to make any inroad on the living principle, so that, as the prisoners are humanely fed upon a regimen which equals the richer scale of diet just laid down by the consulting physicians for the convicts in the Millbank Penitentiary, the ordinary functions of the body have not been interfered with, and the workers have increased in weight from eight or nine grains to an ounce or an ounce and a half a day. But the moment the measure of labour is pushed on to *two miles* a day, the whole system shrinks before it, and the prisoners *waste away* at the rate of from a *pound* to nearly *a pound and a half* every three weeks. There are a few anomalies in the table, which ought probably to be referred to the state of the weather at the time, and the degree of perspiration, sensible or insensible, to which the temperature of the atmosphere must necessarily give rise, but the general fact is clear and unquestionable; and the whole country is indebted to the wisdom and humanity of the Visiting Magistrates of *Lancaster Castle* for putting this machine to a trial, as well as allowing this fact to be given to the public."

Without entering farther into the discussion, or pretending at present to enlist myself on either side of the pending controversy as a *decided adherent*, enough, I trust, is here advanced to show the necessity for pausing for a little while before the Tread-wheel is erected in other prisons, and consequently to justify the Magistrates of Oxfordshire in the prudent course they have taken upon this subject.

Bath, July 15, 1823.

OXONIENSIS.

P. S. Since writing the above, I received a communication from a correspondent, of the following appropriate extract from a work of Dr. Paris and Mr. Fonblanque:—"On the subject of the Tread-mill, we are not enabled to pronounce any distinct opinion: the invention *has not been in use long enough to deter-*

mine, with any degree of accuracy, its merits or defects: that it is held in considerable dread by offenders, is certain, and the fear of returning to it may operate favourably on that class, for which it appears best calculated, the regular vagabond; *but it does not give any habit of industry*, or teach any mode of labour to the merely idle or casually culpable; and therefore ought not to be *INDISCRIMINATELY applied to all cases*. The punishment, too, is *one of the most unequal in its effects, that can be conceived*."

Paragraph from the British Press of the 7th of August.

SIR JOHN COX HIPPISELEY has recently had a correspondence with the Home Department, with the view of proving that the Tread-mill is generally injurious to the health, and often hazardous to the life of the prisoner. In this opinion he is supported by some eminent physicians and surgeons, whose names he mentions!

Letter, inserted in the Sun Paper of the 8th of August.

THE TREAD-MILL.

MR. EDITOR—Though I am not acquainted with your opinions on the subject of the Tread-mill, I am so thoroughly aware of your Editorial impartiality, that I have little fear of your denying this letter a place in your columns. *Before ever I read a single line against this ENGINE of punishment, or even met with a single individual adverse to its use*, I had made up my mind against it from *the instinctive sensations* I experienced on visiting the Wheels in Cold-bath Fields prison. I not only thought the punishment of a *degrading* nature, but anticipated that it would be attended

with serious *physical mischiefs*. I thought, moreover, that it was too *indiscriminating*, both as far as the different degrees of crime were concerned, as well as the different degrees of physical strength or health. The prisoners that I saw descend from the Wheels seemed *debilitated and over-worked*, and I judged from their *downcast, spirit-broken, yet sulky appearance*, that however sorry they might be to have deserved imprisonment, with hard labour; *this labour would only breed in them a more rooted aversion than ever to all kinds of toil and honest employment*. If idleness and slothful habits bring a man to prison, the labour he there encounters should neither be of that oppressive and wearisome kind which shall confirm him in his longings after a state of comparative ease, nor of that unprofitable sort, as far as he is personally concerned, which shall *instruct him in no laborious exercise that can turn to account, or even be practised*, when he is released. Full of these sentiments, and eager to express them, I happened to have put into my hands Sir John Cox Hippisley's Letter on Prison Labour, in which the Baronet not only himself attacks the discipline of the Tread-mill, from his own observation and experience, as physically, morally, and in all regenerative policy, pernicious; but from his extensive means of correspondence and information, brings into a focus the hostility to this discipline of a large number of intelligent, philosophic, and matter-of-fact men, among whom are to be reckoned five or six of the highest medical eminence. If, sir, my opinion is worth any thing, Sir John *makes out his case more clearly, impartially, and incontrovertibly, than I have ever seen any case made out*; but as his pamphlet will doubtlessly be consulted by all those who take an interest in matters of real public importance, it would be a work of supererogation to quote from it in this place, at large: yet a few sentences are of such a decided and convincing nature, that they cannot meet the eye too frequently. A very long letter from Dr. Mason Good, the learned translator of Lucretius, and the experienced author of "The Study of Medicine," is incorporated in the pamphlet, in which, among a complete choice of arguments and facts, are the following—"There is no end of answering all the follies and caprices to which the

Tread-mill must give rise from its intrinsic demerit. It may be altered again and again, and varied, *ad infinitum*, but whether the supposed improved form adverted to, as taking place in a northern county, or any other, become THE RAGE OF THE DAY, it must still be *essentially* objectionable, as founded upon an essentially wrong principle, and which therefore no modification can right: I mean that of subverting the order of nature, *and making the feet take place of the hands.*" Again—"The question which, I understand, is very often put forth, whether any of the maladies that are predicted so freely and confidently by medical practitioners against the Tread-mill, have any where yet taken place, is at first sight plausible; but it is nothing more, for it will not bear reflecting upon a single moment. In the case of *women* the mischievous effects have been *actually proved*. But by far the greater number of the predicted evils are such as could not have taken place from *the shortness of the time the machines have been at work in any prison*; but which to the eye of a pathologist *are as certain*, as if they were at this moment in full force. Such, I mean, as lumbago, weakness of the kidneys, cramps, and stiff joints of all kinds, as well of the hands from an uniformly fixed position, as of the legs and feet." Sir William Blizard, speaking of the Hand-crank-mill, as the proposed substitute for the Tread-mill, says—"The preference is *founded well* on the consideration of *fitting the muscular power of the arms to future labour*; and, hence, the more ready performance of duties for subsistence, and a preventive of inducement to criminal means of obtaining it. *The hand labour can be better graduated to all the relative circumstances of age, condition, health, disease, power, &c. than that of the feet.*" Dr. Good, in a letter written subsequently to a second visit to Cold-bath Fields prison, states the result of an examination of the prisoners, which shows that they all complained of pains and aches in the legs, loins, and other parts, and that their hands were sore, blistered, or horny from healed wounds; which, in the case of the females, he avers, unfits them for a return to needle or other delicate and light work peculiar to women. As to women being again employed in the Mill, after their temporary exemption from it, on

account of the effects it produced, it is *matter of national shame and disgrace!* The precautions of having female overseers, and screens to hide their ankles, speak more than a thousand volumes to the reprobation of those who would employ females in the Tread-mill. None but *miserably unthinking men, or mere beasts*, who care not to see *human nature unfathomably degraded*, would dream of such a mode of *torturing and abasing the weaker sex*.

A PUNISHMENT THAT REQUIRES THE PRECAUTIONS JUST MENTIONED, OUGHT NEVER TO BE USED! It is unutterably revolting to the feelings; it makes the blood boil with indignation to think that its known consequences should not mark out as improper, to the last degree, such a mode of chastising female folly or crime. After Sir John's book has been circulated among the magistracy and the public, I am convinced that the latter will esteem any individual of the former body, who should condemn a woman to the Tread-mill, a *filthy and barbarous monster!* My language, Mr. Editor, may be strong, but it is not too strong. Let those who would find fault with it, read attentively Sir John's pamphlet, and I am certain they will see the propriety, necessity, and humanity, of such expressions. I do trust, sir, that the public are beginning to recover from *one of the many manias* into which they suffer themselves to fall, from too hasty a view of things, and from the impetuosity which besets their desires, for what is of general utility, or what may be a desideratum of national importance. If the Tread-mill be proper for females, then did our senators very prematurely and absurdly abolish their liability to be whipped; if it be proper for men, let us then return to the good old barbarous times of branding, the pillory, &c. &c.

I am, sir,

A Determined Enemy of the Tread-mill,

But your very sincere friend,

MANUAL LABOUR.

August 6th, 1823.

[The editor of the Sun, in giving a notice of Errata, the ensuing day, converted the words originally sent him; viz. "Er-

rata in yesterday's Letter against the Tread-mill ;" into " Errata in the *Humane and Judicious* Letter of yesterday, against the Tread-mill." J. J.]

Letter, from the Literary Chronicle of the 9th of August.

THE TREAD-MILL.—GAOLERS.

SIR,—In your notice, last week, of Sir John Cox Hippisley's work, relative to the Tread-mill and its consequences, is the following remark :—" senators, magistrates, and *gaolers*, have all praised the Tread-mill, and are generally *very indifferent* as to its effects, further than the repression of crime." Of the three classes of persons named here, I rather think the *gaolers* have the *greatest interest* in the *perpetuation and extension* of this new mode of punishment, as I intend presently to show. But, before I do this, allow me to ask you, sir, how you could venture to use so *low* a word as *gaolers*? Do you not know, or have you forgotten, that all these persons are now called *governors*; and that they are generally written to as *esquires*? If you do not, it is fit that you should be told of your unseemly error.

Having set you right in this particular, I shall now proceed to state why I consider this class of *gentlemen* as especially interested in the extension of the Tread-mill and its machinery. The intention, or presumed intention is, that the prisoners shall grind the corn to make their own bread; and so far, so good; but it happens, I believe, that in several of our large county prisons they produce infinitely more flour than can be consumed by the prisoners. The consequence is, that *Mr. Governor* becomes a *mill*, seeing that the culprits must be kept going, and, as he has his machinery and labour for nothing, he can take his commodity to market, and undersell, if he pleases, some of those men who are taxed to enable him so to do; viz. the wind and

water and steam millers, of this *milling* country. *I know a governor of this sort in an agricultural county* (with whom some of the clerical magistrates find it convenient frequently to take pot-luck, and a glass of humble port), *whose flour carts are continually seen about the neighbourhood of the county gaol, to the infinite annoyance of the poor millers aforesaid.* This is not as it ought to be. Certainly, idleness in a prison is a bad thing, and the confined ought to be made to do all they can towards their own support; but when an article is produced by their labour, which may tend, as I verily believe this does, to the partial injury of industrious tradesmen, it ought not to be allowed, especially as it is to aggrandize one of these new-fangled *governors*. (Why, sir, our very workhouse-keepers, now-a-days, scorn to be called masters: they, forsooth, are *governors* too!)

Prison governors have too often an influence over county magistrates; county magistrates get at the ears of senators, or are senators themselves, and thus may be accounted for the reciprocity of their affections for the Tread-mill!

I am, &c.

J. M. L.

Letter, inserted in the Courier of the 9th of August.

Nottingham, August 6th.

SIR,—In my accustomed perusal of your valuable paper, I have this day observed some animadversions on the use of the Tread-mill in prisons; and, as the writer appears to be travelling over the same line of argument lately adopted by Sir John Cox Hippisley, Dr. Good, and some few others, and as those assertions appear to me to have been very lately answered and confuted, in a most satisfactory manner, by the surgeon of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, you will, I am assured, exert your usual candour and liberality in awarding a small portion of your Journal to a refutation of *the misrepresentations*, which the Courier of this day has widely circulated. The following ex-

tracts from Mr. Hutchinson's paper on this subject are copied from the London Medical and Physical Journal for August.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

A NOTTINGHAMSHIRE MAGISTRATE.

[Here follows the greater part of Mr. Hutchinson's letter (which will be met with in the preceding pages) beginning at—" I confess myself happy;" and continued down to " The health of the prisoners in this establishment." J. J.]

Extract, from a Paragraph in the Sunday Times of the 10th of August.

MOUSE TREAD-MILL.

" M. HATTON, of Dumferline, has had two mice constantly employed in the making of sewing thread, for upwards of twelve months. *The Tread-mill* is so constructed, that the common house-mouse is enabled to *make atonement to society for past offences*, by twisting, twining, and reeling, from 100 to 120 threads per day. To complete this task, the little pedestrian has to run ten miles and a half. This journey it performs with ease every day. An ordinary mouse weighs only half an ounce. A halfpenny worth of oatmeal, at 15d. per peck, serves one of *these Tread-wheel culprits* for the long period of five weeks. In that time it makes (110 threads per day being the average) 3,850 threads of 25 inches, which is very nearly nine lengths of the standard reel. At this rate a mouse earns ninepence every five weeks, which is just one farthing per day, or 7s. 6d. per annum. Take sixpence off for board, and allow one shilling for machinery, there will arise six shillings of clear profit from every mouse yearly. The employer is to make application to the heritors for a lease of an old empty house, the dimensions of which are 100 feet by 50, and 50 in height, which, at a moderate calculation, will hold

10,000 mouse-mills, sufficient room being left for keepers and some hundreds of spectators. Allowing 200l. for rent and task-masters, and 500l. for the interest of 10,000l. to erect machinery, there will be a balance of 2,300l. per annum."

VERSES ON THE TREAD-MILL,

Which appeared in the Literary Chronicle of the 16th of August.

INGENIOUS thought! old nature to invert,
And make the feet do duty for the hands!
THE HANDS HAVE WORK'D FOR MANY THOUSAND YEARS,
FOR MANY THOUSAND YEARS NOW WORK THE FEET!—
Behold the human Squirrels! round and round,
Tramping the never-ending cylinder:
Th' "*incorrigible Rogues!*" that wise men send
To houses of *correction*, there to learn,
That *labour* is, in VERY DEED, a curse;
With pains and perils, there to "Mill—the air,"
With strains and achings, therefrom to depart,
Lesson'd to work at,—nothing!
To learn this wondrous lesson, and unlearn
The other habits of industrious years;
LO! WOMAN, STRETCH'D, DISFIGUR'D, ON THE WHEEL!
Stung with a sense of shame, a dread of ill,
'Twere INFAMY, for other eyes, to see;
All little remnant of that self-respect,
Strong to reclaim, extinguish'd in the feeling
Of utter, and o'erwhelming degradation—
Fie on these MANIAS, that o'erdo all good
To perfect evil, these precipitate jumps
At excellence, which hurl it to the ground;
These plans completed without proper planning;
These QUACKISH NOSTRUMS; let the Tread-mill flourish
For just prevention of the thefts of mice;

Or comfort of young ladies who delight
To see the captive squirrel wind his cage—
But let not nature be abus'd, nor *man*,
Converted to a sorry turnspit, tramp
A profitless, debasing, cruel round
Of toil—nor woman be expos'd
To all that man can suffer, and thrice more !

Letter, inserted in the Courier of the 16th of August.

Lancaster, Aug. 11th.

SIR,—In your paper of the 5th instant, I have perused a letter, addressed to you, on the subject of the use of the Treadmill in prisons, signed “Oxoniensis,” endeavouring to account for the apparent delay in the magistrates of the county of Oxon, in not adopting this species of prison discipline, and at the same time to show, that the labour was detrimental to the general health of persons, when worked beyond a certain limit ; and that this fact had been fully established by experiments made at Lancaster Castle : particular reference is made to a letter written by the Keeper of that Prison, to W. C. Wilson, Esq. M. P. and one of the Visiting Justices. I have reason to know that the statement of your correspondent is erroneous in some particulars, and I think I am warranted in saying, that the opinion, not only of the Visiting Magistrates, but also of the Surgeon and Keeper, is directly opposed to the inference attempted to be drawn, by publishing an extract from the Keeper’s letter ; and that if the whole letter had been given to the public, instead of partial extracts, it would have placed the matter in a very different point of view ; and here let me observe, that your correspondent, in fairness to all parties, ought to have done so.

I am fully aware of the use made of this letter, at the last General Meeting of the Society for promoting Prison Discipline, and that a part only of the letter was read ; the remaining part, which, in fact, corroborates the general favourable opinion of the

use of this description of prison labour was, on that occasion, as well as in this instance, withheld. I shall not now stop to inquire how the Hon. Member became possessed of this letter: suffice it to say, that no fairness was used by reading a part of it.

The Keeper of Lancaster Castle, with a laudable anxiety to prove the correctness of the experiments, having discovered that *the wheel employed at the prison had an effect upon the health of the prisoners* wholly opposite to that used in other prisons, has, since his letter of May 25th, proved that the rate of the Wheel greatly exceeded the average first made, and that *instead of 12,000 feet of labour*, the prisoners have actually worked 24,000, nearly double the quantity of any other prison; and that this excessive labour is solely to be attributed to the Wheel, having been regulated by *a break or friction Wheel, instead of air*; other causes have also operated against it, which I will not trouble you with.

As soon as this defect in the construction of the Wheel was ascertained, the Keeper of the prison very properly and humanely reduced the quantity of labour to 8,000 feet each person per day, by having a change of men every three hours and twenty minutes; and at this rate I have no doubt it will be continued until the imperfection is removed; and I feel equally satisfied the enlightened Magistracy of this county will very soon cause the defect to be remedied; and that, so far from condemning this species of labour, they will extend it. Much has already been written on this subject; I will not occupy more of your valuable columns than to state, that the Keeper of the prison is an advocate for this species of labour, being convinced, from his experience, and as your correspondent admits, after minute tests, that it is the best labour ever introduced into prisons; and that, with a proper force affixed to the present Wheel, an opposite result will be found to that endeavoured to be established by your correspondent, upon partial extracts from this letter, and from experiments confessedly imperfect.

I am, &c.

VERAX.

Article, from the John Bull Paper of the 24th of August.

It is with feelings of regret we find ourselves called upon to lay before the public *a narrative of facts, full of horror and misery*, which are daily and hourly occurring under the sanction of the law, in the heart of this great metropolis. It is impossible that we should longer remain silent, and we do sincerely hope that the statement we have to make will induce Mr. Peel to call forthwith for official information upon the subject. To one whose goodness and amiability in all the relations of life are proverbial, we are convinced the appeal will not be made in vain.

The extraordinary, we will not say rash, *patronage which the newly invented machine called the Tread-mill has met with* from the highest, wisest, and mildest of those best calculated, one would think, to judge of its effect and advantages, *has always startled us*; but as our object at the present moment is not to argue as to its moral operation upon prisoners, nor even upon its physical results to them generally, we shall, at least for the present, waive *the objections which we think we could effectually make to its introduction into prisons*, and speak of that, which, while we are perusing the papers which have been submitted to us on the subject, *fills us with horror, grief, and shame!*

What the physical effects of this Tread-wheel *may be* upon men, it is even yet difficult to determine. In answer to the circular letter of Mr. Peel to the magistrates of counties where it has been in use, communications have been made and published, by which, generally speaking, it appears no serious consequences have yet resulted to the males; but our readers, we dare say, are not prepared to hear that this humane improvement of prison discipline is at this moment applied to *women* in the House of Correction in Cold-bath Fields, *after the most decided and incontestable proofs* have been afforded, by experience, of its *destructive tendency* to their constitutions.

Sir John Cox Hippisley, who has *very humanely* interested himself upon the subject, has published a work on the subject, in which, at p. 95, he inserts a letter from Dr. Mason Good, dated October 21, 1822, in which (for obvious reasons we do not quote it) he describes the most dreadful consequences as *likely to result* from the labour of females on the Tread-mill.

In consequence of the straining and exertion, many of the females in Cold-bath Fields were frequently compelled suddenly to descend from their task; and so dreadful and degrading were the consequences, that they *were exempted* from the labour until answers had been received to the circular letter of the Secretary of State, *when they were again ordered* to partake of this *repulsive* discipline.

It is impossible to describe the state of the unhappy women at this moment—suffice it to say, that their hands are, in the first instance, blistered; that they then become hard and horny, and unfit for any of that work which is suited to the sex; that the results of the labour upon the constitutions of these poor sufferers are such as to render it necessary to erect skreens ankle-high, upon the wheel-galleries, and to change the task-masters for matrons, who are necessitated to superintend *this elaborated torture of their own sex*, under circumstances of *the most galling degradation*.

Our information upon this subject is derived from the most authentic source, and we find the statements made to us fully corroborated by Sir J. C. Hippisley, at p. 33 of his work; and although we intend to-day to confine our observations to *female* discipline, the account of Sir John's visit to the House of Correction, as relates to both sexes, is extremely important and interesting; we therefore give it *nearly* entire.

“To ascertain, however, whether any actual change has in any way been produced in the effects complained of since our visit of last year, I have once more accepted of your invitation, and at the time of writing this, have just returned from the House of Correction at Cold-bath Fields, to which I had the honour of being

accompanied both by yourself, and Mr. Cole, who took a part in the examination we entered into, and to whom I appeal, as well as to yourself, for the accuracy of the following brief account of it.

“ The Wheels were at work on our arrival in all the yards, still idly expending their power, and that of their workers, *in the air*. The hour was half-past eleven in the morning, the thermometer at 60 deg. Fahrenheit, with a cool and gusty breeze, which many have complained of as being chilly, veering from north to south-west. We examined THE SUBTERRANEAN MACHINERY, which, with the ponderous fly above, was working at a fearfully rapid rate, notwithstanding the slow-paced motion of the principal shaft. The men were on duty on the wheels in their respective yards, *and the report is true that the shaft has again broken, forming a FIFTH instance of failure ; and other workers been again thrown upon their backs on the raised platform, and must in some instances have fallen through to the stone pavement, some ten or twelve feet below*, had not the present vigilant governor, in anticipation of such an accident, prudently ordered the middle hatch-ways to be closed *. I inspected the men as they descended in rotation from the Wheel, at the end of the *quarter of an hour's* task-work, and made room for fresh relays. *Every one of them was perspiring, some in a DRIPPING SWEAT*. On asking them separately, and at a distance from each other, where was the chief stress of labour, they stated in succession, and without the least variation, that they suffered great pain in the calf of the leg, and in the ham ; while most of them, though not all, complained of distress also in the instep. On examining the bottom of their shoes, it was manifest that the line of tread had not extended farther than from the extremity of the toes to about one-third of the bottom of the foot ; for in several instances the shoes were new, and between this line and the heel altogether unsoiled : a fact, however, that was as obvious from the *position of the foot, while at work*, as from the appearance of the shoe at rest. Several of the workers seemed to

* “ The hatch-ways are now removed to the end of the *galleries*. Among other smaller casualties, a *woman* fell down the hatch-way, having *previously* fallen *in a fit*, from the head of the Wheel upon the floor.”

aim at supporting their weight by bringing the heel into action ; *the feet being twisted outwards* ; and on inquiring why this was not oftener accomplished, the reply was, that though they could gain a little in this way, it was with *so painful a stress of the knees*, that they could only try at it occasionally. The palms of their hands, in consequence of holding tight to the rail, *were in every instance hardened, in many horny, in some blistered, and discharging water*. The keeper, who accompanied us, admitted the truth of all these statements, and added, *that it was the ordinary result of the labour*, and that *use did not seem to render it less severe* ; for those who had been confined long appeared to suffer nearly, or altogether as much as those who were new to the work : thus confirming a remark I long since took the liberty of making to you—I mean that, *when an organ is directed to any kind of labour, for which it is not naturally intended, no perseverance will ever give it facility of action, or take off the original distress !*

“ The females we found again at work upon the Wheel ; for, with a strange countermanding of indulgence, they were again ordered to brave all the mischievous consequences which had been proved to ensue, and apparently to undergo a new set of experiments ; while, as though *in full consciousness of what must follow*, the visiting magistrates had endeavoured to prepare against some of the indecency heretofore complained of, *by exchanging male for female keepers*, and raising a linen screen a few feet above the platform, so as to hide the ankles. Here also the same effects of perspiration, the same complaints of pain in the instep, calf of the legs and hams, were repeated as in the male side ; to which the female keeper added *a very horrible pain in the loins*, that generally and very greatly distressed them ; and which, she candidly told us, was in most cases the forerunner of

* * * * *

carried to an alarming excess, and productive of considerable weakness. The perspiration, however, existing among the females, is often very oppressive ; and one of them, not long since, *fell down to the platform in a fainting fit* : the keeper herself

seemed deeply to feel for them; her language was, that *they often had not a dry thread belonging to them*; and she added, you would be surprised, sir, *at seeing how often the finest of them, after having been a few weeks at work, are worn down and emaciated*. I inquired whether even on this account she did not feel it necessary to recommend, at times, a few days relaxation, that they might recover themselves; and she admitted that she was not unfrequently compelled to do so. The palms of their hands here, as in the case of the males, *were hardened, or horny*, and in far more instances blistered; the leathery skin, in some cases, peeling off, and exposing a sore surface beneath. *For all kinds of needle-work, and other delicate descriptions of manual labour, they seem to be completely unfitted, and the keeper allowed that they were almost always rendered useless for such purposes.*"

We think we have said enough to rouse the feelings of those whose influence must have its effect—*the subject actually haunts us!* A woman, let it be recollected, is liable to the TREAD-MILL for walking in the public streets at night; for sleeping in the open air when she has no roof to shelter her; for the *vice of vagrancy*, or for the *crime of begging*—to see a poor creature set to *such disproportioned labour*, her delicate frame torn and worn down by excess of *unnatural* exertion, her constitution destroyed, and herself deprived even of the very means of obtaining an honest livelihood after her release, by a systematic, authorised, legalised *torture*, is indeed in England *a sight so full of horror*, that we do believe it needs only to be known to the government to be abolished.

It is true the Tread-mill is the favourite child of *modern philanthropy*, and that names of the highest respectability are to be found in the list of its advocates. We shall resume the subject next week as relates to the SYSTEM GENERALLY, because of *its legality* or the *moral effects* of *this terrible work* upon prisoners we have no room here to treat; but in the mean time we call in a loud voice upon those who have the power and authority, to investigate the facts which we have this day brought forward.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE TREAD-WHEEL.

Contained in a Letter to the Editors of the London Medical and Physical Journal for the 1st of September. By J. M. Good, M.D. F.R.S. &c. &c.

I AM glad to find, by an introduction of Mr. Hutchinson's letter to you on the discipline of the Tread-wheel, that you feel this subject of sufficient importance, in a medical point of view, to be brought before the public. The short address from Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. to his friend the Minister of the Home Department, upon which this letter is founded, and in the drawing up of which I was called upon professionally to take a part, was written with considerable haste, and when the subject was new, in order that its contents might be laid before the assembled magistrates of most of the counties of England, at the last Epiphany Sessions; and for this purpose it was put gratuitously into circulation, but never published. Since this period, so much additional matter of considerable importance, and fully establishing the facts and opinions of the unpublished address, have been obtained by the worthy baronet, that he has felt it his duty to put the whole together in a second address to Mr. Peel, and to lay it before the public. I herewith beg your acceptance of a copy of this address, and shall take care to forward another copy of it to Mr. Hutchinson, in order that he may be put into possession of the whole case; and shall leave it to your own judgment to bring the entire question before your readers, in whatever way you may think best adapted for the purpose of free discussion; and, so long as such discussion is conducted in *the spirit of candour and liberality* which Mr. Hutchinson has evinced, it cannot fail of being highly instrumental to the improvement of Prison Discipline, and of developing many points of importance within the range of forensic medicine.

How long the Tread-wheel has been established in the House of Correction at Southwell, or *how many* are, upon an average,

employed upon it, though *points of the utmost moment* in the present inquiry, *are not even glanced at by Mr. Hutchinson* in his letter upon the subject ; who seems also to have forgotten to mention *whether females are sentenced* to the same labour or not. As no communication from the Visiting Justices of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction appears among the official returns, by order of the House of Commons, made to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, respecting the use of Tread-wheels in all gaols or houses of correction, in which they were established on January 18th of the present year, it is most probable that this establishment has taken place *since* ; and, as one of the chief difficulties we have had to encounter is the very short period of time in which this instrument has been at work *any where*, it is obvious that no general conclusion could be drawn from what has occurred in the House of Correction before us, had the scale of employment been even much larger than there is reason to calculate it at, and had female prisoners been subjected to the labour ; which it does not appear that Mr. Hutchinson has ventured to recommend, notwithstanding his general approbation of the Tread-wheel Discipline.

Beyond the walls of this prison, and the period of time in which the Tread-machine has been working there, Mr. Hutchinson's experience does not seem to have travelled ; and hence, so far as relates to the *facts* he has been an eye-witness to, they form *no collision whatever* with the mass of *general facts and opinions* brought forward in Sir John Hippisley's publication, *which makes ample allowance for exemptions and procrastinated evils* ; while the *tendency* to mischief still continues to operate, and has sufficiently shown itself wherever there has been time and opportunity.

How far Mr. Hutchinson's views of the effects of such a kind of exercise as the Tread-wheel imposes, in relation to hernias and varicose tumors of the legs, may be correct, he will learn, and the public also will learn, from an extensive and interesting branch of inquiry, contained in Sir John's pamphlet, directly bearing upon this subject, and probably new to many of your readers. Mr.

Hutchinson, however, is quite correct in stating that the prisoners at work upon the wheel have it in their power, instead of treading with their toes, or the fore-part of the foot only, to twist their knees outward, and bring a larger portion of the foot into action, without which he is ready to admit that the exercise “ could be continued but a very short time, and would be productive of never-ending lameness and misery to the prisoner who had suffered this torture.” In the pamphlet now sent, you will find, however, that, though this change of position can be accomplished, and is accomplished, for a few moments at times, it is not persevered in by the prisoners in Cold Bath-fields, who are as dextrous as most in the kingdom, and cannot be persevered in for more than a few moments at a time, on account of the pain which such a twist of the knees produces, and which compels the prisoner to return abruptly to his original and ordinary bearing upon the *fore-part of the foot alone*: and hence, indeed, the violent heat, exhaustion, and perspiration, into which he is constantly thrown by an exercise of not more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, although his progression is so slow, that his entire day’s walk up hill, and this without any burden to carry, does not exceed *two miles or two miles and a half for the whole day*; and hence, also, that necessity which is found every where, on the introduction of Tread-wheels, for a richer diet. This at present consists, in the House of Correction in Cold Bath-fields, of half a pound of solid flesh every other day, with good animal soup in the intermediate day, besides a sufficiency of bread and other farinaceous food; and *Mr. Webbe*, the prison surgeon, whose official Report shows ostensibly that he is not unfriendly to the Tread-wheel, *has told me*, within a very few days, that, “ *without this increased diet, the workers on the Wheel would be soon in the situation of the convicts at the Millbank Penitentiary.*” All which facts speak sufficiently for themselves.

It was in order to determine how far it might be advisable to enforce the erection of Tread-wheels in all our prisons by a parliamentary enactment, that the Visiting Magistrates were lately

called upon, by the order of the House of Commons just adverted to, to make returns, to the office of the Home Secretary, of the effects actually produced, wherever they had obtained an establishment. Mr. Hutchinson conceives, that "this mass of most respectable evidence speaks loudly in favour of the highly salutary and safe operation of this mode of preventing a repetition of crime." He will find, in the pamphlet I am about to send him, that there are others who have examined it very accurately, and think differently; and, by turning to the third volume, p. 151, of the "Medical Jurisprudence" of Dr. Paris and Mr. Fonblanque, he will also find that the individuals whose opinions are given in Sir John Hippisley's pamphlet, are not the only ones who think differently; for the same general views of the mischiefs of the Tread-wheel Discipline are taken by those able and intelligent writers, with the official reports before the public. But, which is of far more weight upon the subject, by turning to the newly-passed Gaol Act, the passage of which through the legislature was delayed till these returns were received, in order that it might contain certain clauses, enforcing or recommending an adoption of the Tread-wheel generally, if they should be found to justify such a measure; he will perceive that, so differently have his Majesty's ministers, and even Parliament itself, thought of the result of these communications, that every such clause was withdrawn from the first; the Tread-wheel has been abandoned by the statute; and not one single word urged in its favour during the long passing of the Bill backwards and forwards through the two houses. Nor can any thing exceed the candour which has been exhibited by his Majesty's ministers upon this point, because it is very well known that several of them were antecedently most strenuous advocates for the Tread-wheel machine.

Guildford-street, August 4, 1823.

Review, of Correspondence, &c. &c. by Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. D.C.L. F.R. and A.S. a Bencher of the Inner Temple. From the British Critic for the 1st of September.

SIR JOHN COX HIPPISELEY, a sedulous Visiting Magistrate for the county of Somerset, has discovered that the Tread-mill is a cruel instrument of correction. The *discovery* was instantly communicated to Mr. Peel, who *vouchsafed the same attention to Sir John which he had previously paid to PRINCESS Olive of Cumberland*, and asked the Visiting Magistrates of every prison into which the machinery had been introduced, if it was attended with any injurious effects. They answered, *one and all, in the negative*. Yet Sir John persists that injury ought to have been done; and is not a little hurt at Mr. Peel's unsatisfactory inquiry. If, instead of sending a circular to every prison, the Secretary of State had consulted *a certain Dr. Good, who never was in a House of Correction above twice in his life*, the deleterious consequences of the Wheel would have been established, by such a chain of evidence as the world has seldom seen. The subject must evidently be submitted to one of Mr. Bennett's Gaol Committees, and with a view of facilitating their labours, we subjoin the heads of Sir John Hippisley's Case.

Proof the First.—Tread-wheel machinery was formerly employed by the East-India Company, and discontinued last summer. Why, this deponent knoweth not.

Proof the Second.—The prisoners working in the Mill at Cold Bath-fields have had four somersets in three months, and *ought to have been severely hurt*, but they ALL most provokingly escaped.

Proof the Third.—The working is so fatiguing, that it is not continued above a quarter of an hour at a time, and it induces perspiration, weariness, and hunger.

Proof the Fourth.—It makes men walk up hill upon tip-toes.

Proof the Fifth.—The work is too fatiguing for females.

Proof the Sixth.—It is by walking up hill upon tip-toes that

mariners and miners become liable to *varicose* veins. This important fact is investigated at great length.

Proof the Seventh.—Prisoners labouring under *consumption* and other bodily infirmities, cannot safely turn the wheel.

Proof the Eighth.—*The unhappy culprits have a horror of the Mill.*

Proof the Ninth.—The labour is not proper for women. This proof had occurred before, but it is a very strong fact, and worth repeating.

Proof the Tenth.—All the work done in a mill is the same in kind and in degree.

Proof the Eleventh.—The Tread-mill is a very bad thing.

Proof the Twelfth.—The *Hand-crank-mill* is much better. A respectable octavo volume is devoted to the developement of these facts, and we subjoin a few extracts from the evidence of Dr. Good.

“When about a twelvemonth ago you first asked me to accompany you in examining the machine in the House of Correction in Cold Bath-fields, and in comparing it with the Hand-crank-mill, I confess the subject was new to me; and hence, if I went without information, I went without prejudice. Yet, upon investigating its history, I soon ascertained that it was itself of so recent an origin in its application at least, that if I had travelled over the ten or eleven counties (for there were not more) in which the Tread-wheel was *at that time* employed, and had examined every prison separately, its operation would have been too narrow and of too limited a duration to have enabled me to speak of its effects with much decision from the evidence of practice, and have driven me to reasoning upon them from the nature of its powers and their application to the human frame.” P. 25.

“From the tortuous attitude and uneasy motion manifestly displayed in mounting the endless hill of this mighty cylinder, upon the toes alone, with the hands fixed rigidly on the horizontal bar, and the body bent forward to lay hold of it, I could not but conclude not only that the prisoner is hereby deprived of all the healthful advantage of athletic exercise, but must be fatigued

from the outset, and perpetually *in danger* (and with this *limitation* I expressed myself) of cramp, breaking the Achilles tendon, and forming aneurismal and varicose swellings in the legs." P. 26.

[The extract that succeeds this is precisely the same as appears in the preceding article from the John Bull paper; beginning with "To ascertain," and continuing down to "the original distress." J. J.]

The *evidence* respecting females is more to the purpose, but its edge is taken off by the concluding observation.

"The palms of their hands here, as in the case of the males, were hardened, or horny, and in far more instances blistered, the leathery skin in some cases peeling off, and exposing a sore surface beneath. For all kinds of needle-work, and other delicate descriptions of manual labour, they seemed to be completely unfitted, and the keeper allowed that they were almost always rendered useless for such purposes." P. 34.

This is sufficiently entertaining, but it must give way to what Dr. Good calls his *experimentum crucis*, the prisoners in Lancaster Castle have been weighed from time to time, or, in the Doctor's phraseology, "a pair of scales have been employed as a direct *Sarcometer* to determine the amount of struggle between the living powers of human flesh, and the destroying powers of the Tread-wheel." Now, up to February last, the prisoners had gained weight at the rate of an ounce a day; but by bringing the history down to May, Dr. Good is enabled to prove that they have refunded their ill-gotten flesh. His proof consists in the following note, and his commentary upon the evidence is altogether irresistible.

"Copy of a Letter from the Keeper of Lancaster Castle to W. C. Wilson, Esq. M. P.

"Lancaster Castle, 26th May, 1823.

"Agreeably to your wish I beg leave to send herewith the average gain or loss of weight of the prisoners employed at the Tread-wheel. Owing to my having occasion frequently to change the prisoners, on account of their removal to the hulks, or dis-

charge from prison, or to make room for the refractory, I have not been able to bring my experiments to that nicety I could have wished, and should have done, had I been able to keep the same set of men at work for three or four months together.

Working hours each day. lb. oz.					
From 10th Feb.	to 19th Feb.	7	gain 1 7	per man.	
19th Feb.	to 4th March	9	gain 0 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	ditto.	
4th March	to 25th March	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	lost 1 0	ditto.	
25th March	to 28th April	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	lost 2 4	ditto.	
28th April	to 26th May	10	gain 1 8	ditto.	

“ There has been no alteration in diet. The prisoners have been kept solely on the prison allowance.

“ As far as my experience goes, I am of opinion that the employment is *very healthy*, and I have not observed that this species of labour has had the slightest tendency to produce any *specific* complaint.” P. 49.

[From—“ While the pace is only *a mile and a half*,” down to “ allowing this fact to be given to the public,” has already been before the reader. J. J.]

“ Now what other labour under the sun, short of that of *actual torture*, to which men have ever been condemned, or in which they ever can engage, in the open air, has produced, or can be conceived to produce, such a loss of flesh and blood ?” P. 48.

What flesh-consuming Shylocks are the patrons of the Mill! Who would not be a patient of Dr. Good? The loss of a pound in three weeks, would make his blood run cold. The loss of 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. in the month of April overwhelms him with dismay. The recovery of one pound eight ounces in the more genial May, cannot alleviate his extreme distress!!! *Gentle reader, we do assure you upon our honours, that Sir John Cox Hippisley and Dr. Good have compounded 228 pages of such STUFF as this!*

Letter, inserted in the Morning Post of the 2d of September.

THE TREAD-MILL.

SIR,—The subject of the Tread-mill discipline has been so frequently treated of during the last few months, that were it not for the high importance which I conceive to attach to it, I should not think of troubling you with these remarks. From actual inspection of the Wheels and their treaders, as well as an attentive perusal of almost every thing that has been published, *pro* and *con.*; I have unalterably made up my mind, that the Tread-mill is calculated to do *infinitely more mischief, both physical and moral, than can ever be counterbalanced by any of its good effects.* The Parliamentary Return respecting this engine of punishment, printed last March, by order of the House of Commons, instead of shaking my convictions, which were formed long anterior to that date, tended *materially* to corroborate them! In the first place, as far as that Report is retrospectively concerned, the discipline in most of the gaols was *but a few months old*; in one of them I believe it had been introduced above two or three years; in the second, as far as its admissions disclose, a prisoner became ruptured while in the act of treading, in Reading gaol. The Surgeon* of Exeter gaol “*ONLY* learns that the muscles of the legs sometimes ached, and that work on the Wheel in warm weather would produce great perspiration.” The visiting Magistrates of Durham gaol “*have not thought it advisable to employ females in working the Tread-wheel.*”

Those who would argue that the Report itself, with the shortness of the time to which its information was necessarily limited, does not, in despite of these deficiencies, bring the Tread-mill into disrepute, should further be reminded, that the Mills were

* William Tucker, Esq.

not erected when it was returned in more than twenty or twenty-two prisons; that in several of these prisons, *but a small number* of prisoners, speaking comparatively with others, were furnished for the Wheels; and that the hardy subjects of the agricultural counties afford *very improper criteria*, for judging of the physical powers of the progeny of manufacturing and metropolitan districts.

Whatever the public may think of the Report under examination, it seems that Government were *dispirited* by it, from acting upon a resolution that was in progress, of recommending the universal erection of Tread-mills in the gaols of the United Kingdom. *It is a fact, that a clause to this purport was cut out of the Gaol Bill of last Session, by Ministers, before its introduction to Parliament.* This fact, Mr. Editor, should be paid a little deference to, by certain Magistrates, who daily betray an eagerness to introduce the Mills in all directions. It should cause those Judges, who *so prematurely* have recommended their extension, to *pause*. Surely, if Government think it imperative on itself to wait for more certain knowledge, it behoves individuals to be hypercautious, how they venture where such great authority dare not yet proceed, especially as *involving* their respective districts *in enormous expense*, which may all ultimately be thrown away, lies, perhaps, with these very individuals.

What has been hitherto adduced is confined to the Report, printed, as before stated, in March last: but since that date, disasters have occurred, and distresses been endured, through the Tread-Wheel Discipline, which must by no means be overlooked.

In Coldbath-fields prison, for instance, fractures of the machinery have taken place, throwing all the treaders backwards, from an elevation of three feet or *more*. By some mischance of a like nature, several prisoners had their toes severely jammed or crushed; and in respect of the women condemned to this TORTURE, scarcely a hot day has passed without two or three faintings! NOT A DAY has elapsed without witnessing the exoneration, through absolute necessity, of from twelve to twenty individuals,

from a third, or a half of the prescribed quantum of toil! If, sir, these statements be believed, and that they fall short of the truth *I shall furnish you at the end of this communication with the means of ascertaining*, then I am convinced that the public voice will be raised at least against sending *females to the drudgery and degradation* of treading at the Mill-wheels. The very Society for Prison Discipline allow “that there are to be found in *every prison* many descriptions of labour for women, which are *much better adapted* to female habits, than employment at the Tread-mill.” I do not know that I can better serve the cause of humanity and truth than by selecting a few passages from the very complete work, just published by Sir John Cox Hippisley, on Prison Discipline. This pamphlet has excited a *very extraordinary sensation*, and disclosed facts regarding the effects that have occurred, and *will occur* from its use, which must make the reader shudder. The medical opinions and observations which the indefatigable Baronet has collected together, will perhaps weigh most with the public, and as I cannot intrude, *ad libitum*, on your columns, I shall pass over much important and experimental matter, adduced by the latter, to condense the depositions of the former. Dr. Mason Good, in a communication addressed to Sir John, expressed his conviction “that from the tortuous attitude,” &c. [The quotation here adduced, ending with “the female structure can be affected;” and another that followed it, beginning, “I found upon close inquiry,” and ending with “the terror with which the Tread-wheel is contemplated,” are already familiar to the reader. J. J.]

Let no one start up, and retort—ah, the terror! that is the very thing wanted—till he prove that it is a legitimate, a proper sort of terror that is excited. If mere *indiscriminate* terror were a desideratum of prison discipline, it might be much more thoroughly held out, by enacting, that every delinquent on being sentenced to imprisonment, should have his ears cropped, or felon, rogue, or what not, burnt into his forehead. But terror will never prove an entire preventive of crime, as the world to its affliction well knows, and if it be *injudiciously* enacted against the minor orders of de-

linquency, it *may* diminish them by no other process than that of *increasing the higher ones*.—To return to Dr. Good, in another place, he proceeds—“ I inspected the men as they descended,” &c. down to “ the appearance of the shoe at rest”—[which extract need not be repeated. J. J.] “ The palms of their hands, in consequence of holding tight to the rail, were in *every instance* hardened, in many horny, in some blistered, and discharging water.” Mr. Copeland, of Golden-square, writing to Dr. Good, says:—“ With respect to the general causes of hernia, and of varices, I should think those diseases *much more likely* to be produced by the efforts of labour from the Tread-mill, than by the double labour of hand and leg, as sketched and described under the name of the Hand Crank-mill, in the printed paper, which appears to unite the advantages of healthy exercise, with those of compelled labour as a punishment.” Mr. Macelwain, Surgeon to the City of London Truss Society, remarks, “ with reference to the different modes of labour, certainly those which call alternately into action different sets of muscles, are to be considered as most contributing to the health and strength of the individual employed, and it would appear to me that the Hand Crank-mill is calculated to a great extent, to meet the object.” Sir W. Blizard, in a letter to Sir John, observes, “ On the Tread-machine the *abdominal* muscles are kept in constant action, and the extensor muscles of the back always on a stretch.” Again, speaking of the Hand Crank-mill in comparison with the Tread-wheel, he decides that “ the preference expressed for the former is founded well on the consideration of fitting the muscular power of the arms to *future labour*, and hence the more ready performance of duties for subsistence, and a preventive of inducement to criminal means of obtaining it. The hand labour can be better graduated to all the relative circumstances of age, condition, health, disease, power, &c. than of the feet.” Sir Gilbert Blane, first Physician to the King, in a letter to Dr. Good, says, “ I own *I have hitherto been one of the herd who, perhaps from too hasty and superficial view of the matter*, hailed this new contrivance as one step towards that most important and hitherto unsolved

problem—the employment of criminals.”—“ I know of no solid objection to the different physiological reasonings adduced” (by Dr. G. against the Tread-mill) ; “ but still physiology is but another word for theory, which is always fallacious till tested by experience.” Several other medical opinions are brought forward by Sir John on this interesting subject, decidedly adverse to the discipline of the Tread-mill.

Sir John Acland, whom the Prison Discipline Society honour as “ an experienced magistrate,” and who has been occupied with the duties of the provincial magistracy in the county of Somerset for more than thirty years, addressing Sir John, observes,—“ The Tread-mill is so much sanctioned by popular opinion, as a new mode of punishment, that the philanthropy of the day does not *recoil* at it, and it is to be carried on throughout the prisons without consideration, nay, *against a prudent one*. Presently we shall find the impropriety of it appealed against, and voted cruel, dangerous, and the like ; and it will be ordered to be laid aside as *disgusting*, and unsuited to the age we live in, and to the *humanity due to prisoners* ! The Hand-mill, I agree with you, is free from all such complaints, and the labour of it may be increased to any quantum of power necessary to produce hard labour, or be regulated to any degree of wholesome exercise. Can any one who will exercise his reason, by the help of a little anatomical knowledge, halt between two opinions ?”

The extracts given above chiefly relate to the *pre-eminent physical mischiefs* that have accrued, and will accrue from the exercise of the Tread-wheel : but *were these mischiefs out of the question*, the simple facts that the Wheel subverts the provisions of nature, and entirely substitutes *foot* for *manual* labour, thereby straining and rendering less fit for their allotted offices both hands and feet ;—that while it superinduces an unfitness for manual, which is *natural* labour, it generates through its severity, its pains, and perils, a *dislike and loathing of all sort of labour* whatsoever ;—that instead of imparting *lissomness* to the joints, and strength to the members, it contributes stiffness to the former, and sores or achings to the latter ;—that, begetting a dislike of all toil, it does

not bestow the knowledge of, or aptness for even the most irksome species of available occupation :—these simple facts are enough to convince a very simpleton, that the Tread-wheel discipline should be succeeded by something infinitely less pernicious in both its *moral* and *physical* consequences. The reasonableness of Sir John's attack upon this mischievous engine, I consider to be *indisputable*, and its completeness is admirably established by the proposal of a succedaneum for it, which shall secure to the public good, all the benefits, apart from the mischiefs of the Tread-mill labour. Premising that an engraving of the Hand Crank-mill is attached to his pamphlet, I shall now conclude in Sir John's own words :—" It is not to *hard labour* that any objection has ever been made or thought of, by those with whom I have had the honour of conversing in opinion, but only to *morbid* or *perilous labour*. For were there no risk of injury, or irregular and therefore painful straining of the muscles, little fitted by nature for the exertion with which they are tried by the Tread-wheel, we should readily give our consent to an increase instead of a diminution of the toil : we would augment the *quantity* if we were allowed to change the *quality* ; so that the punishment, though applied in another manner, might be as wholesome from its recollection as from the mode of its infliction. Were there indeed no other machinery by which a commensurate degree of punishment might be applied than the Tread-wheel, such seems to be the necessity for castigation, that may sink deep into the mental as well as the bodily feelings of the culprit, and haunt his memory long after his release ; that, notwithstanding its dangers, it might perhaps be a question with a moral and benevolent heart, whether this *VIOLENT and perilous INSTRUMENT OF REFORMATION* ought not to be resorted to. With all its evils, it is undoubtedly less baneful to the body as well as to the mind than absolute idleness ; and hence there is no difficulty in conceiving that the general health has in several prisons been less trenched upon since the use of Tread-wheels, than when their inmates were utterly abandoned from month to month to a life of torpid indolence and inactivity. But while the rival instrument of the Hand Crank-mill is capable of

effecting, as it appears to be, all that the Tread-mill can or ought to achieve, without the ill consequences it menaces, it should seem to follow that the moral and benevolent heart must give its unreserved suffrage to the latter."

Trusting that this letter will rouse public attention to *a most serious scrutiny* respecting the nature of the Tread-mill discipline, I am your very obedient humble servant,

JULIUS.

Letter, inserted in the New Times of the 3d of September.

TREAD-MILLS.

"Audi alteram partem."

SIR,—Your paper some time ago contained documents representing the Tread-mill to be, in the opinion of *the very respectable persons* who signed these, little short of torture. To these statements I humbly beg to oppose my own personal observation, and willingly leave the inference to your readers.

I believe all the Tread-mills in England are alike* in construction, certainly so in principle: however, my observations refer solely to the Brixton Mill, because that *only one* I have inspected. I was at Brixton Tread-mill on Monday, the 25th of August. My first inquiry was who had seen it? I was told many of almost all professions: the Dukes of York and Wellington had lately visited the prison, where too Mr. Grey Bennet was a constant visitor:—these individuals highly approved of the plan †. The shortest time which either male or female prisoners are con-

* [They differ as widely as it is possible for engines, constructed on the same principles, to differ. J. J.]

† [Does this correspondent speak from his own private knowledge? For he goes far beyond what the entries of these illustrious individuals, in the Magistrates' book, contain. *Not one syllable do they say either for or against the Tread-mill*, but merely praise the attention of the officers of the prison, and its regularity, &c. J. J.]

tinued on the Wheel is, I think, ten minutes; the ordinary time fifteen minutes; and the longest *twenty minutes*. The men prisoners are under the superintendence of turnkeys, and the female of matrons. I commenced by viewing the yards appropriated to the men; I walked through several. I am no follower of Lavater, but where the human frame is undergoing torture, some symptoms of agony must appear in the countenance. Now I NEVER SAW A SET OF HAPPIER-LOOKING FACES THAN AT BRIXTON! There might be exceptions, but the general character was decided; and that general character was assuredly not of pain—it was *mild*, it was *tranquil*; many of the fellows *smiled* as they trod their way; and as to the women, they *chatted* in much the same noisy manner as in a manufactory. When last year I was in Paris, I had under my eye a number of women employed at the Plate-glass Works. The labour was very severe; and that it was so, no one could but observe, as well by the countenance, as by the whole frame of the individuals engaged. The difference between the looks of the Brixton women and those of the Manufacture de Glaces is a 100*l.* to 6*d.* in favour of the first; and no one seeing the second could fail to observe this. Thus much for personal appearance. My next step was to feel the pulse of several men as they descended from the Wheel—so many men, so many pulses—but of those I felt *no one was weary or languid*, nor was any one quickened by exertion. One fine young man, who more particularly attracted my notice, was, on coming from the Wheel, as cool as if he had never been on it; he had not the slightest perspiration further than what is common to all; if I may be permitted to use a jockey term, he had not turned a hair; and yet this day was a very hot day. Does this look like torture? Satisfied as to personal appearance, I was permitted to cross-question some of the prisoners, and I will give you the answers of one who had been treading twelve long months at Brixton:—

“The Mill is not hard work?”—“I never thought it hard work; I have worked much harder; and when at liberty shall have to do so again. *It is disagreeable work; it is monotonous, lifeless, teasing, annoying work*, but it is not hard work. When

first placed on the Wheel, *the motion produced pains at the hamstrings*, but this pain diminishes as the party becomes accustomed to the Mill; and it is at no time of *that violence which may be said to be past bearing*. I do not like the work, because it is *degrading work*—prison work; but I repeat once more, it is not hard work."

I shall only add here, that my informant when first placed on the Wheel, *grew thin*. I asked him the cause, and was told, because he had little food. On my remarking, he could not now be called thin, the culprit instantly replied, "No, I am not thin, I have now more food, and am fat in consequence." The mill work has nothing to do then with his constitution. Does this look like torture? I pass at present to the women. It has been said that the Mill is indecent; alluding, I presume, to an exposure of the person. Some people will stick at a cherry, and swallow a mountain. I did not see above the small of the leg of any one of the women. Lack-a-day! I have beheld infinitely more in many a ball or drawing-room. Other topicks, however, of indecency are touched upon, and it is said that the degree of exercise produces unpleasant effects on the constitution. It may be so; but this is *no more* an objection to the Tread-mill *than* it is to a "promenade à cheval," a quadrille, or any other exertion* of that kind. All I can say is, that a matron always attends the Mill (at least at Brixton), and as soon as a female offender complains to her of indisposition, she is instantly taken from the Wheel. I am far from advocating any thing that can lead to the chance of a shock to female delicacy; and the lower and more profligate a woman is, I think *the greater care should be taken not to infringe on the last remaining traces of decency*. Therefore, I admit that the Tread-mill should never be used as a punishment for females, unless a matron can attend. But where, as at Brixton, that precaution is adopted, I consider the object of indelicacy to be totally removed. I have now but one word further to add:—Some

* [Which, if there be logic in this reply, EQUALLY with the Tread-wheel produce these certain *unpleasant* effects. J. J.]

people say that the Tread-mill is torture. Torture and perfect health are not twin-sisters. Let the books of the prison be examined; *the number of the sick will but prove the effect the exercise has had on the constitutions of the prisoners.* When Buonaparte complained that the French prisoners were ill-treated, the British minister repelled at once the charge, by publishing lists of the sick: and similar conduct, in respect to the Tread-mill, would, *I am convinced, set the matter completely at rest.* I am, sir, your obedient servant,

B. N.

P. S.—I forgot to state, that whilst I was in the prison, a girl, who had on some ground or other been taken from the Wheel, begged to be permitted to return to the task. Can that punishment be a torture which a prisoner solicits even to undergo?

Letter, inserted in the New Times of the 6th of September.

SIR,—The objectors to the Tread-mill proceed upon the singular assumption that they alone are alive to the feelings of humanity, and that all the visiting magistrates of the various gaols in which that *contrivance* is adopted are equally destitute of principle and discernment, in allowing such a system of cruelty and horror to go on. But what are the objections? 1. That under the improved system, female turnkeys are alone permitted to take care of female prisoners; and for this wholesome regulation a reason is assigned connected with the Tread-mill: the inventors of the objection not being aware that by a late act of parliament, the same regulation now takes effect in all gaols, whether Tread-wheels are introduced or not. 2. That the visiting magistrates have not dared to continue the prisoners on the Wheel longer than fifteen minutes at a time!—That is to say, under compulsory exertion, the individuals are humanely allowed, by authority and regulation, those stated intervals of cessation and rest,

which persons working voluntarily allow one another, by taking the labour turn about, when the work itself, from the nature of it, cannot be stopped. 3. That the weak and strong labour equally. This is not true—some do not go on the Wheel at all—others, by *getting up* at the middle of the Wheel* instead of beginning at the extremities, have only half the labour to go through before they go down again; and 4. That if the machinery were to give way, the persons would be thrown down! The same would happen if the floors of a house were to give way. At Brixton, the machinery never has given way, neither is it likely so to do. But as the Wheel is not more than four feet from the ground, and the prisoners hold on by a hand-rail, if an accident of this kind were to occur, they would drop themselves about two feet to reach the ground; *their companions not on the Wheel being close at hand* TO ASSIST THEM! 5. That by holding on the rail, merely to steady themselves, their fingers are spoiled for needlework. 6. That in some places where the Tread-wheel is higher than at Brixton, it has been thought proper to conceal the ankles of the females by a sort of screen; and upon this it seems A MOST DETESTABLE STORY has been engrafted, representing the screen to be necessary for ANOTHER CAUSE†. At Brixton there is no such screen. 7. That the general health of the prisoners is injured by the use of the Tread-wheel. I make no doubt that I shall greatly surprise many of your readers, Mr. Editor, by stating, that in consequence of this last assertion, the Secretary of State, so long ago as last January, addressed a circular to the visiting magistrates at Reading, Bedford, Aylesbury, Cambridge, Exeter, Dorchester, Durham, Chelmsford, Gloucester, Hertford, Lancaster, Leicester, Cold-bath Fields, Swaffham, Haverfordwest, Ipswich, Bury St. Edmonds, Guildford, Brixton, Lewes, North Allerton, and Edinburgh; and that *the uniform reply of*

* [Which is totally impracticable. J. J.]

† [Which was the first cause that at Cold-bath Fields prison suggested the precaution. This correspondent had infinitely better follow his ordinary occupation, whatever it may be, than meddle with matters of which he VERY RUDELY proves himself *totally ignorant*. J. J.]

the visiting magistrates, governors, and medical men is, "That no injurious effects had arisen from the use of the Tread-wheel." Such was the reply from *all* the gaols in which the Tread-mill had then been introduced; with the additional statement that the health of the prisoners had been generally improved by the exercise.

If any of your readers wish to see these replies at length, they will find them annexed to a public pamphlet, in "a Description of the Tread-mill," published by the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline. It would be well if the persons who are *agitating the public mind with reports respecting the Tread-wheel, as unfounded as they are absurd*, would employ themselves in a far more useful and respectable manner, by assisting those who take a real interest in the welfare of unfortunate criminals, in devising some remedy for the temptations to which they are exposed the moment they are released from the house of correction. By day and by night the doors of the procuress and the gin-shop stand open for the reception and ruin of the unfortunate females; and the flash-houses are waiting for the men; consequently, the same individuals who, while out of the way of temptation, had evinced, and for a long period too, every mark of repentance and good conduct, become again obnoxious to the laws for some new offence. These poor creatures are like children, alert and dexterous, but without any notion of self-denial or self-control, when left to themselves. The constant use of intoxicating liquors creates in them, even when sober, a *blood-thirsty*, savage disposition, which visibly, though gradually, disappears under the sober regimen of the House of Correction: but it is vain to expect in them any permanent reform, unless something more is done outside of our gaols and penitentiaries, as well as within them.

X.

THE ISLE OF WIGHT JOURNAL, of the 6th of September, transfers into its columns the article on the Tread-mill, which

appeared in the John Bull paper of the 24th of August, heading it with the following note to the Editor :—

“SIR,—AS YOUR paper has ever advocated the cause of humanity, you will, I am sure, oblige a subscriber and correspondent, with the insertion of the enclosed, copied from the John Bull, whatever may be your opinion of the paper whence it is taken.

Your humble servant, &c.”

THE John Bull paper, of the 7th of September, in its notices to correspondents, says, “Our further observations on the Treadmill, as applicable to females, are delayed till next week, to afford us opportunities of hearing all sides.” And “The facts that have been elicited from the consideration of the papers forwarded to us, *are indeed striking*; but as we are requested, nay, *implored*, to pause *before* we bring forward *all we are in possession of*, and as there is a chance that the women may be released from the toil, we wish to give six days more to the subject, in hopes that the necessity of pursuing it, *as far as it is our present intention to pursue it*, may be obviated!”

Article, from the Times of the 12th of September.

TREAD-MILL.

“SIR JOHN COX HIPPISEY has published a work on this subject, in a letter to a friend; and as his account of a visit to the House of Correction, as relates to *both sexes*, is extremely important and interesting, we give it nearly entire. Whether THIS HUMANE MAGISTRATE be right or wrong in his conclusions, we have not the means of deciding; but his opinions, *founded*, as they evidently are, *on much personal observation*, deserve serious consideration in the proper quarter.”

[The *copious* quotations that are appended by this Journal, to these introductory observations, are *precisely* the same as those which are given by the John Bull paper of the 24th of August.]

J. J.

Article, from The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction, for the 13th of September.

HAND CRANK-MILL, FOR PRISON LABOUR.

IN the first number of "The Mirror," we presented our readers with a correct view of the Tread-mill at Brixton, which has since been adopted in several gaols in England, and *even* in the United States of America. That it has had the good effect of inspiring some degree of terror in offenders we believe is acknowledged; but that it is the best means of employing or punishing prisoners, *begins now to be very much doubted!!* MEDICAL MEN HAVE ASCERTAINED THAT IT HAS A VERY INJURIOUS EFFECT ON THE CONSTITUTIONS OF PRISONERS, PARTICULARLY FEMALES—a circumstance which certainly, if fully proved, ought to be *decisive* against Tread-mills: since, in punishing prisoners for misdemeanors, and keeping them in safe custody, it is against the spirit of our laws to render them enfeebled or mutilated, or *to send them in a worse moral or physical condition* from the prison than when they entered it.

Without going so far as some of our philanthropists, who would refine away prison punishments so as to strip them of all their terrors, we may say that we think SUFFICIENT OBJECTIONS HAVE BEEN STARTED TO THE TREAD-MILL TO MAKE THE SUBJECT WORTHY OF FURTHER PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY, WHICH WE DOUBT NOT WILL TAKE PLACE NEXT SESSION! In the mean time, Sir John Cox Hippisley has published a work which embodies all the evidence already taken before Parliament on the subject, with a *very luminous* letter from Dr. Mason Good on the injurious effect of Tread-mills.

It would lead us too far to enter into an examination of what may be said in favour or against Tread-mills, our purpose being at present to describe the Hand Crank-mill represented in our engraving, and which is recommended by Sir John Cox Hippisley as a substitute for the Tread-mill.

In the machinery of the Crank-mill, the principal objects are to apportion the degree of labour to the degree of punishment, and at the same time to throw every principal muscle of the body into healthful action. Our engraving shows the perspective appearance of a portion of this machinery, consisting of two cranks, in which two sets of men appear working at once. It is needless to observe, that any number of cranks may be placed, radiantly or otherwise, round the central shaft, so as to communicate the joint efforts of all the men to it at the same time, and that they may be so partitioned as to preserve the classification of the persons at work. The position of the men may be varied at pleasure: thus, on one side of the sketch the men are shown with their right hands only in action, and the right feet advanced; while on the other the left feet are advanced, and both hands in action. One man is likewise shown with his face towards the others; and the whole may thus be disposed, alternately, by which the labour also may be occasionally increased or diminished. The operation of the hand-crank is so *simple*, and must be so obvious on inspection of the figure, as to render a minute description unnecessary. The cranks should be covered with loose ferrils of plate iron as a protection of the hands—each ferril of a due length for the labour of a single man. Each crank carries a bevil cog wheel at its extreme end, and all these wheels take in common into the cogs of an horizontal bevil wheel, bearing upon the perpendicular shaft, which passes through the ceiling, and gives motion to millwork for grinding corn, or any other purpose which may be desirable, and to which the workmen have no access. Any one or more of the cranks may, however, be thrown out of gear, at pleasure, by which the work will be rendered more severe upon those that remain. In addition to this means of varying the extent of labour, the crank on the right

hand side of the sketch is made adjustable, by means of screw nuts, so that its throw, or the circle which it causes the hands to describe, may be varied in diameter without any sensible variation in the speed of the machinery, or the cranks may be changed for others of more or less radius, at will. The room, which it would be desirable should be open to the air, in which the men work, should contain a dial clock, for the regulation not only of the mill-speed, but to determine the length of time during which each set of men is to work.

The oval figure suspended to the left of the engraving represents a counter or tell-tale, which by means of a dial-plate shows the number of turns that have been given to the machinery in the absence of the inspector during any period of time. Sir John Cox Hippiusley recommends that *females be exempted from the labour of the Hand Crank-mill, as well as that of the Tread-mill altogether*, it being evident that it may be extended to a dangerous excess, without great vigilance on the part of the superintendants.

Review, of Dr. Good's "Letter on the Mischiefs incidental to the Tread-Wheel," from the Literary Chronicle of the 13th of September.

THIS letter is a reprint from Sir John Cox Hippiusley's work on Prison Discipline, which has already been reviewed in the Literary Chronicle. WE CERTAINLY ARE NO FRIENDS TO THE TREAD-MILL AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PRISON LABOUR, but we have some doubts that the clamours against it are *altogether* called for. It may be true, that after a few days' work on the Tread-mill, the labour ceases to be a punishment to some; that one or two others may have employed themselves in knitting; or that a sailor may have used his hands in making straw hats, while his feet were employed in treading the Wheel; yet these facts are not decisive against the Tread-mill, which we believe has proved a terror to many culprits. Dr. Good, however, *rests*

his opposition on stronger ground—that of the Tread-wheel being injurious to the health ; and, *contradictory* as the evidence before Parliamentary Committees* has been, we think there is *no doubt* that this machine is *seriously prejudicial*, in many cases, to the constitution. Another objection to the Tread-mill is, that it *creates no habit of industry*, nor teaches any art or mode of labour. Dr. Good's letter displays *much good sense*, and details some curious facts, relating to Prison Labour and Prison Discipline which are worthy of attention.

Extract, from a letter inserted in the Morning Chronicle of the 13th of September.

“What so efficacious for restoring men to a *sense of shame* and virtue, as a month's exposure in that wholesome *school of morality* the Tread-mill ! If shame be a security against crime, they will thereby have enough of it to serve them for all the rest of their lives.”

Extract, from the John Bull Paper of the 14th of September.

THE TREAD-MILL.

No subject which we have treated, since the commencement of our career, has excited a stronger interest, or produced more numerous communications to *Bull*, than that of the *Tread-mill* ; indeed, the letters we have received are not more remarkable for their number than the variety of opinions which they contain, and we have delayed till now resuming the consideration of a question, certainly of *very great importance*, in order to give them every attention.

* [The only evidence ever before Parliament, were the printed Returns from the Tread-mill prisons, sent in at his request to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. J. J.]

To a particular class of our correspondents who accuse us (if accusation it may be called) of having fallen into the ranks of a party, headed by Sir John Cox Hippisley, in opposition to the Tread-mill, we must reply by *distinctly* declaring that *we took up the subject before we had seen Sir John's book*, and that our observations were made upon information actually received from the House of Correction in Cold Bath-fields; that we spoke after a careful examination of the cases to which we alluded, and that we did not know the nature or contents of Sir John's book *till subsequently*, when he was kind enough to forward it to us—when, finding the strongest proofs contained in it of *similar* conduct at a *different* period, we made use of it as corroborative of the statements we felt it our duty to lay before the public.

The letters which we have received from Magistrates upon the question we put out of discussion at present, because, as a *terrible engine* in the hands of the Police, we do not mean to question the efficacy of the Tread-mill; we neither wish to doubt its *legality*, because, upon the principle of “doing a great right to do a little wrong,” we conclude the Justices of the Peace are fully authorised to send *a lady and gentleman to Brixton, to tread for a month*, who have been detected by a *dreaming* watchman in a flirtation after sun-set upon Waterloo-bridge—all this we desire studiously to throw overboard at present, because, WE HOPE AND TRUST SUCH PARTS OF THE QUESTION WILL BE SHORTLY SET AT REST BY THE HIGHER POWERS OF THE COUNTRY!!

What we go against, and all that we have *yet* strenuously opposed, is the application of this laborious toil to *females*, and we have carefully read over all the papers and documents relative to the discipline so directed; but as our object is to have the matter *fairly discussed*, and by no means to “raise a cry” against a system highly approved by some of the best and wisest amongst our countrymen, we will content ourselves by laying before our readers one or two documents, which may aid the consideration of the subject.

The first is a letter addressed to a work called the “London Medical and Physical Journal,” by Sir John Cox Hippisley;

but which Sir John has transmitted to us, apprehensive that the lateness of its date would prevent its insertion in that publication—it is a reply to a letter which we have not seen, and indeed bears more upon the *general* disadvantages of the Tread-mill than its particular injuriousness to women. The accompanying communication from Mr. Cole corroborates, however, the distressing accounts of its effect upon females, and the horror which has been excited by it in the gaol of Newport, a town in the Isle of Wight. We submit it without any observation.

“ To the Editor of the London Medical and Physical Journal.

“ SIR,—A letter, addressed to the Visiting Justices of the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, under the signature of Mr. Hutchinson, surgeon of the establishment, having appeared in your last journal, with some observations on a communication which I thought it my duty to make GENERALLY, to the magistracy, in the course of last year, I cannot but notice that when Mr. Hutchinson speaks of ‘ the accident on the machinery by which the BOYS at work on another wheel (in the House of Correction in Cold Bath-fields) had been miserably crushed,’ he *merely* observes, ‘ I can *only* assert that accidents of this description have not happened in the Nottinghamshire House of Correction, neither do I see *any probability of their occurrence*, excepting by the *extreme carelessness of those on the wheel.*’

“ If Mr. Hutchinson had considered the incident deserving his notice at all, I should have expected, from his candour, that he would not have withheld the facts stated in the first page of the *circular* communication upon which he has commented. He must have observed that, with reference to the ‘ Official Returns of the Visiting Magistrates, printed by order of the House of Commons,’ the question was put, ‘ Why, may it not be asked, are the *various accidents of the most serious complexion* passed over *without the slightest notice whatever*, that, in different prisons, have followed the use of the Tread-machinery, particularly those that have occurred from the breaking of the shaft, or con-

tinuation of the axis, *four times in the prison of Cold Bath-fields?* Nor has the shaft at *Brixton* escaped a similar lot, and without the influence of such a bias (*as has been noticed*) it would be inconceivable that a report, which correctly states that the Treadmill Discipline was applied to *females* in the former prison, should be silent as to the chief motives for its discontinuance*.

“ I will not trespass, sir, upon your pages with the repetition of details which are now pretty generally before the public. Having myself made an unsuccessful attempt to resist the introduction of this novel, and, as I conceive, injurious discipline, in a considerable provincial establishment, where for many years I had acted as a Visiting Magistrate, it is, under the present circumstances, most consistent with my feelings to request *the discontinuance of my appointment to that highly respectable office*. I have also thought it no less my duty to submit to the public the communications which have now become subjects of much discussion—I can accuse myself for withholding two letters only, from professional gentlemen, whose opinions differ from those which constitute the greater part of the correspondence which has extended to so great a length.

“ I will only further observe, that I conceive all the material observations of Mr. Hutchinson are fully answered by *anticipation* in Dr. Good’s letter of the 7th of June last: that letter, with some additional notes, has been sent to the press for a *reprint*, and should any advantage result from the sale, or of that of the more extended correspondence, it will be applied to the general benevolent purposes of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline. Of Dr. Good’s professional merits, Mr. Hutchinson has spoken very handsomely. I think it not less my duty, on the present occasion, to introduce a foot note which appeared in the publication adverted to.

“ I have availed myself of a visit of Mr. Cole to his family, residing in this county, to request his attestation of the several

* When this observation was made, the female prisoners had been withdrawn from the discipline, since which period it has been unfortunately resumed.

facts which occurred in his *repeated* visits with Dr. Good and myself to the prison in Cold-bath Fields. Since which, other casualties of the same description have occurred, though Mr. Hutchinson sees no probability of their recurrence, except by the *extreme carelessness* of those on the wheel. My own opinion, nevertheless, is so much at variance with that of Mr. Hutchinson, that I am fully persuaded it is not within the means of *all* Mr. Cubitt's *efforts* to effect any *adequate guard* against their recurrence.

"I am, sir, very obediently yours,

"J. C. HIPPISELEY.

"West Cowes, Isle of Wight, Aug. 29, 1823."

"P. S. As it is of some importance that the professional character of Dr. Good should be well understood on the present occasion, I have added a foot note* from the correspondence addressed to the Home Department, p. 122."

"*Letter of Mr. Cole, Surgeon to the Northern Dispensary, to Sir J. C. Hippisley, Bart.*

"West Cowes, Aug. 28, 1823.

"DEAR SIR,—I have no hesitation in answering your question as to 'the accuracy of Dr. Good's statement of the facts and observations on those occasions when I visited with him the House of Correction, in Cold-bath Fields'—nor have I any difficulty in avowing my opinions on the subject, as a professional man, being in entire concurrence with those of Dr. Good.

"During my visit to my family connexions in this place, I have taken an opportunity of viewing the Tread-wheel in the prison, at Newport, where it is admitted that casualties similar to those which, in a greater extent, have taken place in the prison at Coldbath-fields (as described by yourself and Dr. Good) have also occurred—*both men and women* have here *frequently* fallen from the Wheel, and ONE MAN RECENTLY RECEIVED A FALL, WITH

* [This note related to the opinion entertained of Dr. Good by an eminent Counsel, and, has already been inserted in this volume. J. J.]

MUCH INJURY, WHICH CONFINED HIM NEAR TWO MONTHS UNDER THE CARE OF THE MEDICAL ATTENDANT. The remonstrances of the women against the discipline have been so powerfully urged, even against the strongest menaces of the Keeper, that he has been obliged to forego the practice of putting them on the Wheel!

“ The Keeper observed, that the discipline was so severe, that it deterred many who otherwise would have submitted to the imprisonment rather than pay the *fines* which exempted them from it;—if such be the fact, I need make no comment to you, sir, who have so perseveringly investigated this subject, on the inconsistency of such *inflictions* as well as the inequality of punishment which is made dependant, in a certain degree, on the pocket rather than on the *delinquency* of the offender. I have the honour to remain, dear sir, yours, &c.

“ ROBERT COLE.”

Having laid before the public these letters, which embrace at once the consideration of the *moral* as well as *physical* effects of the new discipline, it becomes our duty also in fairness to publish the following communication from Mr. Jackson, the surgeon to the House of Correction in Guildford, which most assuredly gives a complete contradiction to every statement heretofore made as to the injury done to female health by the Mill, as well as to those which have been made with respect to the “ waste of flesh,” so minutely described by the matrons of Cold Bath-fields, and the mischiefs accruing to the hands of the labourers.

[The letter, which is here given in the original article, will be seen among the introductory matter in the commencement of this volume. On its *assertions* (a harsher term *might* be used, with *truth*,) the following remarks are made:— J. J.]

“ We admit that we were beyond measure surprised at this striking variation from *every thing* we had previously heard upon the subject of the *practical results* of the Mill labour, and from the opinions of *many* experienced *medical men* !

“ As we are, upon all other subjects, so are we upon this, perfectly independent and unbiassed: having published certainly a

MOST * STAGGERING COMMUNICATION AGAINST OUR OWN DOCTRINE, we think we may fairly request the indulgence of our readers for not pursuing the 'Tread-mill' any farther, till we get some † SATISFACTORY REPLY to the *apparently* unanswerable testimony of Mr. Jackson.

"One 'Magistrate of Berkshire' begs to know what we mean by 'disproportionate labour,' and the inaptitude of women to work, we mean simply this; that we would have as there are at Cambridge—spinning-houses, or needle-work houses (a *sedulous* application to which might be compelled), for females—we mean that each woman should toil at that which was difficult and disagreeable to her, but not injurious to her health. The Tread-wheel seems too much like A QUACK MEDICINE, when it is applied indiscriminately to both sexes and all constitutions—make labour irksome, but do not make it prejudicial, because magistrates have no right, whatever they may think, to do more than ENSURE THE PERFORMANCE OF HEALTHFUL TOIL!

"All this might be done without any swelling of hams or breaking of bones, and in a similar manner work might surely be apportioned to the *weaker class* of criminals at Brixton or in Cold Bath Fields."

THE *New Times* of the 15th of September copies Mr. Jackson's letter to *Bull* into its columns, but makes *no comment whatever* upon its contents.

IN a letter inserted in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 22d of September, which is headed "Revision of the Magistracy," the

* [The reader will already have seen, to his no little astonishment, that this most staggering communication was furnished by Mr. Jackson "BEFORE HE WAS AWARE" (these are the Governor's words) that the women whose *weight* he sets forth to prove the wholesome effects of the Wheel labour, *had scarcely worked at all at the Wheel!!!* J. J.]

† [Will the foregoing reply do? J. J.]

following sentences occur: "If, sir, any communications you receive on this subject are calculated to demoralize our wives and daughters, by making them too wise in the ways of the world, let the whole blame attach to the THE MISCHIEF-MAKING INSANE BEINGS, who would send a couple for such offences (indecent exposure after dark) to gaol, and *that detestable engine of gaol torture, the Tread-mill.*"—"The Tread-mill is a *terrible infliction,*" &c.

Paragraph from the British Press of the 24th of September.

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

THE magistrates of York have asked Counsel's opinion, whether, under the New Prison Act, magistrates are compellable to maintain prisoners before trial, and authorised to compel them to work. Messrs. *Gurney, Park, and Nicoll* have given it as their opinion, that *they cannot compel prisoners before trial to work against their will, and are obliged to maintain them at the expense of the county!!!*

Article, from the John Bull Paper of the 28th September.

THE TREAD MILL.

IN agitating this question, we perceive on every side the interest which we have excited, and although our opinion with respect to the application of the labour to females still remains *unshaken*, we are anxious to give every fair opportunity to its advocates, because we believe the discussion likely to be serviceable, and forward the best interests of humanity.

We have received communications from Mr. Cole, from Mr. Dent, and Mr. Headlam, to all of which we are desirous to afford room; but being unable, from the nature of our publication, to

devote to any one subject so much space as they would require, we have selected for this day's insertion Mr. Cole's letter, observing upon the statement made in the letter of Mr. Jackson, surgeon of the Guildford House of Correction, and *an extract* from Mr. Dent's letter to Sir John Cox Hippisley, *containing all* that relates to the subject under discussion—with these statements and counter-statements before them the public will be prepared to come to the question well armed, for WE CANNOT CONCEAL THE FACT THAT THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE DISCIPLINE ARE BY NO MEANS DECREASING, AND THAT IT IS PROBABLE THE MATTER WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNTRY IN A MORE OFFICIAL AND IMPORTANT MANNER WHEN PARLIAMENT MEETS.

For the present we refer our readers to the following documents:—

“ TO JOHN BULL.

“SIR,—It does not appear from any thing Mr. Jackson has stated in his letter of last week, concerning the effects of the Tread-wheel on the prisoners employed on it in the House of Correction at Guildford, that these effects are in any degree at variance with those which have taken place in any other prison; for it has already been stated, over and over again, that the wear and tear of the frame, as well as the injury to the hands, depends upon the *measure of the infliction* and the *nature of the diet* allowed; *upon neither of which points has Mr. Jackson given the least glimpse of information whatever.* At Lancaster Castle, where it has been established by the regular use of a pair of scales, that the prisoners grievously fall away when they are compelled to work for *ten hours and a half* a day, or, in other words, to walk up the wheel TWO MILES within the same term of time; it has also been found and admitted, that in consequence of the nutritive diet which it is necessary to allow them under this mode of punishment, the prisoners can stand *seven hours* for the day's task-work, or walk on the mill *a mile and a half* for the day, not only without falling away, but even with some increase of flesh. This may be the measure of infliction in use at Guildford, for any thing that at present appears upon the subject; and if so, the facts are

strictly accordant, instead of being at variance, and the only conclusion we can draw is, that here also, as at Lancaster, and in other prisons, the prisoners will waste away upon a severer application of the same labour. But *to state isolated facts without their collateral data, is to give no information whatever, and to weary instead of instructing the public.*

“ The same remark must apply to the effect produced on the hands, or in any other part of the body; and which must very much depend upon the extent of the labour, and not a little upon the relative height and position of the hand-rail; concerning all which Mr. Jackson has left us *entirely in the dark*. From what I have personally seen, like effects are produced in all prisons from like labour; and the mischiefs so well known to have taken place in the female frame in Cold Bath Fields have been felt so severely in the prison at Newport (to which I directed your attention in my letter to Sir John Hippisley) that *here also the punishment is altogether withdrawn in respect to women*. The keeper of this prison, indeed, acknowledges that during the time it was applied to them they were *almost daily fainting and falling down from the wheel to the ground below, as, he adds, the men still do occasionally*; the diet being here upon a very low scale, and consisting of nothing but bread and water, except a very scanty allowance of meat on Sundays.

“ It is admitted on all sides that the labour of the Tread-wheel is an object of peculiar TERROR, fled from with almost as much panic as the gallows—that it cannot be continued for more than *ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at a time* without rest—that a *richer diet* is necessary to support the exhaustion which takes place: and nevertheless that not more than about TWO MILES AND A HALF of such up-hill is walked over in the whole day's task work, without any weight to carry but the prisoner's own person. Now, what can be the cause of all this *mischievous violence* of effect? Is it the *quantity* or the *quality* of the labour, for it must be the one or the other? We ascribe it to the latter, and point out the means by which this *quality* acts. But the question is an insuperable dilemma to the abettors of the Tread-

wheel, for they cannot ascribe it to the *quantity*, and will not impute to it the *quality*, while there is no other cause they can call in to their aid. *The official returns from the Tread-mill prisons* to the Minister for the Home Department, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, *support in the main the conclusion we have drawn*; and that Government has come to the same conclusion is obvious; since the legislative recommendation of this machine, which it was probably the object of this parliamentary inquiry to introduce into the lately-renewed Gaol Act, (provided such a recommendation could be supported), has been altogether withdrawn, and the intended sanction recalled. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

“ Great Coram-street, Sept. 19, 1823.

“ ROBERT COLE.”

The following has been addressed to Sir J. C. Hippisley:—

“ It is not my intention, in this letter, to engage in an inquiry as to the comparative superiority of the *Tread-wheel*, or the *crank-hand-mill*, or the *capstan*, or any other description of labour, founded on similar principles. It will not be denied that the introduction of *any one of them* will counteract the evil I have alluded to. In order to effect this at Northallerton, we have recourse to the Tread-wheel; and it would be doing injustice to the cause, if I did not most distinctly and explicitly state that it has been eminently productive of all the advantages *we anticipated*;—that it has in *no one instance* been attended with any of those alarming consequences, which you and the medical gentlemen contemplate, as its necessary result.

“ In support of the first position I could adduce sufficient local testimony in appealing to those gentlemen whose habits and avocations have led them to an attentive observation of such matters; and who contrast the gaol at Northallerton in its present state, with that before the introduction of this employment. If order, regularity, and quietness be evidence of the excellence of gaol discipline, if it be a desideratum that none except those prevented by bodily infirmity should escape *that degree* of labour to which THE LAW condemns them; such benefits have resulted from the introduction of the Tread-wheel; and if the combination

of these causes be productive of *health* to the prisoner, during his confinement, and excite no tendency or disposition to such complaints as you are afraid of (and which I will endeavour to prove need not be apprehended) after his liberation, then I trust no *visionary fears*, no mistaken views, of the true nature of a prison, will be suffered to operate to the prejudice of that system, which, after the fullest consideration, and a consultation with medical authority, the justices of the North Riding *unanimously* adopted.

“ In discussing this subject, I should be engaging in an *unequal contest* with MEN OF SUCH ACCREDITED EMINENCE IN THEIR PROFESSION, AS THEY, WHOSE OPINIONS YOU ADDUCE, were it not evident to me, that *all their conclusions are founded upon erroneous premises*: opinions *only* in opposition to *facts*. It is not from an hour's inspection of the employment on the Tread-wheel, by professional gentlemen, known to be such, attended in form by gaolers, &c., that a correct idea of its operation is to be taken; the prisoners are upon their guard; is it to be supposed that *they* have no interest in what is going on? Will they not use every means in their power to give *force* to objections, against an employment they dislike? We cannot suppose them to be ignorant of the nature of such visits. To the inquiry, whether this or that joint or tendon is rendered stiff and painful; whether this or that ordinary function is inconvenienced or obstructed by the labour; what other answer can rationally be expected except an affirmative? It is probable that if the same medical gentlemen were to inspect the Tread-wheel at Northallerton, the men would put themselves in something like the position delineated in fig. 3.— A figure correctly adopted by Mr. Cubitt, to give a *general idea* of the manner of applying the power of the prisoner to the Tread-wheel; but a position, which from having frequently watched them when they were not aware of it, I take upon me to assert is *seldom* adopted, *the whole length of the foot* is as often brought in contact with the *treadle*, and indeed sometimes the *heel*, and not the *toe* only. The position is varied, indeed, almost *ad libitum*, and on a wheel, when ten men are at work, there will be every variety of posture which is *essential* for the due alternation of muscular flexion and extension.

“ *I admit that the employment may cause men to perspire; and unless means are taken to afford the freest respiration, perhaps profusely;—but what labour does not? Is the offender, within the walls of a prison, eating that bread which his honest neighbour is obliged to earn by the sweat of his brow! is he to plead an exemption from labour because its effects may expose him to the same risks as others are liable to? but which, it is assumed, he must wilfully use to his own destruction, ‘by drinking to excess of cold water, &c. &c.’ The working compartments, however, cannot be too spacious and airy.—At first we found a tendency to the inconvenience complained of, but it was completely obviated by substituting an open trellis, instead of closed boards, between the steps of the wheel and the top of the compartment—thus affording a free scope for the action of the lungs, in whatever posture prisoners might be working.*

“ But to return—let us examine the matter more in detail. In letter 1st. it is assumed as a fact, that the prisoner ‘hangs by his hands,’ and ‘treads by his toes;’ and hence a long catalogue of necessary effects, such as ‘cramp, breaking the tendon achilles, bursting arteries and veins, aneurismal and varicose swellings in the legs, loss of power of motion in the arms,’ &c. Whether such would be the general effects of such causes, I leave to the decision of professional men; but I am not at issue upon effects but causes. If the fact be that the men do not always tread ‘unequally upon the toe,’ but that they use the heel also; if they do not ‘hang by the hands’ (which I would observe, at Northallerton, they cannot do, even if they wished it, so as to apply any part of their foot to the treadle at the same time,) and which frequent observation justifies me in saying, is not the case; then the evils predicted from such a position fall to the ground.

“ In addition to the disorders, which the Tread-mill is said to superinduce, and which apply equally to both sexes; others of a most serious nature, and distressing alike to their bodily health and moral feelings, are apprehended, will be the effect upon females. On the propriety of employing females at all, in this description of labour, a difference of opinion may exist; but evils to the alarming extent, and of such certain occurrence as are

anticipated in the extract dated October 21, 1822, if well grounded, would put a stop to any difference of *opinion*, and settle the point at once! Let us examine the ground they rest on; and we shall observe the same fallacious '*treading upon the toe*,' the same '*hanging by the hands*,' to be at the bottom of this also. But in addition, *some* of the evils apprehended are of such a nature as must *necessarily have occurred* in the course of a two years and a half experience. In answer to inquiries on this subject, the gaoler assures me, that in no one instance has any thing of the sort occurred, so as to prevent its application, either on the ground of *decency* or *moral feeling*: and to a similar inquiry, the surgeon of the gaol, a gentleman no less distinguished for his humanity than professional attainments, gives it as his opinion, that in many cases which occur during confinement, this particular description of labour has a *direct tendency to promote health*; and that, with certain exceptions (which must be obvious) he considers women, without a violation either of *decency* or *humanity*, may be thus employed.

"But IT IS NEEDLESS to follow the several authorities you quote through their labyrinths of *theories*; SINCE to all their *predicted* maladies, the same answer is at hand—that *none of them have happened since the erection of the Tread-wheel at Northallerton*; and so far from exciting a disposition to many of the complaints dreaded, or incapacitating the prisoners for future labour, the surgeon is of opinion, that the equable and regular action of the muscles of the body, excited by its operation, has rather a tendency to remove many *chronic* and *rheumatic* affections, which from their previous habits, the prisoners may have contracted. I have interrogated this gentleman also most particularly, as to its tendency to produce *various swellings upon the legs*—in no one instance of the sort, or any disposition to such a complaint has ever shown itself since the introduction of the labour.

"With regard to another formidable complaint; viz. *rupture*, which, we are told, is particularly threatened, it should be recollected that this, generally speaking, is the effect of some *sudden* shock, some violent extension of the abdominal muscles—*lifting heavy weights, raising water*, and even, I should say, by the up-

lifted action of the arms—in the Crank Hand-mill, in a much greater degree than the *action* of the feet upon the Tread-wheel ; for in the latter case, the power applied is only equal to the weight of the body, and the resistance *can* be no more, or in other words,
 * NO GREATER FORCE CAN BE EXERTED THAN IS NECESSARY FOR WALKING.

“ But, sir, the same answer that applies to all the former predictions, is the answer to this : Neither *rupture* has ever occurred, or any disposition to the complaint has supervened. We have had no instance of ‘ *typhus fever* since the introduction of the Tread-mill ;’ in short, instead of ‘ *disordering all the important functions* of the body,’ as one of your correspondents apprehends, it seems to promote that uniform and due secretion of the various organs which is essential to and productive of health.

“ To another objection, founded on accidents that are said to have occurred where the *Tread-wheel* has been introduced, it may be answered *generally*—That *occasional* accidents are *inseparable* from the use of *any kind* of machinery ; but in order to give force to the argument, as an objection to a *particular* machinery, it is not enough that such and such accidents *have* occurred once or twice, (or even four times, as at Cold-bath Fields) it must be shown, that they must *necessarily* be of *recurrence* AGAIN ; that they are *connected* with, and arising from, the very *construction* of the machinery :—It does not appear to me that the *mechanism* of the Tread-wheel is *more liable*, either to *derangement* or SUDDEN FRACTURE, than must *necessarily* be the case in *any* machinery where the resistance, and consequently the power is so great :—so far as *experience* goes, nothing of the sort has occurred at Northallerton ; and viewed *abstractedly*, it would seem that the *uniform equability* of its motion, would rather be an argument *against* the liability to accidents or fractures, which are generally caused by a violent jerk, or some excessive application of the

* [Here is a specimen in the assumptive “ of the answer to Sir J. C. Hippisley’s (multifarious) objections,” which is so satisfactory to the Prison Discipline Society, as to supersede much they might but for this letter of Mr. Dent’s have urged in reply ! *Credat Judæus !* J. J.]

moving power. Neither is it at all evident to me how, when applied to the purpose of grinding corn, it *can* be *exposed* either to the *same*, or any similar accident as that, according to your description of the cause, which occurred at Cold-bath Fields.

“ If, however, it were on no other account, than to avoid the possibility of a recurrence of such accidents, I think the adoption of some other *checking power*, for which the *fly* is merely a substitution, is desirable.

“ The application of the *labour* to some *useful* manufacture, suited to local circumstances, independent of the immediate benefit both to the persons employed, and those within the sphere of its operation, is desirable in another point of view, as affording means (distinct from those expected to result from the ‘TERRORS OF THE TREAD-WHEEL,’) for the reformation of prisoners. Without intermeddling with the distinction between a prison and a penitentiary, the object of each is in substance the same—the reformation of the morals of society in general; and whatever has a tendency to promote *individual* reformation, and to prevent the repetition of crime, is auxiliary to this leading principle. I am not discussing the means by which THIS REFORMATION is *most likely* to be effected; but the object should never be lost sight of, as involving *the true principles of prison discipline*! To apply this to the matter of discussion, it will hardly be denied, that to whatever variety of causes the *repetition* of crime is to be ascribed, none is more likely to produce it than the *utterly destitute* condition in which prisoners are often placed, immediately on their discharge! Now it is not to be expected, that in any gaol, the first and immediate object of which is punishment, provision can be made (I mean upon an extensive scale, as in the General Penitentiary at Millbank) for enabling the prisoners to provide for themselves in future life, by *instructing* them in some trade or employment; and it is therefore highly important that some plan should be adopted, at the *critical moment* of liberation, to preclude *absolute necessity* from being urged as the plea for dishonesty. Accordingly, this description of machinery, whilst, on the one hand, it presents a *ready* and *efficient* mode of employment, so on the other, it unites

with the *certainty* of employment, the *certainty* of enabling the prisoner to provide a *fund*, which is paid on his liberation, and which will operate as a corrective of the *danger* I have alluded to. A comparative estimate of the advantages, in this *view* of the question, which have resulted at Northallerton, from the application of the Tread-wheel to grinding corn, may be perceived from the following statement:—From Michaelmas, 1818, to Michaelmas, 1820, the whole amount of earnings by the prisoners was 48*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* (the Tread-mill not then having been erected.)—From Michaelmas, 1820 (at which time the Tread-wheel was brought into use), to Michaelmas, 1822, the earnings amounted to 194*l.* 3*s.* 7*d.*

“ I have been led into this digression, not for the purpose of objecting to the Tread-wheel, *used merely as labour*, without any *concurrent pecuniary advantage*, for any thing is preferable to idleness; but merely to show the *superior advantages* it is capable of, where the labour can be applied, (and this may always be done,) to some *useful* purposes, *profitable both to the prisoner and the public*, rather than being exerted merely as *unproductive labour*.

“ Again, the last sentence in extract, November 25, 1822, page 7, runs thus:—‘ The Tread-mill opposes equally all the principles of animal motion, and all the laws of animal health, we are acquainted with; it subverts THE BEAUTIFUL AND ESTABLISHED ORDER OF NATURE, makes the hands change place with the feet, and the arms with the legs; and whilst every human being without the walls of a prison rests upon the latter, and works with the former, compels the vagabond and convict to work with the former, and rest upon the latter.’ There is some difficulty, from the wording of this sentence, in ascertaining the precise meaning of the writer; it not only assumes the unfounded position of ‘ *hanging by the hands*,’ and ‘ *treading by the toe*,’ but it would seem almost to imply that the use of the feet, for any purposes except support, is *malum prohibitum* by the laws of nature. Another of your correspondents compares this mode of working to that of ‘ *turnspits and squirrels*,’ and seems alarmed at the *moral consequences* of *thus* DEGRADING ‘ human beings into mere automata.’

“ The only thing, which such reasoning as this proves, is the power of prejudice. An * assertion that the labour of no human being is performed by his legs and feet, carries its contradiction in every day's observation. And so far as *severity* is an ingredient in the charge,—with respect to this, *surely* a committee of *intelligent Magistrates, are as competent to form an opinion, as a Board of Medical Practitioners!* They, to whom the discipline of gaols is primarily intrusted, are not to be assumed as devoid of common humanity or feeling;—they can derive no *exclusive* pleasure, from the infliction of *excessive* labour upon the prisoners. They can have no *private* interest in *misrepresenting* that labour; and *therefore* to the imputation of severity, I beg to quote the following answer; being a resolution of the Justices of the Peace for the North-Riding, at their Midsummer Sessions, 1822; (made after *personal inspection* of the *machinery*, and the *fullest examination* of its *effects*) and which referring to the Tread-wheel, is as follows:—‘Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Court, that the labour is found to be beneficial to the health of the prisoners, and conducive to the good order and tranquillity of the gaol; neither is it such as can be considered *severe*.’ A Resolution like this, deliberately entered into, by men in their public capacity, is certainly entitled to some attention, particularly when put as a *fact*, in opposition to mere problematical opinions. And *suppose it were more severe, where would be the harm?* The voluntary efforts of honest industry are surely not too high a measure, for the standard of *compulsory* labour: and where is the labourer, whose daily task does not exceed a walk of two miles, even admitting it to be up hill? Yet this is as great a length of distance as *can* be performed by the revolution of our Tread-wheel in *six hours*, the average time of each man's labour at it per day.

“ And with regard to the *disgrace*—assuming (what I by no means admit to the extent contemplated) that the labour is *degrading*. The situation of a convict, in a prison, is surely not a post of honour! Is the converse of every moral principle applicable alone to *Prison Discipline*? And is the offender more likely

* [No such assertion is made by Sir J. H. J. J.]

to be *reformed* by experiencing that the unavoidable consequence of dishonesty is *not disgrace*;—and that a violation of the law does not entail either *sorrow* or *discomfort*? But, sir, it is not a new proposition in criminal legislation, which recognizes disgrace as a punishment; and if the *quantum* of that *disgrace* were material to this inquiry, I should require some better arguments than mere assertion to prove that the *Tread-wheel* is more *degrading* either than the Crank Hand-mill, or any other mechanical labour of the same description, either in or out of prison;—certainly it is much less so than many employments at which the innocent members of society are *obliged* to work to earn their daily bread.

“How far, indeed, it may be inferior to the Crank Hand-mill, in its favourable effects upon the ‘*brain and intellect*,’ which the same medical correspondent observes, are produced by the latter, I do not presume to decide: to the discernment of the physician or physiologist such results may be clear, but a man of plain understanding will be puzzled by what physical associations, between the brain and the extremities, ‘hand labour at the Crank-mill’ becomes conducive ‘to an alteration of evil disposition; thus answering the great ends of punishment;’ whilst in applying to the other extremities, viz.—the feet to the ‘*Tread-wheel*,’ ‘*despair may be the consequence, and the unhappy creatures be compelled even to the most shocking acts.*’

“There is also another hypothetical mischief, which claims our notice, in Extract, dated October 31, 1822: it seems to be apprehended that a ‘*comparatively enfeebled race, springing from the injured health and wasted limbs of many of those unfortunate beings, who may be exposed to this impolitic discipline,*’ will ensue. This is a prediction which I hardly know how to meet; if true, it involves the best interests of the state, and removes the matter in dispute, from a mere difference of opinion, about ‘employing vagabonds and convicts,’ to a great question of political economy. For what with its *moral* deterioration on the one hand, and its *physical* debilities on the other, the ‘*Tread-wheel*’ bids fair to annihilate a, by no means inconsiderable part of our national resources;—adding also this, to all its other inconveniences, that

we are all in the dark, as to its insidious movements:—to the ‘discerning eye of the physician and physiologist’ alone they are visible. ‘By far the greater number of the evils predicted, (according to the opinion of your correspondent of December 3, 1822), are such as could not have taken place from the shortness of the time the machinery has been at work, in any prison;’ *i. e.* all these effects, viz. ‘*severe and chronic lumbago, totally incapacitating from future labour;*’ ‘*various nephritic affections; disorders of the chest, accompanied with difficulty of breathing;*’ ‘*rupture;*’ ‘*rheumatism;*’ ‘*fevers of various kinds;*’ ‘*constipation of the bowels;*’ ‘*bursting arteries and veins;*’ ‘*various swellings in the legs;*’ ‘*cramp;*’ ‘*breaking the achilles tendon;*’ not to mention ‘*various complaints peculiar to females;*’ all these (I presume) ‘*require years before they develop themselves.*’ The same writer compares its operation to the ‘*poison of lead, which is often operating for years upon painters, before their limbs and bowels are rendered paralytic,*’—to ‘*the husbandman worn out with years of toil;*’ as if the prisoners, when *once* in gaol, were in *for life*; or that instead of three months (which is the average of each person’s imprisonment, in our gaol, during the last four years) they were bound to the Tread-wheel for a seven years apprenticeship, at least.

“With respect to the latter part of this position, I confess myself unable to see any parallel between it, and the *system* it impugns;—is it meant to compare the *duration* of a *temporary* imprisonment, with a long *life* of toil? or *application* to any particular business? or will the toils, and privations, and fatigues of the *husbandman* and *labourer*, find any parallel in our modern gaols? will the *labour* of the latter bear a comparison with that of the former? The offspring of the one is not more in danger of being enfeebled than that of the other—and it is not found that the children of the laborious classes in the community are at all less fitted for fatigue or labour, because their parents were laborious before them.

“Again, will it be asserted, that the bodily evils predicted *ALL* require length of time to develop themselves? or is this only

partially true? I am content to take it either way—*Rheumatism, affection of the chest, constipation of the bowels, ruptures, various swellings, &c.* together with a long catalogue of female complaints, would surely have given some intimation of their existence, or approach, during the experience of two years and a half; yet no disposition to any thing of the sort has *appeared*. Others again, such as *bursting the arteries and veins, snapping of the tendon achilles*, are generally *instantaneous*, yet nothing of the sort has *happened* since the erection of the Tread-mill at Northallerton. In short, to all the objections advanced against it, whether as descriptive of the *mode* of its operation, or the *hypothetical* reasoning founded thereon, or the *accidents* to which it is liable—the same answer is at hand (so far as *our experience* goes) the *strong negative of fact*.

“ I have endeavoured fairly and distinctly to lay *these facts* before you,—and although I must be allowed to express my deep regret, that statements so *materially affecting* the good order and discipline of prisons, and so calculated, from *the personal consideration, the professional attainments*, and the decisive tone of their advocates, to agitate the public mind, and excite impressions unfavourable to the humanity, and even *justice*, of those who preside over this department; representing (as it were) Justices of the Peace, and Gaolers, indeed *all* who support the *Tread-mill* system, as exercising an unwarrantable and injurious tyranny over the unfortunate objects of their custody,—although it must be a matter of deep regret, I repeat, that such ALARMING STATEMENTS should have been made *without* extreme caution;—it is far from my intention to cast the slightest imputation on the motives by which they have been actuated. Perhaps on the *general principles* of prison discipline there may be no difference of opinion between us. A prison, in my acceptation of the term, should be a place where every discomfort is studiously introduced, and every comfort excluded, except so far as is compatible with health;—and that the Tread-wheel is eminently calculated to effect this, I have endeavoured to prove, by a plain exposition of facts;—and the only additional observation that remains to be

offered, is the testimony of the surgeon at Northallerton, who, being interrogated, as to the effect of the Tread-wheel, concludes his observations in these words:—‘ There has been less sickness in the gaol since its introduction ; and after an experience of two years, I repeat, without the fear of contradiction, that the health of the individuals has been benefited, and in no one instance has it been injured.’

“ It is my intention to give the same circulation to this letter, as is obviously required by the statements that have given rise to it, and as the Magistrates for the North-Riding are more immediately interested in an explanation of the charges which bear against their gaol in particular, a copy will be forwarded to *each* of them.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Sir,

“ Your very obedient humble servant,

“ WILLIAM DENT.”

“ Crosby-Cote, March 13, 1823.”

Letter, inserted in the Morning Chronicle of the 29th of September.

TREAD-MILL.

SIR,—Among the numberless attacks which have of late been made upon the Tread-mill, I do not remember to have seen *the sufferings of the females*, in particular, sufficiently *detailed* and dwelt upon. If you will allow me space in your columns, I will endeavour to give the public something like an idea of *the barbarous impropriety of putting women*, at least, upon the *Tread-wheel*. Every word of what I shall state as matter of fact, comes direct from the head-quarters. I have not received it at second hand ; and instead of being an exaggerated statement of matters, mine will studiously be confined *within* the limits of truth. About

six weeks ago, I made inquiries in person about Coldbath-fields prison, the result of which I shall state in order. I am particular in mentioning the interval of time since then, as, on renewing my visit two or three days ago, I found (I implore the attention of the public to this part of my deposition), that of SEVERAL women who had *fainted off* in these last six weeks, *one had been so injured by her fall*, as to be obliged to be conveyed to the infirmary, where she remained till her period of confinement expired; again, A WOMAN of the name (I think) of Smith, has been put on the Wheel, WHO HAS BORNE TWELVE CHILDREN, and who seems distressed by the labour to the very last degree; she declares she would sooner perform any conceivable task than tread; and on the very day of my visit, the machinery (which has met with five or six fractures, that have precipitated all the prisoners from the Wheels) was out of sorts in the following manner: The Wheels in one of the yards of the women, suddenly stopped, and then ran round of their own accord with great velocity; as soon as they stopped the women all jumped off in a fright, for had they not done so, their toes would have been crushed, as was the case with one of the yards of the treaders in this prison some time back. I am told this kind of irregular action of the machinery has occurred *several times*, and from *its immense extent and ramifications*, I am afraid that it will ever be liable to it, as well as that far more serious casualty which has five or six times thrown all the treaders backwards off the Wheels. What I have yet brought forward, let it be borne in mind, is a *part* or sample of the Tread-mill mischiefs in *only two out of the eight yards* of Cold-bath Fields prison, *during the last six weeks*; I now proceed to lay before you the account which I obtained previously, of the sufferings and dangers more particularly connected with these *two yards*. Most of your readers know, and know with *loathing and indignation*, that the effects of the discipline on the female frame, which should have condemned it as unfit for a moment's encouragement, have *only* produced the precautions of a screen along the Wheel-galleries, and the exchange of female for male superintendants of the yards. Into these yards, to stare at the women

in this their degraded ATTITUDE and condition, are male visitors as well as female continually admitted. The male, however, are by far the greater proportion. I am assured that the most abandoned characters complain bitterly at this exposure to strangers' eyes, and ask whether it is not enough for them to endure this drudgery, without being exposed to the gaze of others? Their only consolation under this feeling should be, that the accessibility of the prison will probably prove fatal to the discipline, as the public obtain by it, *not magistrates', nor surgeons', nor gaolers' statements of their case*, but statements founded on the WHOLE truth, because formed without prejudice, and uninfluenced by interest or fear. This feeling lets us into the secret of one of the *moral* qualities of the punishment; it shows us that it is felt to be *essentially* of a degrading, or rather branding nature; that *it degrades human nature*. Now all men who study human nature aright, are decidedly against any punishment's possessing such a quality—a quality that *never helps to reform*, but, on the contrary, *infallibly tends to exasperate and debase*; to make *savage, revengeful, and sullen*; to form, in fact, the desperado—a quality which frequently renders the punishment worse than if it were capital, and which has sometimes caused it to be fled from for actual self-destruction. Soldiers have been known to commit suicide, to escape *the beastly and intolerable exposure and disgrace of whipping*. WHIPPING! A PRACTICE WHICH PUTS US ON THE LEVEL OF NAKED SAVAGES AND BARBARIANS, which impeaches our character for wisdom as well as humanity, and which can only be approached in moral cruelty by the infliction of the Tread-wheel! It is no wonder if this *engine* of punishment be of this nature, that added to its physical severity, from time to time, it should cause many of the females to *cry deplorably*, which is an absolute fact. Most of the unfortunate wretches endure severe pains in the loins, some of them still severer *bearing down pains*; and in warm weather scarcely a day passes without two or three falling off the Wheel in fainting fits. These faintings ought to shock us into an instant surrender of such a mode of punishment as far as women are concerned. They are not even peculiar to hot

weather, but are of *continual* recurrence. One woman was ordered on the Wheel three several times a short time ago, after three several faintings; and another with a contracted hand, was then undergoing its torture. But the grand mischief of *continual* recurrence which has already been alluded to, renders it imperative on the public to bestir itself; to take up the cause of outraged humanity; and as with the voice of one man, plead for the immediate release of the women from such a distressing, loathsome, and *unnatural* discipline—a *discipline cruel and impolitic for the male*; but a thousand-fold more so for the female. After what has been adduced, the statement, that on first being put to the toil, the hands become blistered, and generally run blood, and that in some subjects the feet become sore also, will appear comparatively trifling.

The public may not be aware that it is *impossible* to place the whole foot on the treadle without twisting it sideways; this is the reason the stepping has been *so properly* described as mounting a hill on tiptoe—a mode of progression the most trying and mischievous to the human body in the world! What, however, can be so conclusive against the severity and *inequality* of the punishment, as the fact, that out of forty or fifty females, scarcely a day passes without the superintendants being compelled, in the exercise of a *very limited* discretionary power, to exonerate some of them from a portion of their allotted task-work? On several occasions, as many as ten and fifteen have been so relieved! What a pretty picture does this present us: a work of humanity forced upon the task-mistresses, which shall help to harden the hearts of the unexonerated, while it exposes these matrons to their murmurs and, perhaps, impositions. The simple state of the case, that, treading on the Wheel is a punishment which cannot be managed or proportioned to relative degrees of health, strength, size, &c. &c.; that for many states in which a prisoner may be; namely, pregnant, consumptive, ruptured, &c. or have a tendency to consumption or rupture, &c. form objections to it, *valid and sufficient to its utter condemnation*. After all the cost of its invention and adaptation, it cannot be used in many instances,

which, however, but for it, would be somehow provided for. A surgeon, with whom I conversed a few days since, expressed his fears to me that, in the case of women, the discipline would every now and then be found TO HAVE INJURED THE UTERUS!

Amid the mass of writing which has lately accumulated against the Tread-mill Discipline, I was inexpressibly gratified at meeting with the following entire reprobation of it, in a very superior article on Prison Discipline, contained in the sixth number of the Supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica:—

“There cannot be a worse quality of a punishment, than that it has a tendency to corrupt and deteriorate the individual on whom it is inflicted.”—“Labour, as a punishment, operates with more inequality than almost any other instrument of punishment that ever has been invented. The same degree of labour would kill one man, that to another would be only pastime. From this cause *we may apprehend the most horrid abuses, in the continuance of those Tread-mills.* We may be *very sure* that the *most atrocious cruelty* will often be inflicted upon those, who, with strength below the average standard, are placed on those *penal engines*, while in the case of those whose strength is much above that standard, they will hardly operate as a punishment at all.” I would refer all your readers to this article, as I conceive its reasonings of the most conclusive nature against the Tread-mill. You will probably agree with me, that when works of the notoriety and national importance which this possesses, begin to attack a discipline upon sober and argumentative grounds, it is high time that all *precipitate* encouragement and promotion of it should be suspended. *Certain Magistrates, however, have not evinced more unwise precipitation in introducing the discipline, than disingenuous pertinacity in defending it.* After the enormous expenses in which they have involved themselves, it is certainly not very wonderful that they should be unwilling to open their eyes on the fact, that their money is *worse* than thrown away. That it is daily generating unjust sufferings and mischief, both moral and physical. The cost of the wheel erections at Cold-bath Fields was, I believe, 12,000*l.*; no mill is there in existence; all the labour is spent on

the air ; but better so, than that another 12,000*l.* should be laid out in erecting a mill for the laudable purpose of being subsequently pulled down, or not worked at all. If right is to prevail, and the dictates of common sense to be preferred to THE SPECIFICS OF QUACKERY, *the Tread-mill must be abolished.* It cannot be modified into an engine of NATURAL employment: when the hand-rail is high, the short prisoners are on the stretch, and the loins, &c. are distressed ; when it is low, as is the case at some prisons, not only are severe pains felt *in the chest* (a fact I have not seen any where noticed) from the stooping-forward, leaning posture ; but many prisoners will every now and then support themselves entirely on the rail, and take their feet off the Wheel, leaving so much additional labour to be done by those who continue to tread. Every syllable, sir, of what I am now telling you, is correct to scrupulousness : it is gathered from actual observation, and the most guarded inquiry. *No disposition to condole with the prisoners has been betrayed, nor have they generally been questioned in one another's hearing.* That it is absolutely indispensable for the public to receive with due caution ALL OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS IN FAVOUR OF THE TREAD-WHEEL, will be suggested by the knowledge of the extent to which certain Magistrates are involved in the matter ; the consequently intense interests that must side with the discipline ; and the superior facilities possessed by its advocates of dressing up matters as seen through their own optics ; and of slurring over or suppressing what ought to be known. I do not put forth these insinuations without cause. And it is indispensable that the public should know, that *the returns to Government*, in answer to Mr. Peel's Circular, calling for information respecting the Tread-mill, &c., though gloomy enough to make Government change its intention of recommending, through a clause, obliterated from the lately-passed Gaol Bill, the universal erection of Tread-mills in our prisons, *were deficient** in many points of information that should have been afforded. Previous to these returns going in, *one most important result* of the discipline

* [Attention is most earnestly requested to this particular point. J. J.]

in more than a single prison, or a single instance, had been THE REFUSAL OF INDIVIDUALS, AND OF WHOLE YARDS TO TREAD; and in a case or two THIS MUTINOUS SPIRIT WAS ONLY SUBDUED BY WHIPPING AND COERCION. *Not one*, however, of these consequences of the punishment, *not one* of the remedies used to subdue the refractory proceedings, was hinted at in the Reports! They were as though they had not been; and but for the difference between countries, would have been no more known than the mysteries of the Inquisition. Similar mutinies have occurred since—one at Swaffham gaol, another at Reading gaol, several at Cold-bath Fields, where on one occasion the Keepers were obliged to send off express for the Magistrates, who, on arriving, ORDERED FOUR MEN TO BE WHIPPED, &c. &c. So much has *leaked out* to enlighten us as to the arcana of the Tread-mill Prisons; but how much is behind? The antipathy to the labour is of the most rooted kind; and it has given proofs, in the manner by which it has expressed itself, that it is not grounded on an aversion to toil, and an indolent audacious spirit, but on SOME INERADICABLE AND UNIVERSAL FEELING AND INSTINCT OF HUMAN NATURE—a sense of shame, a feeling of degradation, and a smarting under the irksomeness and severity of the infliction!!

That some surgeons may not be the fittest persons (from a professionally indulged habit of thinking lightly of disasters unless truly and immediately serious) to report on the Tread-mill, may be gathered from the fact that Mr. Webbe, of Coldbath-fields, assured Government, that during the eight months since the working of the Wheels, he had *never* known any ill effects produced on the bodies of the men or women. Now it is *undisputed* and indisputable, that during the eight months, women had been obliged to descend from the Wheel! and continued complaints of achings, and pains, &c. &c., had been made from all quarters.

Several of the Reports also neglected to state how long their Mills had been worked; and in the report just analysed, *no mention is made of the fractures of the machinery* which had already occurred, and their headlong consequences. These various de-

tected omissions, however *innocently*, were most injuriously made—for without the matter they pass over, *much* that the Mills are objectionable in, could not be thoroughly explored.

I see that the surgeon of Guildford Gaol has addressed a letter to a Sunday paper, in which he asserts, that in *his* prison no ill effects have occurred, and that several of the women treaders have a trifle increased in weight. This may be all very true, and yet *perfectly in accordance* with the doctrine that impeaches the discipline. That doctrine holds, among other things, that the punishment is *unequal* in its operation; that some individuals will be horribly distressed by it; that some will not. This surgeon's charge are probably of the hardy, peasant breed; but if some of them were not so, it was never argued that the ill effects were to be *always* produced, either immediately, or in every subject not of a given calibre, or a ruddy countenance; again, if he gives the whole list of females, let it be observed *how very small* their number is! I am astonished that this gentleman, instead of producing his information as an isolated account, has drawn an inference from it to the credit of the discipline, and the discredit of its opposers: he should have considered, that *unless his facts could destroy the facts of a totally reverse nature*, collected from Cold-bath Fields and NUMEROUS other prisons, *he makes no progress in favour of the discipline*; the facts may clash; but a main charge against the discipline is, that its results will clash; will be various and uncertain; his facts are a portion of these results. It *only* serves to bewilder the public judgment to publish statements so imperfect as that sent up from Guildford. This document neither mentions the total number of prisoners in the gaol; nor the position of the hand-rail; nor the extent, or comparative ponderosity of the machinery; nor the diet, whether richer, as of necessity is now the case in most Tread-mill prisons; nor the average sort of subject sent to that prison, whether of the hardy agricultural race, or of the metropolitan or manufacturing standard, as to general health, occupation, and strength. The absence of *any one* of these data would render the communication *valueless*, as far as any positive and precise deductions to be drawn from it; what

then must the absence of them all do? Five or six essential ingredients of every such a statement—if it is to prove of any earthly service in the eliciting of truth! They must render it as they have done, calculated only to startle the superficial and undiscerning, and to pester the opponents of the Tread-mill with the extra task of opposing, or rather exposing, inconclusive and fallacious styles of treating a most important subject. I have hitherto argued the point, allowing to the Guildford surgeon the whole benefit of his unqualified assertion, that *no ill effects* have occurred in his gaol; but I would now call upon him to explain, to the very letter, the meaning he attaches to the expression, *no ill effects*. Will he vouch for it that no complaints of achings, and pains in the loins, or insteps, or legs, have been made in his prison since the introduction of the Mill? If they have been made, and made with truth, then ill effects have been produced there! Will he aver that no casualties of any kind have occurred there? I am afraid he cannot. I am afraid that he means by *no ill effects*, no serious mischief—*chirurgice dicens*—now, effects to be not only in themselves ill, but truly prophetic of severer mischief, need not be *serious* in the first instance, or for a considerable time; but, however mild they may be in commencement, *their accruing at all is condemnatory of that which produces them*. I beg particular attention to this proposition, as I know that surgeons have conscientiously sent in reports of no ill effects having been produced, when the contrary was the fact; but, as already remarked, they *confounded** *serious mischiefs* with *ill effects*. Many of the mischiefs of the Tread-wheel Discipline can only become fully developed by time; for instance, all accelerated predispositions to disease, all the debilitating and impairing influence of its straining and stretching peculiarities, &c. I think, Mr. Editor, I have said enough to convince every one who believes my statements (and those who do not may easily inquire into their veracity), that in the behalf of women, at least, an immediate appeal should be made on the part of the public, for their release

* [This cautionary distinction is of very essential importance. J. J.]

from THE DISGUSTING AND MERCILESS INFLICTION OF THE TREAD-WHEEL. It is really monstrous for them to be subjected to it a day longer. I have just heard in conversation, that at Newport Gaol, in the Isle of Wight, the women have proved so refractory, that all hopes of making them tread have been abandoned. I give you this anecdote as something more than ordinarily important. The magistrates and gaolers have, in fact, been beaten in a favourite attempt, by a set of poor female prisoners asserting against them the *rights* of humanity and the impulses of common sense. One thought occurs to me, which is, that it is the duty of all, who visit the gaols, where a book is kept (as at Cold-bath Fields Prison) for visitors to record their opinions in, of the state of the arrangements, &c., should they object to the Tread-wheel, there to put it down in black and white. Such a course of proceeding might considerably hasten the abatement of THAT PRISON NUISANCE, THE TREAD-WHEEL. Intending to prosecute my *researches* still further, and hoping to have some additional matter of accusation to lay before the public in a few days, I conclude for the present with your obedient servant,

A FRIEND TO NATURAL EMPLOYMENT AND MANUAL LABOUR.

Letter, copied from "The Staffordshire Advertiser" into "The British Traveller" of the 30th of September.

THE TREAD-MILL.

My principles, as a *stanch Tory*, naturally lead me to lean in all cases, where the exercise of authority is considered, rather to the side of the magistracy than to that of the people; and I consider this to be perfectly just and safe, where *our old laws* are concerned, which time and experience have ascertained to be adapted to the free spirit of our Constitution, and which long ex-

ample and precedent have taught English Magistrates to *administer in conformity to the genius of the age*. It is the *misfortune*, however, of the present day, that a system of interference with our established code of justice has sprung up (founded upon the assumption that the morals of the population are in a state of deterioration), which has found its way into the Senate, and produced a rage for *experimental* legislation. To this, and to its effects, I am most decidedly hostile, for I am fully convinced that it is a gross libel upon the lower orders of Englishmen to assert, either that they are not the most moral of their class amongst the human race, or that crime amongst them has at all increased, in proportion to the augmentation of their numbers! With these opinions it is almost needless to say how much I dislike the introduction of any *novel* engines of discipline into our prisons, which, according to the spirit of our law, are considered *in themselves* as a severe punishment. To the free spirit of an Englishman the restraint of a prison is necessarily a serious infliction; and constructed as our prisons are, the confinement which a prisoner undergoes within their walls, is of itself a sufficient expiation for *any* kind of misdemeanour which *only affects the public morals or convenience*. But when to this is added a *species of distressing labour, administered by means of mechanism*, I confess it appears to me that we have parted with a portion of our ancient liberties, in the moment which introduced *these wheels to our criminal code*. As a substitute for *whipping*, or for the pillory, or for any disgraceful and painful infliction, which the laws have hitherto sanctioned, the Tread-mill might perhaps be justified, although even in those cases I should object to the use of *machinery*, which *always savours of torture, and is at the best a bad precedent*; but *in cases of vagrancy and slight misdemeanor*, to which it is now applied (and in the former of which no magistrate has for years past thought of putting the full sentence of the law in force) I consider the practice of condemning prisoners to labour at this invention as **HOSTILE TO THE SPIRIT OF OUR CHARTERS**. As an *engine of moral reformation*, I am convinced that *it is as useless as example* has long since proved all punishments to be; and *the*

principle by which its employment is sanctioned would *equally* justify the introduction of the rack, the guillotine, or the whole detestable train of instruments which human cruelty has imbrued in human blood!! That such was in any way the light in which it was regarded by those who have brought the Tread-mill into use, I am far from believing to be possible, for their intentions are indisputably good; but *I trust that, in the next Session of Parliament, the Tread-mill will be examined in a constitutional point of view, when I am pretty certain that its appearance in our prisons will cease at once!!* We are a moral and religious nation, and it is very discreditable to both these qualities, that in the nineteenth century, and when we have probably attained our highest point of national excellence, it should be recorded of us, that we had so incompetent a police as to oblige us *to invent new and aggravated punishments for slight offences.* M. C.

Article, from the New Times of the 30th of September.

THE TREAD-MILL.

THE importance of giving some laborious employment to persons suffering imprisonment as a punishment for crime, having been generally admitted, the invention of the Tread-mill was naturally received with favour. Strong and numerous testimonies of its efficacy and fitness, laid before the proper authorities, confirmed the impression; and *its universal adoption seemed to be at hand*, when doubts of its propriety were started, founded on the alleged tendency of the exertion it calls forth, to produce particular diseases, and injure the health of prisoners, and *especially of females* compelled to work on it. The question is one of considerable interest to the friends of *humanity* and of *justice*, and we have thought it right impartially to lay before our readers the

statements which have been transmitted us on both sides. The most distinguished opponent of the Tread-mill has been Sir John Cox Hippisley, whose work we have already had occasion to notice. We have now to mention a letter, on "the Mischiefs incidental to the Tread-wheel, as an Instrument of Prison Discipline," addressed to that gentleman by Dr. Mason Good.

Dr. Good thus speaks of his first visit to the House of Correction, in Coldbath-fields, to examine the Tread-wheel :

"When, about a twelvemonth ago, you first asked me to accompany you in examining the machine in the House of Correction in Coldbath-fields, and to compare it with the Hand-crank-mill, I confess the subject was new to me ; and hence, if I went without information, *I went without prejudice*. Yet, upon investigating its history, I soon ascertained that it was itself of *so recent* an origin in its application at least, that if I had travelled over the ten or eleven counties, for there were not more, in which the Tread-wheel was *at that time* employed, and had examined every prison separately, its operation would have been too narrow, and of too limited a duration to have enabled me to speak of its effects with much decision from the evidence of practice, and have driven me to reasoning upon them from the nature of its powers, and their application to the human frame.

"I well remember many of the striking remarks you made at the time upon the general construction of the machine, and particularly upon *the vast extent of its shafts, and the enormous weight they had to support* ; together with the fear you expressed that neither cast nor malleable iron would ever be found to support it. The workers themselves also minutely occupied your attention, and though *your inquiries were cautiously worded*, their replies proved, *very evidently*, the distress they underwent during the labour ; and which, as I understood, was *at the same time* unequivocally admitted by Mr. Adkins, the governor, who accompanied us, as well as by the other officers of the prison, both medical and ministerial, there being no difference of opinion between them at that period. Putting the opinions, however, as

well as the practice of others, on my first inspection, out of the question, I resolved, first of all, to confine my attention to the peculiar powers and singular action of the Tread-wheel, and its necessary effects upon the human frame.

“To this point I limited myself on my first inspection of its structure.”

[The sentences next in order, beginning with “From the tortuous attitude,” and continuing down to “Female structure can be afflicted,” have been already more than once quoted. J. J.]

“On these accounts I ventured to recommend the Hand-crank-mill in preference to the Tread-mill, as affording a *far more natural attitude*, and hence, a *far more healthy exercise*; in which the greater number, if not the whole, of these evils predicted might be avoided; muscles of the utmost importance to public industry, be called into action, and strengthened against future labour; and the prisoner be hereby far better, instead of invariably far less, prepared for a variety of handicraft trades, than before he was sentenced to confinement.

“The opinion, therefore, was not given *absolutely* and *disjunctively*, but *relatively* and *comparatively*; and not in regard to the *quantity* but the *quality* of the labour enjoined; a remark which it is peculiarly necessary to make, because, in the course of the discussion which has since taken place, the Hand-crank-machinery has too often been lost sight of in pursuit of the Tread-wheel; and it has sometimes been more than hinted, that the effect of these strictures would be to screen delinquents from **HARD LABOUR GENERALLY** (than which nothing can be more incorrect), and to take the wholesome burden of punishment away from all their muscles, instead of transferring it to those which are best fitted to bear it by nature.

“Having taken this view of the subject proleptically, I next endeavoured to see how far the apprehensions thus formed in private, of the effects of the Tread-wheel, might be justified by the opinion of other professional characters; and to what extent they had hitherto been realized in the House of Correction from

which I had deduced them, affording the widest field for observation of all the prisons throughout the kingdom in which the Tread-wheel has hitherto become an inmate.

“ From each of these quarters I found myself completely upheld, as will sufficiently appear from the extracts you have given in your correspondence ; whilst various other threatened evils were hereby added to the list, and correctly so, *especially those of ruptures, and injury to the respiratory organs.* In the Cold-Bath Fields Prison itself, I found, upon close inquiry, that the prisoners frequently complained of stiffness and numbness in their hands, of pains in their loins and in their legs, and that they were thrown into a profuse perspiration, and so completely exhausted in the course of a single round, or QUARTER OF AN HOUR’S task-work, as to induce them to drink very largely of cold water as soon as the fifteen minutes were completed, although it is calculated that this up-hill exercise does not exceed the average of TWO MILES IN SIX HOURS ; and consequently does not amount to half a quarter of a mile in the course of the fifteen minutes to which the task-time extends ; evidently proving, that it is the *nature* of the labour, its *quality*, and not its *quantity*, that occasions such violent effects, and constitutes the terror with which the Tread-wheel is contemplated. At this visit also, it was not concealed from me, nor from my professional friend, Mr. Cole, who accompanied me, that, in consequence of the nature of the exertion, prisoners labouring under consumption, rupture, or a tendency to rupture, are exempted from working, (out of a prudent regard to the mischief which might follow), under such circumstances. While, in respect to the anticipated complaints of females, it was at length candidly acknowledged, that those most likely to take place had already occurred in various instances, even *in the presence of the male keepers* ; insomuch that at this very time the Tread-wheel was abandoned as to work, though no regular employment, if I recollect aright, was allotted to them in its stead.”

Dr. G.’s account of his second visit has been so much noticed that we should not have inserted it, had it not appeared necessary

for the purpose of presenting a fair view of his objections, and likely to be often referred to, should the subject be further discussed.

[The extract here given is precisely the same as that made by the old Times of September the 12th; after which is subjoined the following observations, selected from the same source as the rest. J. J.]

“ There is, perhaps, no prison in the kingdom in which the Tread-wheel has been worked more judiciously, or with a minuter attention to its effects, than at Lancaster Castle Gaol. For not only have delinquents, labouring under a great variety of constitutional affections, been exempted, and a shorter daily period been allotted for work than the time usually assigned; but the visiting magistrates have, from time to time, submitted the workers at the wheel to the test of a pair of scales, and thus actually put this kind of labour to an *experimentum crucis*. Mr. Smith, the surgeon, writing his official report in the month of February, being less than four months from the first employment of the machine, tells us, and tells us truly, that the prisoners, notwithstanding their expression of dislike to the work, ‘ have gained weight * since they have been so employed.’ Had the history of this well-conducted prison, however, been followed down a little lower, a very curious and important fact, and a very different result, would have been put before the public. From the kindness of the very excellent member for Cockermouth, W. C. Wilson, Esq., himself one of the most distinguished and active of the visiting magistrates of Lancashire, and Chairman at the Westmoreland Sessions, I am now enabled to make the requisite addition, and to bring the history of the Tread-wheel in this prison down to the present time. Mr. Wilson has been so obliging as to obtain for me a letter upon the subject from the

* [For loss of weight, subsequently, at this prison, see The Analysis of Prison Discipline Society’s “ Report on Tread-mills;” which Analysis is given in the Introduction to this volume. For loss of weight at another prison, see in the same place Mr. Briscoe’s Guildford Cases. J. J.]

keeper of the prison, of so late a date as May 26, which I will thank you to subjoin as a foot-note * ; and which, if I mistake not, will be found to form, upon this contested subject, a far more important document than any one whatever contained in the Government Returns ; affording another proof, if proofs indeed were yet wanting, how very unripe the present season is for casting up a general account of the whole crop of evils which belong to the Tread-mill machinery, and will, probably, show themselves in fulness of its time.

“ The ordinary period of the day’s employment at the Wheel, as estimated by the committee of the Prison Discipline Society, is *eleven hours* ; which, allowing for the intervals of rest and refreshment, they reduce to *seven hours and twenty minutes*, forming ‘ the

* *Extract of a Letter from W. W. C. Wilson, Esq. M. P. for Cockermouth, to Dr. Good, dated Downing-street, 28th May, 1823.*

“ I have this morning received from the keeper of Lancaster Castle the enclosed letter. Perhaps you may think it worth while to cause a copy of it to be taken.”

[The Copy of a Letter from the keeper of Lancaster Castle to W. W. C. Wilson, Esq. M. P. will be found attached to the Review already given from the British Critic, which, however, OMTS these two last paragraphs. J. J.]

‘ From the anxiety the prisoners express to change from the Tread-wheel to *any other* description of work, from the inquiries I have repeatedly made of those within, as well as those leaving the prison, I have no doubt upon my mind, but that the labour is SEVERE—VERY IRKSOME, and such as is likely to deter men from the commission of crime. I have found the employment a TERROR to the refractory.

‘ I am happy to say the criminal side of the prison is lighter than it has been for many years ; the debtor’s side are average number.

‘ Trusting my reply will be satisfactory, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

‘ THOMAS H. HIGGIN.

‘ P. S. I have read with much interest the Report of the Physicians at Millbank Penitentiary, and am happy to find the diet they have recommended so very nearly agrees with that in use here.’

time of actual labour which falls to the lot of each prisoner for the day;’ during which period he walks over the Wheel, according to another of their estimates, twelve thousand feet, or about *two miles and a furlong*, ‘which is the amount or measure of labour performed by each prisoner on the Tread-wheel for the day;’ nearly coinciding with Mr. Dent’s calculation.

“ Now, at *Lancaster Castle*, as we learn from the subjoined letter, the visiting magistrates, with becoming humanity, have adopted a smaller scale of labour than this laid down by the committee of the Prison Discipline Society; for they have never carried it higher, in extent of time, than to *ten hours and a half* for the day’s employment, instead of *eleven hours*; while, in the winter months, they have reduced it to *seven hours*. In other words, they have never compelled the prisoners to walk more than *two miles a day*; and, in short days and cold weather, have been satisfied with their walking *a mile and a half*. And I now come to the very *extraordinary result* which the letter I refer to discloses (extraordinary I mean to those who have not duly contemplated the subject in all its bearings), by putting this slow and snail-paced labour to the test of a pair of scales, which have been employed as a direct *SARCOMETER*, to determine the amount of struggle between the living powers of human flesh and blood, and the destroying powers of the Tread-wheel.”

[Here again the intermediate sentences, from “while the pace is only a mile and a half,” down to “this fact to be given to the public,” have been already published in this volume. J. J.]

In conclusion, Dr. G. earnestly urges the use of the Hand Crank-mill, as an instrument of prison discipline equally efficacious as a punishment, and at the same time beneficial to health, and calculated to render the prisoners more capable of labour after their discharge.

Paragraph, from the Gentleman's Magazine for the 30th of September.

WE agree with Dr. Good's Letter on the Tread-wheel, as far as relates to *females*, but in other points *wait for further evidence*; at the same time, Sir John Cox Hippisley's Hand-crank-mill is confessedly *a good invention*. Let medical men and mechanicians weigh the matter *well*!

Review of Correspondence, &c. By Sir JOHN COX HIPPISELEY, Bart. D.C.L. F.R. and A.S. a Bencher of the Inner Temple.—Svo. pp. 228. London: G. and W. Nicol, Pall-Mall. 1823. *From THE MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL JOURNAL for the 1st of October.*

THE subject of this work is of *such paramount importance*, in a public point of view, that we should consider ourselves as culpably negligent of our duty as journalists if we delayed, even for one month, to give as full an analysis of its contents as our limits will permit. The tendency of this book will, no doubt, very much startle and appal those who have considered the introduction of the Tread-wheel in our prisons as the death-blow to crimes and misdemeanours of all descriptions and degrees, and who have expected from its employment a practical illustration of the doctrine of the perfectability of human nature; yet *we are much mistaken if a careful perusal of its contents will not do very much to check and counteract the current of popular opinion*, which has hitherto flowed, almost without impediment or opposition, in favour of this powerful instrument of punishment. The public is indeed, we conceive, HIGHLY INDEBTED TO THE DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR for the pains he has taken in the investigation of this

subject: he has spared neither TIME, TROUBLE, nor EXPENSE, in pursuing this inquiry; and he appears to have devoted himself to the task with that zeal for the public good which is so characteristic of the English gentleman, and which looks *only* for its reward *in the consciousness of having performed a duty*.

A popular writer, not much more than half a century ago, has put the following sentence * into the mouth of one of his most entertaining characters: "People may say this or that about being in gaol, but, for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a place as ever I was in, in all my life: I had my belly-full to eat and drink, and nothing to do;" and we have no doubt that this would be the opinion of a great majority of those whose principal objection is *to work*, and who would consider a successful course of roguery easily expiated by a few months' residence with companions of their own stamp, allowing them sufficient leisure to recruit their strength, and to devise more ingenious modes of following their lawless pursuits. This severe satire upon the state of our prisons was, we fear, but too just at the time it was written, and many years elapsed before any successful endeavours were made to alleviate or remove those obvious evils, notwithstanding the examples of Holland and America, where plans for the exercise and improvement of prisoners had for some time been in operation: indeed, as late as the year 1797, a writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* maintains that a prison is only a place of safe custody, and not of punishment. Other and more enlightened notions have, however, of late years, gradually made their way; the exertions of benevolent individuals, and the active operation of the Prison Discipline Society, have altogether changed the character of our places of confinement; and, in fact, they had latterly become such enviable residences, as to render some kind of labour and discipline absolutely necessary: the only contest, then, at present, is with respect to the *mode*. All are agreed as to the propriety of the general principle, of which the author of

* Goldsmith's Essays.

the work before us is one of the warmest advocates, and it is only against a particular system that he has lifted his voice; and THE OBJECTIONS WHICH HE URGES AGAINST THE TREAD-WHEEL ARE NOT ONLY STRONG, BUT IN MANY POINTS UNANSWERABLE; and that they are so, we are further led to infer from this circumstance, that the application of this mode of discipline is practically forbidden in so many instances, as to render it, even at present, *any thing but a general instrument of punishment*; for it is evident that, if women, if the ruptured, if the scrofulous, and those affected with varices to any extent, are considered unfit for the exercise of the wheel, a great proportion of prisoners must either be left idle, or some other mode of labour must be devised for them;—but we anticipate.

Before we introduce the work itself to our readers, we may just remark that the objections against the Tread-wheel divide themselves into two branches,—political and medical. With the first we have little to do; but we may be allowed to hint, that, where height and strength make so great and obvious a difference in the quantity of suffering, the indiscriminate employment of the wheel cannot be just, unless it be clearly proved that physical strength and moral turpitude always bear a relative proportion to each other!

Having made these preliminary observations, we shall proceed at once to examine the volume; and, as we have already shown that *our opinions are pretty much in unison with those of the author*, we shall not have occasion often to interrupt the narrative with many remarks of our own. In pursuing our inquiry, we have ventured to deviate from the arrangement of the author, as the space we are enabled to devote to the subject obliges us to avoid repetition as much as possible, and to arrange our matter in the smallest possible compass. The work is divided into four principal parts, or sections, occupying 195 pages,—first, an Introduction; secondly, a copy of a letter to Mr. Secretary Peel, with the original statements transmitted to the several clerks of the peace, in which is comprised the bulk of the medical evidence on

the subject ; thirdly, copies of all communications made to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, respecting Tread-wheels in gaols or houses of correction ; and an Appendix, containing extracts from the evidence of Sir J. Acland and the author, before committees of the Houses of Lords and Commons on the subject of prison discipline ; and a note from Sir J. Hippisley to the Shepton Prison Committee, and which is of an interest comparatively local.

After some prefatory remarks upon the changes produced of late years in the condition of our prisons, our author mentions the introduction of the Tread-wheel, under the auspices, and by the recommendation, of the committee of the Prison Discipline Society, and then adds—

[This quotation—" To the principle of hard labour," &c. down to " when its evils are fully laid before them," will be found at page xl. of this Appendix. J. J.]

" It was under this impression he felt himself called upon to address the following communications to his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Home Department. That minister appears to have felt the importance of the object, by the motion he afterwards made in Parliament ; nor does it seem, from the tenor of that motion, that he originally intended to abridge the limits of inquiry ; but the subsequent official circular, addressed to the visiting magistrates, is so pointedly and locally restricted, as necessarily to have produced *a result wholly inadequate to the purpose of such information as seems requisite to assist the judgment in determining the merits of a question that in fact ramifies into many important branches*, though limited, in the first step, to the introduction of the Tread-wheel. Any observation, however, upon the official communications contained in the return, by order of Parliament, and printed on the 10th of March, will be reserved, till some reference be made to those anterior communications which have been excluded by the restrictions of Government of the 18th of January. In the actual circumstances, the writer has thought it incumbent on him to submit the evidence

entire to the public, as it will be found to develope, and establish, from incontrovertible, and in most cases concurrent, testimony, a variety of weighty facts, which must necessarily be of interesting reference to the members of the Legislature; many of whom, probably, at the present hour, are occupied with the provisions of the revived Gaol Bill in its progress through Parliament." (P. 4, 5.)

To Mr. Cubitt, of Ipswich, must be assigned the merit of having introduced the use of the Tread-wheel in prisons, but the invention is of a much older date; and it appears to have been applied in this country as a crane at the warehouses of the East-India Company, having been introduced by a Mr. Hardie, who obtained a patent for the construction; though, in fact, he had no pretension to the discovery of the principle, as a wheel of this description had long been employed by the Chinese in the irrigation of their plantations. The description and engraving of the crane, as given by Dr. Olinthus Gregory, leaves no doubt as to its identity with the Tread-wheel. Our author, however, desirous of ascertaining the present state of the machinery in the East India Company's warehouses, procured a report to be drawn up by the principal officers of the warehouse department, from which it appears that serious accidents have occurred in the use of these cranes; that they are considered more dangerous than the capstan; that in two instances labourers have been so severely hurt, as to be pensioned by the Company; and that, finally, the cranes were taken down last summer.

"If, in the selection of the quality or implements of prison labour, the personal security of the individual subjected to the discipline be held to constitute *a reasonable consideration*, and to attach a just responsibility upon those who hold that selection, it should seem that, antecedently to the period when it was adopted by Mr. Cubitt, but little could be collected from the test of experience to warrant the introduction of the Tread-wheel.

"With this conviction on the part of the writer, the result of the most deliberate and repeated personal examination and inquiry,

in concurrence with professional characters whose opinions he held himself bound to respect, the original communication was first made to his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, and is now submitted to the public." (Page 10, 11.)

From that investigation, the following facts (which we have compressed) appear to be established: 1. From the enormous height, complication, &c. of the Tread-wheel, **THERE IS GREAT DANGER OF ITS BREAKING**; (which has actually occurred *four times in three months* in the House of Correction, in Cold-bath Fields,) whereby all the prisoners on the wheel must be thrown down on their backs, from a height, with a chance of considerable injury. 2. That the posture on this machine implies an exertion so exhausting to the human frame, as not to be inforced for more than a *quarter of an hour* at a time; whilst at Edinburgh only seven minutes and a half are appointed to be risked. 3. That, in consequence of the exhaustion produced by this exercise, a fuller and richer diet has been humanely allowed at several prisons, particularly at Edinburgh and North Allerton. 4. That strains upon the organs and muscles immediately called into exercise have taken place on various occasions. 5. That, in consequence of these united causes, many of the female prisoners have been suddenly obliged to descend from the Tread-mill under circumstances *highly indelicate*, and in consequence have been in most prisons exempted from this kind of labour. 6. That a similar *kind of labour* has been found to produce rupture and varicose veins in other classes; and that consequently, the same effects may be apprehended from this; and therefore, 7. That prisoners labouring under these complaints, or with a tendency to them, are exempted from the punishment of the Tread-wheel. 8. That, for these reasons, the unhappy culprits have a horror of this discipline, and would rather undergo any fatigue, or suffer any deprivation, than return to the house of correction, when once released; and that, 9. Notwithstanding its enormous expense in erecting, in consequence of the above reasons, it is of *very limited*

application, and cannot be exercised over one half the delinquents. 10. That in this mode of punishment there is only one degree as well as kind, so that criminals of every shade of character are subjected to *the same degree* of severe and perilous suffering; and, 11. As a necessary consequence, that it is absolutely expedient, for the purposes of justice, as well as for the salutary application of hard prison labour, in the spirit as well as letter of the statute, that means of discipline very different from the Tread-wheel should be resorted to. This leads our author immediately to the consideration of the Hand Crank-mill, of which he is a warm admirer and advocate; but we shall for the present pass over this part of his inquiry, and pursue our consideration of the valuable and interesting medical communications which follow next in order, and tend *most fully to confirm and verify the objections* which we have quoted above. In this list we find the names of Dr. Good; Sir Gilbert Blane; Mr. Copeland; Mr. Cole; a gentleman* whose name is not mentioned; Sir William Blizard; Mr. Hickes, of Bath; Mr. Day, of the Isle of Wight; and to these we may add the valuable and *weighty authority* of Dr. Paris, in his last work on Medical Jurisprudence†. Of these gentlemen, Dr. Good seems to have considered the subject with the greatest attention, and his letter appears to us to embrace the whole question; for although numbers and respectability give weight and strength undoubtedly to the opinions he has expressed, yet, as no fact or observation of importance has escaped his penetration, our quotations will be principally derived from that source, though we may, for obvious reasons, make our extracts not exactly in the order in which they occur in the letter itself.

After descanting at some length upon some discrepancies in the reports of the medical men from various prisons where the Tread-wheel is in operation, Dr. Good thus describes *what he saw* in the House of Correction in Cold-bath Fields:—

* [The late Dr. Baillie. J. J.]

† Vol. iii. p. 151—3.

[The extract here introduced by the Reviewers forms part of that which is given in the John Bull Paper of the 24th of August, beginning at "The Wheels were at work," and continuing down to "original distress." J. J.]

Dr. Good then proceeds to examine, *seriatim*, the evils to be apprehended from this mode of labour; and first, with respect to the production of *premature and excessive menstruation*. It appears that, out of twenty-four prisons, *women are only subjected to the Tread-wheel in four; viz. Exeter, Dorchester, Cold-bath Fields, and Brixton*. The words of the reporter relative to the prison at Exeter are *at least equivocal*. *From Dorchester, there is at once an admission that certain complaints have occurred*, which the surgeon has attributed to working at the Wheel, although they had *only had five months' trial of that discipline; the same result was also acknowledged in Cold-bath Fields*: whilst from Brixton we are informed that the Tread-wheel is an excellent remedy for rheumatism, and a preventive against weaknesses and varicose tumours. In this place we shall go back a few pages, in order to point out the assertion of the governor of the Bedford House of Correction, who says that the labour *is not severe*—whilst the surgeon to another institution of the same kind is indiscreet enough to affirm, that, after a few days' work on the Tread-mill, the employment *ceases to be a punishment*—thus ingeniously *contriving to give the death-blow* to the invention he intended to eulogize.

"I have dwelt more at large upon this subject (continues Dr. Good), because THE PRINCIPLE UPON WHICH IT HINGES IS JUST AS APPLICABLE TO MALES AS TO FEMALES, and forms the basis of by far the greater number of the complaints anticipated on first contemplating the discipline of the Tread-wheel. For, if the muscles and organs of the loins and lower part of the body be urged to excess, and pressed into an unnatural and distressing, and hence into a morbid, play upon each other, *in the case of the latter*, so must it *also be in the case of the former*. The greater firmness, indeed, of the male structure must necessarily resist its evil effects

for a longer period of time, in consequence of which they will neither so soon nor so frequently show themselves: insomuch that, as I have already observed, it may in some instances require several years before the natural strength of the organs will decidedly fall a prey in the contest. But the battle is still waging, though unperceived; the Tread-wheel is still gaining ground; and, not only upon the field of combat, but even afterwards, when released from it, the stoutest champion in this new system of warfare may for the first time give palpable marks of its mischievous effects." (P. 38, 39.)

Continuing the examination of the Reports, we find, in the first, *a rupture* produced upon a prisoner labouring on the Wheel. The last, from Edinburgh, contains a case of *spitting of blood*, and a *bruised ankle*; at Lancaster, *an inflammation and tumour in the groin*; and Mr. Green, writing from Durham, where the Mill had only been employed eight or nine months, says—"I am of opinion, if persevered in *with prudence, and not too long continued*, no serious effects are to be apprehended from its use;" and in short, the various modifications proposed by different practitioners in the position of the hand-rail, and in the intervals between the steps, sufficiently prove they have respectively thought there was a necessity for some kind of alteration; and which necessity could only arise from the uneasiness and undue exertion produced by the position of the body and the mode of labour.

"Nothing, indeed, can more decisively prove the distress and undue exertion under which the muscles chiefly pressed upon labour, than *the extreme and exhausting perspiration* into which, during warm weather, the prisoners are thrown *within a few minutes*, and *which the mere quantity of labour* is altogether incapable of accounting for. This is one of those evils already enumerated as having existed, last October, in the House of Correction, in Cold-bath Fields; and which is also glanced at *in the government document* by Mr. Tucker, in his Report from Exeter. 'I learned *only* (says he) that the muscles of the legs sometimes ached, and that work on the Wheel in warm weather would pro-

duce a great perspiration.' The same fact is admitted by Mr. Dent, to whose active and praise-worthy exertions the North Riding of Yorkshire is under great obligations. 'I admit (says he) that the employment may cause men to perspire, and, unless means are taken to ensure the freest respiration, perhaps profusely. At first we found a tendency to the inconvenience complained of, but it was completely obviated by substituting an open trellis instead of closed boards.' This, however, by no means, always answers, though it shows another necessity for some modification in the general system of the Tread-wheel discipline, according to the ingenuity of the contrivers. In the Cold-bath Fields prison, the men work under sheds in the open air; and yet here the perspiration, at the time referred to, was *not only profuse, but highly exhausting*. Nevertheless, I do not urge this as an objection *in se*, nor have I ever thus urged it: for, like yourself, I am altogether friendly to hard labour as such, and care but little how hard it may be, provided the health of the prisoner is not thereby put in jeopardy. But I mention the fact as a strong and incontrovertible proof of the trying and distressful nature of the present labour, however hard or mitigated; or, in other words, as painful, and therefore morbid, from *its quality*, and *not from its quantity*. With respect to the latter, I entirely agree with Mr. Dent, and would even go beyond him, that the 'voluntary efforts of honest industry are surely not too high a measure for the standard of compulsory labour: and where is the labourer whose daily task does not exceed a walk of two miles, even admitting it to be up hill?—yet this is as great a length of distance as can be performed by the revolution of our Tread-wheel in six hours, the average of each man's labour at it per day.' I now, however, take this distinguished and excellent magistrate upon his own ground, and ask him in reply, where is the hill, with a path already cut up it, in which any man in a state of health would be thrown into the slightest perspiration in ten or fifteen minutes, even admitting it were covered over, (as in the case of stairs in a house,) whose pace should only equal that which is

here calculated, being not more than one-quarter of a mile in three-quarters of an hour? Who does not see in this, as well as in every other result we have already contemplated, that the alleged cause and effect are not commensurate, and consequently that there must be SOME OTHER, AND MORE MORBID, POWER THAN THAT OF MERE PROGRESSION? Who does not at once dive into the real source of that secret and indescribable horror which this labour is universally allowed to excite, and which has never been satisfactorily accounted for otherwise? And who, at the same time, does not enter into the absolute necessity, and admit in its fullest extent the wisdom, of those numerous emancipations from labour which exist in almost every prison into which the Tread-wheel is at this moment introduced, and which renders it only available to considerably less than half those for whom it was at first designed? *That it is totally unfit for women, and will in a short time be universally abandoned in respect to them, does not now, I believe, admit of the shadow of a doubt.* Yet, among males, the ruptured are, I apprehend, as universally exempted, amounting, according to the estimate of Mr. Macelwain, surgeon to that truly valuable association, ‘The London Truss Society for gratuitously relieving the poor that are afflicted with ruptures,’ to be not less than one in six of the labouring classes, as nearly as can be calculated. To which we are to add the consumptive, who are humanely spared, as noticed, in the Cold-bath Fields and various other prisons; and those labouring under venereal complaints, scrofula, or diseases of any kind in the groin, all of whom it is judged necessary to exempt at Lancaster Castle.” (P. 42—46.)

At Lancaster Castle, it appears that, at the date of the surgeon’s report in February, the prisoners on the Wheel had gained weight; but by carrying the inquiry down to the month of May, a very different result was produced. In most prisons, the time devoted to actual labour is seven hours and twenty minutes, during which period the prisoner walks about two miles and one furlong; whereas at Lancaster the standard has been only seven hours, so that the prisoners have only walked two miles a-day, and, in short

and cold days, one and a half miles. It appears that, as long as this rate is continued, the scale of diet being exactly similar to that recommended by the visiting physician at the Penitentiary at Millbank, that the workers have increased in weight from eight or nine grains to one ounce and a half in the day; but if the labour is pushed to two miles in the day, the prisoners waste at the rate of from a pound to nearly a pound and a half in three weeks.

The next point which Dr. Good proceeds to examine, is the probability of the production of herniæ, and aneurismal or varicose tumours in the vessels of the lower limbs, by this species of labour; but, *as these are diseases of slow growth*, the fact cannot possibly be proved otherwise than by a reference to the condition of those classes of men whose mode of labour bears the greatest analogy to that of the Tread-wheel. From the testimonies which he has produced in support of this opinion, as far as relates to sailors and miners, we conceive that he has established his point to the satisfaction of the most sceptical; though, for our own parts, *the tendency of this kind of labour is so obvious*, that we scarcely think so great a quantity of proof necessary to establish so self-evident a proposition. We cannot, however, forbear quoting a passage from another letter of Dr. Good's on the same subject, and which occurs at p. 133.

“ Varices and aneurisms, or tumours of the veins and arteries, may arise in any part of the body; but they occur most frequently in the lower limbs, from their dependent condition; and they never can be cured, or even prevented, where there is a tendency to the disease, but by counteracting this dependency—as by rest, a reclined position, and the uniform support of a bandage, or laced stocking. Upon this subject there never has been, and never can be, any dispute in the profession, as must be obvious from the nature of the case. This may be general or local: it may proceed from an uniform weakness in the tunics of the arteries or veins, or from weakness in particular parts, produced by cramp, strain, or stretch in such parts, and hence, very generally,

by violent or fatiguing exertion, or standing long on the legs. Hence hardfaring men, and especially hardfaring women, are particularly liable to these complaints ; as are officers in the army, when exposed to great harassment and exhaustion ; so are pregnant women, from obstructed circulation. Now a man would be laughed at who should recommend the Tread-mill, or any thing like it, as a cure, or a mean of prevention, where a tendency exists, to any of these patients ; and to talk of promoting or increasing the circulation by any means where the vessels are too weak in particular parts to bear its ordinary force without bursting, is most extraordinary."

Sir W. Blizard expresses himself thus :

" The communications No. 1 and 2, contain," &c. [This extract, continued down to " criminal means of obtaining it," will be found in page xxxi of this Appendix. J. J.]

We might go on extracting passages from other authorities to the same effect, almost *ad infinitum* ; but those which we have selected cannot fail to produce a proper effect on the mind of the unprejudiced reader.

It will, however, be naturally asked, what is the nature and extent of the evidence on the other side of this question ? and what is the tenor of the Reports from the various prisons in which the Tread-wheel is employed ? We find, in the work before us, *reports from twenty counties*, in most of which *the Wheel had only been employed for the space of a few months* : yet, out of these twenty reports, we have already noticed that opinions *unfavourable* to the *general* employment of this discipline are expressed by *six, at least*, of the surgeons ; that, whilst one * is for excluding those with ruptures or syphilis from its exercise ; a second † recommends it to be used with caution ; a third ‡ re-

* Lancaster Report.

† Durham ditto.

‡ Berkshire ditto.

ports a rupture to have been produced by a violent fit of coughing on the Wheel ; a fourth * relates a case of spitting of blood, which also took place whilst undergoing the same discipline ; but which, as he heard no more of the case, the reporter attributes to a desire to escape from the labour. One or two other minor accidents are also related, which we will not insist upon : neither will we stop to point out the inconsistencies displayed by one or two of the warmest advocates of *this potent machine* ; because we think that, considering the short time it had been in use in most of the above instances,—considering the prejudice that was existing in its favour at the time, and the great moral benefits that were expected from it,—*we are only astonished that so many objections FORCED themselves upon the notice of those who made the reports.*

So far, we conceive, we have placed in a prominent point of view that part of our author's work, in which he urges his objections against the Tread-wheel ; and we now come to consider the plan which he recommends as a substitute for it, and of which we have purposely forborne to speak hitherto, although in the work itself the comparative merits of the two are frequently contrasted with each other ; and *much* of the medical evidence given expresses a decided conviction of the superiority of the Hand-crank machinery. Reverting, then, to page 16, we find the following reasons for giving a preference to this latter mode of labour:—That it affords the workers the *natural* position of standing firm on the feet, and on firm ground ; that it divides the exercise equally among those organs *intended* for muscular motion ; increases the general health and strength, instead of counteracting them ; and *hereby prepares every prisoner, so worked, for applying himself with greater facility to a variety of handicraft and other trades, after his discharge from confinement, than he possessed before his commitment to prison* ; and renders, in fact, the habitual use of hard manual labour a great and per-

* Edinburgh Report.

manent good, instead of what may possibly be a serious and lasting evil. This last paragraph we conceive to be of the highest importance, and OF ITSELF QUITE DECISIVE OF THE QUESTION. But it has been urged that the operation of the Tread-wheel is so effectual in the prevention of crime, that in those prisons where it is employed, the average of recommitments is reduced almost to nothing; but, by examining the third Report of the Committee of Prison Discipline, we shall find that, *in those prisons in which the Hand-crank machinery was in use, this average was even lower*, as the following statement will show:—Preston, four per cent.; Wakefield, four per cent.; Bury, five per cent.; Devizes, the general average three per cent.; Ipswich, three per cent.; Lewes, six per cent.; Worcester, two per cent.; Leicester, three per cent. Upon which Sir John Hippisley remarks, “It is not less fair to observe, that in the prison of Bury *alone* was the Tread-mill *at that time erected*; and that at the Devizes, and at Worcester, the Hand-cranks were in action; yet even Bury does not take the lead of the enumerated prisons for a *relative paucity* of recommitments.” (P. 118.)

We have now only to confirm the above statement, by quoting the opinions of the magisterial and medical authorities adduced by our author; and, in conclusion, to give as accurate a description as we are able, without the assistance of the engraving, of the improved Hand-crank-mill, as recommended by Sir John. In order to avoid needless repetitions, we shall only insert the two following extracts from Mr. Copeland's and Mr. Macelwain's letters to Dr. Good:

“With respect to the general causes of hernia and of varices, two very common and very important diseases, I have nothing to remark more than is commonly known to the profession: but I should think those diseases much more likely to be produced by the efforts of labour of the Tread-mill, than by the double labour of hand and leg, as sketched and described under the name of the Hand-crank-mill in the printed paper; which appears to unite

the advantages of healthy exercise with those of compelled labour as a punishment."

* * * * *

"With reference to the different modes of labour, certainly those which call alternately into action different sets of muscles are to be considered as most contributing to the health and strength of the individual employed. And it would appear to me that the Hand-crank-mill is calculated, to a great extent, to meet the object, when employed in the manner you propose."

"There is, however, another ground, and of a still more important nature than any we have yet contemplated, which induces me to prefer the Hand-crank-mill to the Tread-wheel. While the latter is purposely designed to *operate by terror*, and hence necessarily excites in the prisoner a dread and disgust of labour, and of all muscular exertion whatever, by which he becomes habitually unfitted for work of every kind upon his discharge from confinement, the former operates by giving an insensible invigoration and facility of action to the muscles of most importance in all the callings of mechanical and handicraft industry; and, consequently, habitually prepares him for providing for himself at the same period. We have here a *moral attribute*, to which the rival labour can make no pretensions. The culprit, just freed from the Tread-wheel, though he should have escaped the diseases and injuries to which he has been exposed while under its domination, has gained nothing to facilitate his progress in any useful employment; with a greater hatred of a prison-life, he will have no greater means, and may perhaps have fewer, of avoiding it: while the *Hand-crank man* will find that, under your improved machinery and regulations, he *has been serving a most valuable apprenticeship*, and *has become initiated in the healthful and vigorous arts of thrusting, pulling, heaving, and bearing burthens*; for the action of the cranks on the several muscular positions of the body in effect prepares it for the various relative details of manual labour. What was irksome to him before he went to prison, he now undergoes with ease, and even relish; his punishment may have been severe, but it has proved wholesome; and

the curse of earning his miserable pittance of bread and water with the daily and profuse sweat of his brow, is transformed into a blessing for which he will have to thank the magistracy and the manual labour of the Crank-mill as long as he lives." (P. 64—66.)

We conclude our extracts with giving the opinion of Sir J. Acland, one of the oldest and most active magistrates of the county of Somerset.

"The Hand-mill, I agree with you, is free from all such complaints, and the labour of it may be increased to any quantum of power necessary to produce hard labour, or be regulated to any degree of wholesome exercise. Can any one who will exercise his reason, by the help of a little anatomical knowledge, halt between the two opinions? The first dangerous result from the Tread-mill will open the eyes of the blind and unthinking."

We have thus endeavoured to give our readers a sketch of Sir J. Hippisley's work, and in doing so we have been more attentive to placing the facts he has collected in a strong point of view, than in following the exact order and arrangement which he has adopted: aware of the imperfection of this article, (arising principally, we hope, from the limited space we have been under the necessity of devoting to the subject), still we have done enough, we presume, to call the attention of the public, and of professional men especially, to the subject. We shall be the means of disseminating widely the *objections* which appear to us to be *urged in the spirit of justice and mercy, against this very unequal and unprofitable species of labour*; and in so doing we shall have the consolation of feeling that we have acquitted ourselves of a public duty, and have, to the best of our abilities, furthered the benevolent design of the author.

We add the following description of an improved *Hand Crank-mill*. [This description, which closes the Review, is necessarily almost the same as that which appears in the Mirror, of the 13th of September. In the commencement of this number of the Medical Journal are inserted the letter of Sir John Hippisley, and that of Mr. Cole, which appeared in the John Bull Paper of the 14th of September. J. J.]

*Extract, from "The General Question," No. I. in Blackwood's
Edinburgh Magazine for the 1st of October.*

"MR. PRESIDENT,—Sir John Cox Hippisley and Dr. Mason Good (the translator of Lucretius) have lately been attacking the Tread-mill, and John Bull has joined his forces. Do not you agree with these three distinguished philanthropists, that men should not use woman with cruelty, if they can prevent it? Let the males tread away, but find a gentler exercise for the females. No strong or weak-bodied he-fellow of a pickpocket or purloiner is a proper object of compassion, except just as he is going to be hanged, and if he *sweat on the Tread-mill to the utmost wish of Hamlet himself; wrench his instep; sprain his ankle; dislocate his knee; and bring his back to the lumbago;* there can be no question whatever, that

‘A wiser and a better man
Will rise to-morrow morn.’

"But even although no amendment in his morals is visible, is there not *a satisfaction* in knowing that he is on the Tread-wheel, *battered and blistered to a most painful degree*, and ineffectually damning the Keeper of the Brixton Prison, and the inventive spirit of the age? But this argument does not apply to females; any thing like needless cruelty to women is too *shocking and abhorrent* from every British feeling to be long practised in the shape of legal enactment; and if the cruelty be accompanied (as in this case *it is*) with *indecent, disgusting, and degrading* circumstances, it is still more odious! "

Review, from the old Monthly Magazine, for the 1st of October.

DR. J. GOOD's letter to Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. on the mischiefs incidental to the Tread-wheel, as an instrument of

Prison Discipline, is another pamphlet well worthy of consideration. With regard to the advantages to be derived from this recently invented instrument of punishment, there are different opinions, but THAT OF ITS PREDOMINANT EVILS APPEARS TO BE GAINING GROUND. *Dr. Good is not one of those modern philosophers who would abolish all punishment*—and believe that, by the powers of reasoning, they could coax a criminal into virtue. His objection to the Tread-wheel is, that instead of enuring the prisoner to labour, *it tears his frame to pieces*, and undermines his constitution; that it produces ruptures and various other diseases; and with regard to females, *is most indecent, tormenting, and destructive*. It has been asked by Mr. Dent, of Yorkshire, “Where is the labourer whose daily task does not exceed a walk of two miles, even admitting it to be up hill? Though it is as great a length of distance as can be performed by the revolution of the Tread-wheel in six hours, the average of each man’s labour at it per day.” To this Dr. Good has a *triumphant answer*, founded on experiments made at Lancaster Castle: “By putting this slow and snail-paced labour to the test of a pair of scales, which have been employed as a direct sarcometer to determine the amount of struggle between the living powers of human flesh and blood, and the destroying powers of the Tread-wheel, when the pace is only a mile and a half, or a little more for the day, it appears that the strain on the muscles has not, hitherto, been found so mischievous as to make any inroad on the living principle; but the moment the measure of labour is pushed on to two miles a day, the whole system shrinks before it, and the prisoners waste away, at the rate of from a pound to nearly a pound and a half every three weeks! Now,” says the Doctor, “what other labour under the sun, short of that actual torture to which men have ever been condemned, or in which they ever can engage, in the open air, has produced, or can be conceived to produce, such a loss of flesh and blood as that before us; where the rate of progression, whether up hill, down hill, or on level ground, does not exceed two miles for the entire day; and the labourer has to carry no bag of tools, or weight of any kind, but the weight of his own body?”

THIS REASONING IS INFALLIBLE ; and while the rival instrument of the *Hand Crank-mill* is capable of effecting, as it appears to be, all that the Tread-mill can or ought to achieve, without the ill consequences it menaces, it should seem to follow, that the moral and benevolent heart must give its unreserved suffrage to the latter.

*Communication, inserted in the Globe and Traveller Paper of the
3d of October.*

TREAD-WHEEL.

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

By the publication of Sir J. C. Hippisley's work on Prison Discipline, the public attention has been called to the mischievous effects of a punishment which has been hailed as the great modern improvement in penal legislation—the Tread-wheel.

There are strong objections to the employment of labour, in any case, as a punishment. If we consider from what causes men are induced to commit that species of crimes which are most common—petty violations of property—it will be found that in the great majority of cases, it is *aversion to labour* which has been the operating motive. To prevent crime, means ought to be taken to counteract the painful associations which give rise to this aversion. For such a purpose *no contrivance can be worse chosen than that of forcing labour*, and that of the severest kind, *upon the offender as a punishment.*

When a poor man is at large, earning his bread by his exertions, unless his labour be excessive, there are many circumstances which tend to make it agreeable to him. It is to labour that he owes all the comforts and enjoyments of existence. By labour alone can he hope to advance himself in life and raise the prospects of his family. All this has not been sufficient to counteract his habits of indolence, for those habits have prevailed, and instead of labouring he has turned thief; and yet in order to cure him of his aversion to labour, he is placed in a situation where,

instead of being the source of his enjoyments, it becomes an engine of unrequited misery to him, and of misery of the most intense description !

This objection applies strongly to all kinds of labour, when considered merely as a punishment ; but most of all, to the Tread-mill, the horrors of which, as described by Sir John Cox Hippisley, appear unequalled in the modern annals of *legalized* torture !

[That portion of the extracts, given in the John Bull paper of the 24th of August, beginning with, “ I inspected the men,” and ending with “ new to the work,” follows in this part of the original communication. J. J.]

Sir J. C. Hippisley also states on *good medical authority*, that this kind of labour has a strong tendency to produce varicose tumours and ruptures ; also, that the tortuous attitude and uneasy motion totally deprive the prisoner of the healthful advantage of athletic exercise.

On the female prisoners the effects are of a still more serious and distressing nature, inasmuch, that in the greater number of counties where Tread-wheel labour exists, it has not been deemed safe to extend it to females. Nor are these evils chimerical. Sir J. C. Hippisley mentions the particular prisons in which they have been experienced, and gives various details concerning the Cold-bath Fields House of Correction, for which we refer our readers to the work itself.

It is true that the communications received from the Governors of the various prisons in which the Tread-wheel is in use, in answer to the official circular of Mr. Peel, have not been in any *great* degree unfavourable to the Tread-mill. The *admissions*, however, which they have made, and which are stated by Sir John Cox Hippisley, are *fully sufficient* to justify the inferences which Sir John has drawn from them. And were it otherwise, **ILCHESTER GAOL HAS TAUGHT US NOT TO JUDGE OF PRISON ARRANGEMENTS ON THE WORD OF THE PRISON AUTHORITIES**—more especially of arrangements so well calculated as the Tread-mill to be instruments of oppression in the hands of those authorities themselves.

Among other circumstances which essentially unfit the Tread-mill to be a good engine of punishment is *the extreme inequality of the labour*; which, it is plain, does not admit of being proportioned with any exactness to the constitution and previous habits of the prisoner, nor can it be proportioned at all, without *leaving much to the discretion of the GAOLER*! “A man who has been accustomed to running up stairs all his life, with good lungs and muscular legs, will scarcely suffer by it, while an asthmatic tailor, weaver, or other sedentary artisan, will be half killed by the exercise.”—*Medical Jurisprudence*, by Dr. Paris and Mr. Fonblanque, vol. iii. p. 131.

As if it had been endeavoured to devise *a mode of punishment which should unite the fewest possible advantages*, the Tread-mill discipline, besides *its cruelty, its inequality, and its injurious effects upon health*, has not even the advantage of being an *efficient kind of labour*. THERE ARE MANY WAYS OF TURNING A MILL MORE ADVANTAGEOUSLY THAN BY HUMAN LABOUR. Moreover, it does not, like the Hand Crank-mill, exercise the muscles which are of use in ordinary labour. It does not give those bodily habits which will render labour less irksome after release, while, as we have shown, it strongly tends to give such habits of mind as will render it more so. Nor is the Tread-wheel labour efficient in the way of example. To be so, it should be visible to every eye. But it is unavoidably shut up within the walls of a prison, and can operate directly upon the minds of none but the prisoners.

Let it not be inferred, however, that we are adverse to the employment of labour in Prison Discipline. *Labour*, not Tread-wheel labour, but mild, and at the same time *efficient and productive labour*, though *highly unfit for purposes of punishment*, is *the best of all engines of reformation*. But these two kinds of discipline must be kept entirely separate. The object of punishment is to inflict *pain*—pain sufficient to counteract the motives to vice. The object of reformatory discipline is to break pernicious habits, and to substitute useful ones. If, as has been observed, the *habit* which brings criminals to gaol is usually an *aversion to labour*, the grand object of reformatory discipline

should be to *destroy* that aversion. The mode of destroying it is not by making labour an *engine of torture*. It is by making it a source of pleasure; by suffering the labourer to partake of the *fruits* of his labour, and that in sufficient quantity to make him think of labour with some degree of *pleasure*. It is evident, then, that if punishment, which is intended merely as an infliction of pain, be *mixed up* with reformatory discipline, which can be made effectual only by rendering the condition of the prisoner a state of pleasure, either the one of these two objects must be entirely sacrificed to the other, or the ends of both must be incompletely and inefficiently attained. In fact, we think that nearly all the failures which have taken place in the organization of prison arrangements may be attributed to an ignorance of this fundamental rule, that *punishment* and *reformation* are *two different objects*, and as such, *should be kept distinct*: a position which appears to have occurred to no writer antecedent to the publication of the article "Prisons," in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, to which, for further illustration, we beg to refer our readers.

The Morning Chronicle of the date of the foregoing article, in some general strictures, which involve a passing allusion to the new prison labour, uses this strong expression, "Grinding at the Torture of the Wheel."

Article, from the Public Ledger of the 4th of October.

THE TREAD-MILL.

At this time when the propriety of continuing the labours of the Tread-wheel, or Mill, as a part of the punishment of offenders against the laws of their country, is discussed, on account of the

effect which this species of labour has upon the health of those employed in it, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to have laid before them the substance of a correspondence which has taken place between the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Peel), and the Visiting Magistrates, Gaolers, and Surgeons of the different prisons in England and Scotland, upon this very point, and which was laid before Parliament, in the last Session, by the Right Honourable Secretary. The correspondence commences with Mr. Peel's circular to the Magistrates, desiring to be informed of the effect produced upon the health of the prisoners employed in treading the Wheel, by this new species of exercise; and from the replies received by Mr. Peel, it appears that at the time to which this correspondence comes down, Wheels had been erected in the prisons of Reading, Bedford, Aylesbury, Cambridge, Dorchester, Durham, Chelmsford, Gloucester, Horsley, Knutsford, Lancaster, Leicester, Cold-bath Fields, Haverford-West, Swaffham, Bury St. Edmunds, Brixton, Ipswich, Exeter, Guildford, Lewes, Wakefield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Northallerton, in the North Riding, and Edinburgh. The opinions of the Visiting Magistrates, Surgeons, and Gaolers of the different prisons is UNANIMOUS; that this species of exercise has INVARIABLY operated to improve the health of the prisoners thus employed, both male and female; and that there are no grounds for the report which had been circulated of the discipline of the Mill, operating to produce diseases in the muscles of the legs, or any other bodily infirmity. The several Mills have been at work for different periods of from upwards of three years to three months, *the first Wheel ever erected* in this country being that in the House of Correction at Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk!

This Wheel, first set to work in November, 1819, is calculated to give employment to eighty-four persons at a time, the full number being employed on it at the period at which the present return to the Secretary of State was made; and the average number which have been constantly employed since its first erection exceeding fifty. The following letter, addressed to the Visiting

Magistrate, J. Benjafield, Esq. contains the opinion of Mr. Hubbard, surgeon to the gaol, on the subject :—

“SIR,—In answer to your note, I beg leave to inform you that I have constantly attended the gaol, as surgeon; and since the erection of the Tread-mill, which is now upwards of three years, I have never met with a single instance of injury arising from that mode of employment; and I am further of opinion, that no rupture, or indeed any injury whatever, is likely to be produced, as the body of the prisoner is kept in an upright position, and the equilibrium preserved by the hand-rail.”

The reports of the surgeons of the other gaols are similar in substance—NOT A SINGLE CASUALTY IS REPORTED AS HAVING HAPPENED TO ANY PRISONER IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE LABOUR OF THE WHEEL. There is an account from Mr. R. Palmer, one of the Reading Visiting Magistrates, of the date of March 6th, stating that William Strange, a prisoner at that time employed on the Wheel, had, whilst at work, been seized with a violent fit of coughing, which produced a rupture; but the certificate of the surgeon, Mr. Bulley, sets forth, that, *in his opinion*, the accident did not occur in consequence of the prisoner's exertions on the Wheel, but was the result of a violent fit of coughing, and would, in all *probability*, have happened independent of any bodily exertion whatever.

Article, from the Sunday Times of the 5th of October.

THE TREAD-MILL.

THE *London Medical and Physical Journal* for the present month contains, among other valuable matter, a very able review of Sir John Cox Hippisley's Physical and Moral Objections to the Tread-mill, to which we confess our obligations for a considerable part of the following article :

Whether the quantity of pity be increased or the direction merely changed, we shall not pause to inquire; but, certainly criminals, culprits, and beasts were not wont to occupy so large a share of sympathy as they do at the present moment. We have pious females going a crusade over the country, for the very laudable purpose of seeing that those who await the award or the punishment of the law are not too severely treated; we have an Irish member foregoing the everlasting song of the woes of Green Erin, allowing the inhabitants of Galway to wander breechless over the mountains, and cut each other's throats, and giving up the tender sympathies of his soul to horses and donkies in London; and we have the philanthropic veteran, Sir John Cox Hippisley, endeavouring to remove the terrors of the Tread-mill, and substitute in its place *Hand Cranks*, which, in our opinion, would, along with the alleged bad qualities of the Tread-mill, abolish also all the good. We shall hold some converse with the tender-hearted Baronet anon.

Before doing so, however, we would remark, that the apportioning of punishments to the *criminality* of the objects would be a vain attempt; and this, we think, should take precedence of any endeavour to apportion them to their *physical strength*. Taking crimes as they appear publicly, in the eye of the law, and through the medium of evidence, let any one read the sentences at the Old Bailey, and compare them with the trials, and he will find an *inequality* which is most vexatious and even *appalling*. He will find THE SAME MEASURE OF INFLICTION—the highest pains that human tribunal can award—given with equal promptitude and certainty, TO THE TAKING AWAY OF A LIFE UNDER THE MOST SHOCKING CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THE STEALING OF FORTY SHILLINGS IN A DWELLING-HOUSE. We are aware that the answer to this is, that the *more frequent commission* of the lesser crime renders it deserving of equal punishment with the greater: but to us the complete refutation of this plea is found in the plea itself—the frequency *exists*, and does *not* appear to be *diminished by the severity of the punishment*. But, besides this inequality, where the law reaches, there must be far greater as to the case of

the *real guilt*, which the law cannot reach ; and hence we are of opinion, that before humane persons, like Sir John Cox Hippisley, would take out of the eye of the minor punishment this mote of inequality of the Tread-mill, they should take the beam of the major inequality out of the eye of the law itself.

The objections stated to the Tread-mill are of three kinds—physical, moral, political ; and we beg leave to add a fourth, which, however, does not so much apply to the engine itself, as to the quarter in which the power of awarding it is vested—the *constitutional* objection.

1. *The physical effects*, as deducible from Sir John's careful investigation, which we give in the words of the reviewer, are these. [They will be found in the Review from the Medical Journal. J. J.]

Now, as to the first of these, we answer, that for one accident which has happened from the breaking of the Tread-mill, twenty have happened from the breaking down of stage coaches ; and, therefore, we would as soon argue that the coach should, on this account, give way to the wheelbarrow, as that Sir John's Hand Cranks should come in place of the Wheel. The great advantage of the Wheel, as a punishment, is, that the culprits upon it *must* work—a necessity which the Hand Crank would not impose ; and so the labour done at the Crank would be in proportion, not to the *power* of the culprit, but to his *will*. The “posture,” the “strains,” the “indelicate circumstances,” and the “varicose veins,” do not appear to be more alarming than in many cases of voluntary labour ; and as for the “horror” which the unhappy culprits have of this discipline, why, we think that in it consists much of the merit of the invention. Men whose hearts are out of proportion to their heads, will always be confounding imprisonment of retention with imprisonment of punishment ; and, really, when we see *by whom*, and *for what* this punishment is inflicted, we wonder not that persons of more penetration than those who are alarmed at a tumour in the groin of a culprit, or a sprained ankle upon the Tread-wheel, are a little offended. On this part of the subject we cannot help being amused at the incapacity of

the "learned Thebans" to account for the severity of the Tread-mill labour.—Because the distance is never more than after the rate of "about one quarter of a mile up stairs in the hour," they wonder why the labourer should perspire, and be unable to continue above one quarter of an hour at work; and hence they shape to themselves some dreadful occult power in the Mill. Now, we would just ask them if ever they walked along a very greasy road, or attempted to climb a steep hill of loose land? If they have, we would beg leave to ask them what they felt then? and if not, we would recommend the experiment. The violence of the labour arises from the *fulcrum's* slipping from under the feet. Let any one ascend Ben Nevis, as we did, among the loose stones, and without a guide, and he will find his progress as slow, and his fatigue and perspiration as great (even in that cold atmosphere) as though he were at the Tread-mill.

2. *The moral effects.*—These are not much objected to, and really there is little cause. The discipline while it lasts precludes any improper connexion, or even conversation among the prisoners; and we certainly consider the Wheel as *infinitely preferable to solitary labour*.

3. *The political effects.*—Here it is objected that the labour is not useful in itself, and that it does not teach habits of industry: whereas, if the prisoners were employed in turning a crank, they would be prepared for turning potter's and cutler's wheels, and a variety of other operations. Now, we never heard that the object of prison labour was to teach dexterity to the culprits, who, God knows, are naturally dexterous enough; and we have never regarded prisons as polytechnic schools. The grand object is, that the prisoners should not, during their confinement, acquire idle habits, and consequently grow more vicious; and that the labour, while it is healthy, should be so severe as to put an end to every chance of returning. We think that in this respect, as well as in the two preceding ones, the Tread-mill, though an evil—and every punishment is of necessity an evil—has as much resemblance to a good, as any evil that could be named.

4. *The constitutional objections.*—These, though they have

tion of its application to females from ourselves, we shall give his own words, descriptive of the *spectacle* at Brixton.

“ ‘Revise your opinions,’ says he, ‘about the Tread-mill—the women are *not* injured—do *not* suffer—do *not* complain in the way you have been told.’

“ Here we must differ, as far, at least, as relates to Cold-bath Fields.

“ ‘I have seen them, thirty or forty, at work at Brixton—have spoken to them—*shaken hands with them* ;’ (merely by way of experiment we conclude),—‘their hands are *not* horny. I saw a dozen or two step from the Mill, those too at the hardest work. There are two or three degrees of it measured by the proportion of rest to that of labour, and according to the degree of guilt, and they were not exhausted—nor fainting—nor perspiring. I do not know,’ says our free-and-easy friend, ‘what other namby pamby sentimentalities I am to negative,’—meaning our expressions of pity for these suffering women—‘namby pamby sentimentalities!’—well, let us see—‘I watched for the fact—not one of them wiped her face when she came down, but sat *erect* and composedly till her turn for labour came—there even was little *ennui* or lassitude apparent among them ; the greater proportion appeared patient and resigned, and those whose ill-looks I remarked upon, had been the shortest time in the prison—those who had been longest confined being uniformly the most healthy.’

“ So far we are pleased with this, as it shows upon good authority—not that *our dislike to the system* is ill founded—not that we have exaggerated or been deceived with respect to the facts we have stated—but because it gives us reason to believe that the female labour is not *equally severe* in all prisons.

“ ‘I’ll swear,’ says our correspondent, (which by the way in these days is vastly improper)—‘I have seen a young lady in a well carpeted drawing-room looking and feeling I dare say as miserable as any of these persons, while seated on a squeaking screw music-stool at her eternal piano-forte, or still harping at

Ah vous dirai je Maman (juxta comitante), an almost equally ferocious governess!!

“ ‘And pray mind,’ says our inveterate castigator, ‘during the visit I have alluded to, there they were’—these amiable innocents—these *protégées* of yours, in the known presence of strangers, perhaps even of the representatives of that fourth estate, called the ‘*gentlemen of the Public Press*’ (*pace dicam*), and haply some of those who had so successfully contributed to render them the worthy objects of the discriminating sympathy of the reforming public, (a great portion of which have a fellow-feeling for the sufferers :) ‘there they were,’ he says, ‘in a state the most favourable for effect, quite sufficiently disengaged to cast many a backward look at their visitors, ‘speaking unutterable things.’

“ We rejoice mightily at this—this really gives us satisfaction—it shows the infallibility of female resources—their tongues are stopped by prison laws, and they have recourse to their eyes—we see no crime in this, rather a new proof of that ingenuity for which the sex is proverbial, and of which the poets in every age have sung. We enjoy the remonstrances of our friend, we admit his justification of the Tread-mill, and his attack upon ourselves, but nevertheless we object to the system.

“ Well—away with the Tread-mill, and let us look at patrician acts of misconduct—gentlemanly vices, not punishable by summons, nor amenable to the criminal laws. There have been more elopements, more goings off, and carryings off, during the last ten days, than have occurred within the previous ten months—here are the brothers of Irish Earls, the sons of English Barons, Irish Barons themselves, Irish gentlemen of small fortune, and French gentlemen of no fortune at all, helter-skelter carrying off other men’s wives and daughters, with the most merciless decision and despatch.

“ A man mounted in the chair of a patriotic dinner steps from the rostrum of liberty and independence to rifle the sweets of his friend’s fire-side, and illustrate the liberality of his sentiments by a practical experiment;—the husband of an amiable lady flies from her arms to those of the bewitching wife of an honourable

husband ;—and during all this short reign of liberalism, there has been a superabundance of duels fought—one less, the world says, than there ought to have been ; but that is not to the purpose—we mean merely to remark upon the state of society, that while THE JUSTICES ARE SETTING MEN OF SEVENTY TO TREAD UPON FLOAT-BOARDS FOR ACCIDENTAL SOLECISMS, AND WHILE PLAYERS IN SPANGLED JACKETS ARE INCARCERATED FOR DANCING AT STEPNEY, and whole hosts of publicans are fined for allowing their customers to drink in their houses after eleven o'clock, their betters are doing their best to preserve the equilibrium of society, and counteract the “double refinement” of the lower classes, by showing themselves above the petty control of Bow-street, the fulminations of Sir Richard Birnie, or the censure of the world or their own consciences.

Article, from the same Paper of the same date.

PRISON LABOUR.

As we have treated this subject in a different way in another part of this paper, and as we mentioned the name of Mr. Headlam in our last, as one of our correspondents upon it, we think it only consistent with the principle of impartiality which we have laid down to give a place to some portion of that gentleman's letter to Mr. Peel.

It is hardly necessary to premise to those who have given the question any consideration, that Mr. Headlam is a very active Magistrate, and Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the North Riding of Yorkshire ; nor will it be required of us to observe, that we have purposely confined our extracts from his letter to such parts as treat of the power of the Magistracy to inflict the sentence of hard labour, and the consideration, how far the hardship of that labour may be increased.

Convicts, says Mr. Headlam, (for we waive the arguments touching the legality of setting *untried*, and probably *innocent*

prisoners to work) to whom work is assigned as a punishment are sentenced to *hard labour*.

“ The 22d Geo. III. cap. 64, which authorises the employment, in Houses of Correction, of prisoners not sentenced to labour, directs them to be employed in some work or *labour which is not severe*.

“ It seems important upon this inquiry to consider the definite extent and meaning of these expressions. The first time that I am aware of the former term being used is in 5th Ann, cap. 6, which extends the benefit of clergy to all those who are entitled to ask it, without requiring them to read by way of conditional merit. ‘ And experience having shown that so very universal a lenity was frequently inconvenient and an encouragement to commit the lower degrees of felony; and that though capital punishments were too rigorous for these inferior offences, yet no punishment at all (or next to none) was as much too gentle; it was further enacted by the same statute, that when any person is convicted of any theft or larceny, and burnt in the hand for the same according to the ancient law, he shall also, at the discretion of the Judge, be committed to the House of Correction or public workhouse, to be there kept to *hard labour**.’ The object of this statute being to substitute *labour as a punishment in lieu of death*, it is obvious that the epithet *hard* is added *in terrorem*. A review of the practical effect of this statute, and of some others, which have subsequently assigned the same punishment to various offences, as well as a consideration of the degree of hardness with which labour is capable of being applied, will satisfy us that the epithet has not any very definite or appropriate meaning.

“ As to the *practice*, till within a very few years, scarcely any House of Correction was provided with the means of keeping all the convicts employed in regular, *serious* work. Notwithstanding the sentence of *hard labour*, solemnly pronounced by the Judge as a substitute for capital punishment, such criminals have till lately almost universally loitered the term of their imprisonment in perfect idleness.

* “ Blackstone, vol. iv. p. 370.”

“ And even where labour is inflicted according to the sentence, to what degree of hardness or severity can it be extended ?

“ It has been contended by some writers, ‘ that severe unmitigated labour ought alone to be introduced into prisons :’— ‘ that prison labour should exhaust the strength and subdue the spirit of the criminal, and send him to repose worn down in body and hopeless in mind*.’ Can it be contemplated, that a convict should be so far exhausted or subdued by his labour, as that the diet and rest with which he is supplied will not enable him to resume his task the following day, and so from day to day during the term of his imprisonment ? If so, he must grow daily more and more unequal to his work ; and if the same task be continued to be required of him for any considerable period, *his health and strength, and ultimately his life, must sink under the infliction !*

“ It is clear that such severity of labour never was required, and never would be tolerated. If by the criminal’s being exhausted and subdued, is only meant that he feels so much weariness as a night’s rest will remove, and so much exhaustion as the prison diet will replenish, so that he can resume his labour on the morrow with *undiminished* strength, then it will not appear to be more severe than the toil which the common labourer is obliged daily to undergo. Indeed it seems as *unmerciful* as it would be impracticable to require more.

“ A great quantity of labour has been performed of late years by convicts within prison walls, in enlarging and improving public buildings. Is any such culprit, however aggravated his crime, or however deserving he may be of the utmost severity of punishment, ever expected or required to do more than the ordinary day’s work of a hired labourer ? Considerations of health, to which the whole treatment of prisoners, in regard both to lodging, diet, and work is referable, would not justify a more severe task.

“ *It may safely therefore be assumed, that the sentence of hard labour has never been construed to impose more than the average work of an ordinary labourer !!!*

* “ Fourth Report of Committee of Prison Discipline, &c. p. 34.”

“ When the statute 22d Geo. III. cap. 64, extended to Houses of Correction the right which had previously existed in gaols of setting to work persons not convicted, the Legislature probably had in view the words *hard labour*, expressed in the sentence of punishment, and therefore directed that those who work only for their maintenance should be employed in some work or *labour which is not severe*.

“ What then is the precise extent and meaning of this direction? If the arguments already urged for the right of setting prisoners to work for their subsistence be considered of any weight, they will determine this question. There seems to be no hardship in requiring of persons who are accustomed to live by their labour when at large, the same degree of exertion when they have to earn their support in prison.

“ The expression, therefore, of being employed in *labour which is not severe* can only mean, not more severe than the ordinary labour of honest working men. There seems no reason why it should be less so, or that a man who is well sustained with comfortable lodging and healthy diet, should procure those comforts with less labour in prison than out of it.

“ In practice, therefore, it will be difficult to draw a distinction between the quantity of work to be performed by a convict sentenced to *hard labour*, and by a prisoner who is to be employed in *labour which is not severe*. The former cannot do more than a day's work, and the latter ought not to do less. But there may be a material difference in the *quality* as well as in the *quantity* of work required of prisoners.

“ It is contended by some, ‘that severe unmitigated labour ought alone to be introduced into prisons, and that profit and utility are quite foreign from the object*.’ To this the Committee of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline reply, that convinced as they are ‘that hard labour is of the very first importance in Prison Discipline, they cannot perceive why hard labour may not also be useful and profitable labour.’

* “ Fourth Report, p. 34.”

“ The question is entitled to our most serious attention. Let it be put in this form. In making arrangements for setting to work all the persons confined in any Gaol or House of Correction, would it be more expedient to establish a *Tread-mill* or a *weaving manufactory* ?

“ We have the opportunity of seeing the latter plan carried into complete operation in the county of Lancaster. The great mass of the population there being engaged in the cotton manufacture, there is no difficulty in employing every prisoner at the loom ; and every prison is like a large manufactory, carried on with great profit both to the public *and to the prisoners*.

“ In the county gaol all are so employed, *except* those committed for trial. In the House of Correction at Preston it is the same, and the cost of their subsistence is more than covered by their earnings. In the New Bailey House of Correction at Manchester there have recently been accommodations made for *four hundred looms*. It would, perhaps, be difficult to establish this manufacture to the same extent in any other county ; and there is scarcely any other mechanical labour which could be applied so universally or so profitably to all the inmates of a prison. This, therefore, presents the system of useful and profitable labour in the most favourable point of view. Let us consider the *moral* effects of this system in the reformation of offenders and the prevention of crime.

“ Those prisoners who have resorted to acts of dishonesty for want of education and instruction in any honest calling, will undoubtedly be improved by being taught a useful trade. But this will chiefly apply to young delinquents, who are sentenced to a long imprisonment, during which they may have time both to be taught a trade, and also to acquire the habit of practising it. As to those who have been brought up in a business differing from that carried on in the gaol, they can derive little advantage from learning a new one ; and those who follow at home the same trade to which they are sentenced in prison, will not feel much punishment in pursuing their ordinary occupation.

“ A weaver in Lancashire, who prefers vicious idleness to

work, and resorts to theft to furnish the means of gratifying his criminal inclinations, if he is detected, is committed to gaol, where he is maintained comfortably before his trial, without any labour at all. After conviction, he is ordered, perhaps, to hard labour for six months, during which time he is employed in weaving, to which he is accustomed. He is moreover obliged to be cleanly, temperate, and sober. *These are restraints* to which he would not have submitted at home ; but which, by improving his health, make his life more agreeable : and he will *probably confess* that he is now a happier man than in the riot and debauchery which brought him to his present situation. These feelings cannot but produce moral improvement ; and when his term of confinement is completed, he will *probably* leave the prison with resolutions of amendment—though without any horror of a gaol, or any dread of the punishment there inflicted. Under the control of authority, he has felt the advantage of industry and temperance ; but when he returns to society, and meets with the temptations of vice, and the seductions of evil company, to which he has before yielded, his self-command may forsake him, and he will not be restrained from crime by any apprehension of being again sent to work at his business in the house of correction.

“ Is this reasoning supported by the experience of that populous county ?

“ At Manchester, the governor observes, with respect to the juvenile delinquents, that they returned repeatedly, at the rate of sixty per cent., or, in his own words, three in five. Upon which the Committee remark, ‘ that it would be most desirable that the Stepping-mill were here introduced as an excellent instrument of corrective discipline for a considerable part of the inmates of this house of correction*.’

“ Until within these few years that this species of labour has been introduced, the enlarged system of manufacture carried on in the prisons of Lancashire was entitled to the highest praise. Without such a system, it was difficult to contrive employment for a number of prisoners, and the consequence was, that in very few

* Fourth Report—Appendix, p. 31.

prisons did employment exist. But since the introduction of the Tread-mill, it has been very generally considered, with the exception of a few FASTIDIOUS persons, a most valuable improvement in prison labour.

“ There seem good reasons for establishing in prisons a kind of employment which is not pursued elsewhere, and for preferring irksome labour to reputable trades.

“ Considering the pains that have been taken in the last 50 years, equally dictated by humanity and policy, to preserve the *health* of prisoners, it requires some contrivance to connect the ideas of discomfort with a gaol, and, by making imprisonment disagreeable, to make it conducive to the prevention of crime.

“ This object is attained to a great degree by the labour of the Stepping-wheel. *It has been found highly favourable to health, the first object of prison discipline.* It is nevertheless generally disagreeable. The unpleasantness, however, proceeds from its dulness rather than its severity. It is irksome, *without furnishing a plea for any well-founded complaint!! Without any oppression, or real hardship, it excites a strong dislike, and is more likely than any labour which has been hitherto adopted to operate beneficially in the diminution of crime!!*

“ On hardened offenders there can be no doubt that the dull monotonous labour of the wheel, *though neither severe nor exhausting*, will have a more salutary effect in deterring from crime than occupation in any trade which is pursued by respectable persons in common life.

“ It is also EQUALLY WELL ADAPTED FOR SHORT IMPRISONMENTS, and punishment for petty offences. It can be applied immediately on the entrance of every prisoner into gaol, WITHOUT ANY DISTINCTION OF AGE OR STRENGTH, without any reference to his former calling, and without unfitting him for resuming his ordinary habits when restored to liberty. A prisoner sentenced to labour for only seven days, may be the whole of that time kept to work according to his sentence; whereas, if the employment of the prison be confined to some useful manufacture, it is not worth while to teach a prisoner whose term is short.

“ It is well known, that a great number of individuals, committed for non-payment of penalties, disobedience of orders, misbehaviour in service, and other slight offences, to whom simple imprisonment held out no terrors, have made payment, submission, and amendment, rather than be subjected to the labour of the Tread-wheel.

“ Although for young culprits, who have committed serious offences, for which they have to undergo a long imprisonment, and who are ignorant of any honest means of livelihood, it will be useful to institute a system of education combined with punishment, and to teach them some of the useful trades, which, after a certain period of instruction and practice, may make them valuable members of society ; yet, for the punishment of old offenders, and for the employment of those whose terms of imprisonment are short, a system of *peculiar irksome prison labour* seems preferable to the establishment of any respectable or profitable manufacture.”

After this consideration of the subject, and this *unqualified* praise of the mill, Mr. Headlam proceeds to argue on the propriety of applying it to prisoners committed for trial—a point which we have no inclination here to discuss. In allusion, however, to Sir John Cox Hippisley, Mr. Headlam says—

“ As to its effect upon the *health*, an Honourable Baronet in a western county, supported by the authority of *several gentlemen of considerable reputation in the medical world*, has recently made a very serious and elaborate attack upon the labour of the Tread-wheel, as likely, from its nature, to be productive of almost every disease to which the human frame is subject, and to exhibit, in the next generation, ‘a comparatively enfeebled race, springing from the injured health and wasted limbs of many of those unfortunate beings who may be exposed to this impolitic discipline.’ If this alarming denunciation were well founded, there would be an end of the question, and it would be clearly wrong to insist upon a kind of work which would endanger the health of so numerous a class of our countrymen, as unfortunately the inhabitants of prisons now compose.

“ But these fatal prognostics are *entirely at variance* with experience on the subject. They have been *completely* answered in argument by a very active and intelligent magistrate of the North Riding of Yorkshire, in his Reply to the Statements of the Honourable Baronet *, and they have been answered, in fact, by the communications received by yourself, sir, in reply to your inquiries addressed to the visiting magistrates of every gaol in the kingdom where Tread-mills have been erected. These official returns entirely negative the imputation that any evil consequences have arisen, or are likely to arise, from the kind of labour to which prisoners are subjected on the Tread-wheel.

“ We may safely, therefore, agree with the Committee of Prison Discipline, in their observation upon the House of Correction at Northallerton, ‘ that one of the most pleasing and satisfactory circumstances attending the introduction of the Stepping-mill, is the effect which the regular labour it imposes has upon the *health* of the prisoners.’ ‘ Not a man,’ says the very respectable surgeon attending the prison, ‘ enters the prison, who does not now leave it in higher and firmer health on his liberation.’

“ If it is thus conducive to the *health* of those who are employed upon it, it cannot exceed the measure of ordinary labour; otherwise, it would be injurious in its effects. It must be obvious on the slightest inspection, that the exertion required for this task is not nearly equal to the toil undergone by many honest labourers; and I have frequently asked prisoners so employed, whether it was harder work than they were accustomed to, and never yet heard any complain that it was more severe than their ordinary *avocations*.

“ To those, therefore, who admit that prisoners before their trial ought to be made to work for their bread, the labour of the Mill cannot be thought *too severe*; but still they think there is something degrading and disgraceful in its nature, which ought to be confined to the punishment of adjudged guilt.

* In a letter to Sir John Cox Hippisley, in reply to his Statements on Prison Labour, by the Rev. William Dent.

“ On reflection, however, it will appear, that the degradation does not arise from the nature of the work, but from the place and circumstances in which it is imposed ; there is nothing unmanly in the exercise, and nothing that would be thought objectionable, if it were found expedient to employ the power of the Stepping-wheel in the machinery of any respectable manufacture.

“ If we look back to the statute of Charles II. which directs a stock of materials to be provided for setting untried prisoners to work, and inquire into the usual practice that prevailed under its authority, we shall find that it generally consisted in setting the prisoners to *beat hemp*.

“ The statute of James I. which directs that Houses of Correction *shall be furnished with Mills, and such like necessary implements* for setting prisoners to work, does not specify whether such Mills shall be put in motion by *stepping* upon them, or by *turning* them by a hand-crank ; leaving the regulation of such matters *where it should be left*, to the discretion of Magistrates.

“ Can it be considered that either *beating hemp*, or *turning a mill by hand*, are, in ease or dignity, preferable to the mode of work now proposed ? The real cause of disgrace is, that the work is carried on in a gaol, and that prisoners only are employed upon it.”

The rest of the letter contains proposals for improvements in prisons, and a general assurance of the writer's confidence in the ability and humanity of Mr. Peel, that he will give the subject his attention and consideration.

We offer no opinion ourselves upon the use of the Tread-mill, as applicable to males ; but we still are unwilling, indeed as yet unable, to give up the dislike we have all along felt to the labour of women at its toils, and precisely upon the principle laid down by Mr. Headlam himself while advocating the system : he says that the labour of the Mill is not greater than any labouring man would undergo, were he not in prison. Surely the argument will not hold good as relates to women—we make our women our friends and companions—we do not make them our slaves. The

crimes and vices of vicious women ought to be punished; but there is something repugnant to the feelings of an Englishman in the idea of torturing a woman: a man, for instance, might horsewhip his groom for insolence, or kick his valet down stairs for impertinence, and he would be only amenable to the laws for an assault; but a man who used personal violence to the most absolute virago, the most insulting termagant upon earth, in the shape of his wife's waiting-woman, would be scouted as a thing in human shape unworthy the name of man. The same corrections are not applicable to the two sexes, and we must hear better reasonings and stronger facts than we have yet met with to convince us of our error.

Paragraph, from the Morning Chronicle of the 7th of October.

EXERCISE at the Tread-wheel being a species of *torture*, and also *not in contemplation* of the several statutes that enable magistrates to sentence to hard labour: Quere—Can such sentence be legal?

Article, from the John Bull Paper of the 12th of October.

THE TREAD-MILL.

IN addition to the * testimony of Mr. Jackson, surgeon of the Guildford House of Correction, respecting the effects of the Tread-mill upon "*patients*," we lay before our readers the following letter from Mr. Hutchinson, whose name has been frequently mentioned during the discussion.

* [Which testimony was founded, as has been explained, upon totally mistaken premises. J. J.]

" *To John Bull.*

" Southwell, Notts, Oct. 4, 1823.

" SIR—Observing that within the last few weeks my name has had the honour of being repeatedly mentioned by your correspondents on the subject of the Tread-wheel, I shall esteem myself under an obligation if you will notice in your ensuing paper, that Sir John Cox Hippisley's letter, addressed to the editor of the London Medical and Physical Journal, and published in the last number of that useful work, as well as in a late one of your highly interesting John Bull, will be *very fully answered* in the November number of the London Medical and Physical Journal; to the highly respectable and ingenious editor of which my reply has been already transmitted. This letter of Sir John Cox Hippisley contains a commentary on my observations, stated three months ago in the Medical Journal, and must be acknowledged by every candid and unprejudiced reader to make *a feeble effort* to resist the force of plain facts and positive truths, by assertions supported only by illusive hypothesis and vague conjecture.

" As a period of two or three weeks will elapse prior to the publication of my reply in the Journal above alluded to, and as my silence may possibly be construed into an acquiescence with the opinions of Sir John Cox Hippisley and Dr. Good, permit me to mention, through the medium of your truly impartial and widely circulated paper, that in confirmation of my sentiments heretofore given to the public on this very important subject, under the direction of the Rev. J. T. Becher, a visiting justice of the prison at Southwell, and one of the chairmen of the Quarter Sessions, attended by Mr. Mole, the governor, and myself, fifty prisoners have undergone a *strict* and impartial examination, so as to ascertain individually and collectively their unbiassed and uncontrolled opinions respecting the comparative severity of the exercise, and its sensible effects on the different muscles called into action, for the purpose of enabling me to investigate the truth by determining from representation as well as inspection its morbid effects upon the human frame. These important questions, and equally

important answers, with some general observations, I have arranged in a tabular form, *under an assurance that they must carry with them, even to the minds of their most determined opponents, a conviction of the MILDNESS, THE UTILITY, AND SALUBRITY of the exercise imposed by the Tread-wheel.*

“ With every sentiment of deference for *the high respectability* of Sir John Cox Hippisley, and *the scientific attainments* of Dr. Good, I can neither abandon the unequivocal testimony of my senses, nor admit the existence of imaginary evils, which are * controverted by the statement of fifty prisoners practically competent to speak the truth, but personally disposed, from motives of self-interest, to conceal it, as well as by our daily observations upon visible occurrences attaching to the health of prisoners entrusted to my care and medical superintendence as a surgeon, in which profession I have assiduously and extensively practised for nearly thirty years. I remain, sir, your faithful servant,

“ BEN. HUTCHINSON,

“ Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Surgeon to the Nottinghamshire House of Correction at Southwell.”

On the opposite side of the question we have received some *strong and pertinent remarks*, and an extract of a letter giving an account of THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MILL INTO TRINIDAD.

It is now nearly seven weeks since the gentleman to whom the letter containing this account was addressed was kind enough to furnish us with the extract—we hesitated as to inserting it, because it appeared to us to reflect *personally* upon the governor of that island, whose character for humanity and moderation we never before heard impeached.

The gentleman who has *now* done us the favour of transmitting another copy of this extract, dwells *very sensibly and forcibly* upon the barbarity of the punishment in a hot climate; yet in relating facts that have occurred in the island, he informs us that

* [See this examination, among the introductory matter of this volume. J. J.]

Sir Ralph Woodforde, the governor, being himself present at the operation of the Mill, when a lad sentenced to hard labour was put upon it, was so struck by the violence of the toil that he ordered him off *after seven minutes*.

We mention this rather as a proof of the governor's humanity and consideration than of his severity or cruelty; and we think when the introduction of the punishment is attributed to the "penal inventiveness" of his Excellency, our correspondent suffers his animosity *to the system* to carry him somewhat too far—an English judge might as well be stigmatized as a murderer for passing sentence of death, as a colonial governor characterized as cruel because the Tread-mill is introduced into a colony during his administration. We certainly should think the labour excessive, when the heat of the climate is taken into consideration—yet, it should be considered that the ordinary labour of man in the fields is performed in the same temperature, and that of course the Tread-mill bears the same relation to voluntary work in a hot country as it bears in a colder one.

The system of enforcing the labour at Trinidad appears somewhat different from that adopted in England; for we are told that "the common hangman—a proper enough officer, as far as *that* goes—is stationed with a cow-skin to flog the unfortunate offender in case he should not keep equal motion with the revolution of the Wheel." Hence it appears, that one individual only is put upon the Wheel at a time, and that the rotatory motion of the machine is not the result of his treading, but that his treading is regulated by the motion of the Wheel, imparted to it by some other force or power.

An instance is quoted to us, of a slave called Moses, who "not able or willing to follow the preponderating gravity" of the machine, fell down and broke his leg. This, which is cited as an instance of barbarity, appears to us to be merely the result of idleness or sulkiness, *virtues* with which the blacks are amply endowed, and *the same circumstance would happen to any person here wilfully skirking the labour*.

It appears they have two punishments on the Wheel in Trini-

dad—the quick and slow. In the quick time, or “*impelled motion*,” the Wheel revolves twenty times in a minute; but our correspondent is unable to tell us the circumference of the Wheel—in slow time its revolutions are at the rate of ten or twelve in the minute.

We have but one more remark to make upon this communication, but we ought, in justice to our correspondent, to make it—the letter from which our intelligence is derived was written in July, long before the Tread-mill had become a subject of general discussion, and *long before* Sir J. Hippisley’s book had reached *Trinidad*. We state this to clear the writer from any imputation of party feeling in the question, and to place his communication before our readers in its real character—that of A DETAIL OF FACTS OPERATING STRONGLY UPON A MIND UNBIASSED BY ANY PREJUDICES, SAVE THOSE OF HUMANITY, and THEN UNDISTURBED BY THE CONFLICTING EVIDENCE WHICH EVERY DAY NOW BRINGS TO LIGHT!!

We perceive that we have a coadjutor in Blackwood’s Magazine for the present month, in our hostility against the labour for women; and we are pleased that a work so extensively circulated, and so universally read, should have taken a similar view of the subject with ourselves. In an article called the “General Question” is the following passage [which will be seen a few pages back. J. J.]

Extract, from the News of the 12th of October.

“WHAT was an Act of Vagrancy, we had used to know; but what, now, IS NOT, Heaven and his Worship of the little parlour, only know. The *Tread Mill Torture* is the Country Justices’ incipient *Inquisition*—the sovereign remedy for idleness, and *impertinence* of every species. What renders this *infamous* power more disgusting, is, that a commitment to the Mill is not unfrequently made out as a ‘*D——n’d good joke!*’ Where the boozing ‘Squire has been out, taking his glass, and is returning home as full of wine as of power—at once *plenipo* and *plenipot*—

he is, peradventure, marvellously *amusing* on the road—a great Quiz withal; and having put some bumpkin on his mettle, the ‘cholerick word’ is enough to the great man; and with a loud horse-laugh, some *Johnny Raw* is sent to the Mill! No wonder that such *Mills* are rising up around us, on all sides. The Quorum ought to render great honour to this Mill—it finds *them* all with *stepping* work, in their progress *upwards*; a man has only to look *askant*, and unless he is able to ‘plead the justification’ of a native *squint*,—he must mount the steps of his Worship’s *ladder*, which is higher than JACOB’S, for it has *no top* to it. Besides, it is so *devilish droll a thing to look at*, when it is at work! In several that we have seen, you are introduced into a side-room, from which there is a *kind of gallery or balustrade, cut out for the accommodation of spectators*; their Worships and their friends—and you are made to *look down directly on the faces of the poor wretches* who are writhing in the *double agonies of torture and shame*! We know not what may be the feelings of some men, in reviewing such scenes; but it was *one of the most painful moments we ever experienced*, elicited by the suffering of others; it was a sensation that we had *never before felt in England*: and from our hearts we *cursed* alike the *wretch that invented*, and the *brutes who adopted*, such an *out-landish punishment*. We lately saw in a country paper a statement, that three or four *Peers*, and their *Ladies*, and several Baronets, Squires, and Parsons, had *taken a turn on the County Tread Mill*, just to *see how it worked*; and *very merry they were over it*—pronouncing it a most *wholesome exercise*!—It were only ‘murder in jest,’ as *Hamlet* says of his Player King! There is something *horribly depraved* in this: why do not these moral experimentalists mount the platform of the pillory—and placing within the wooden collars their illustrious heads, grin broadly and merrily at the crowd below? Why not mimic the waltz at the cart-tail, to the accompaniment of the *musical nine* of the multiplied whip; or travesty the *pas de deux* of the gallows? It may indeed ‘be sport to them’—but it is ‘death to others:’ and we should hold SUCH MERRY-ANDREW TRICKS in the higher orders, as a debasement of all that is dignified in rank, or manly

and honourable in the *social* feeling; and as counselling an unreflecting mummery, that would in the end fit Englishmen for the scenes that brought a deluge of blood on France—where the *Noblesse* used to paint and dress, to go and witness the victims on the rack, precisely in the same way as for the Opera-house.”

TREAD-MILL IN TRINIDAD.

Extract of a Letter, received by an eminent Merchant, dated Trinidad, the 1st of July, 1823, inserted in the Morning Post of the 15th of October.

“NOT content with the IGNOMINIOUS punishments ordained by the Royal Order of the 16th of September, 1822, for petty thefts and offences, the *Tread-mill* has been introduced here; several slaves have been worked upon it *till they could work no more for the time*, from their exhausted state; and it has been acknowledged by medical men here, that the punishment is too severe for female slaves; these poor creatures, after an experimental trial, are therefore exempt for its operation, but they have no thanks to return to * * * * *. I do not know how this kind of thing is managed in England, but the mode of inflicting such punishment here is thus:—Those sentenced to the Wheel, or, as the ordered term is, ‘to hard labour, with or without chains,’ are placed upon it, and the common hangman is stationed, with a cow-skin, to flog on the unfortunate offender, in case he should not keep equal motion with the revolution of the Wheel. An instance occurred, about three weeks since, of a slave (Moses), belonging to La Puerta estate, having been put on the Wheel; but not able or not willing to follow the preponderating gravity, ONE OF HIS LEGS WAS FRACTURED, and he is now in gaol, where the wheel is erected, undergoing, I am happy to say, a complete cure.—Now, suppose death had ensued,

what would have been the consequence to the perpetrators of it? There are two kinds of time observed here, in such punishment—quick and slow.—In quick time, or *impelled* motion, the wheel revolves twenty times in a minute, and it is one of large dimensions, but I cannot exactly state its circumference.—In this time, then, the wheel performs 1,200 turns in an hour.—In slow time, and that is for very feeble persons, the operation of the wheel is from ten to twelve times in a minute.

“ Another case of THIS KIND OF PUNISHMENT HAS HAPPENED TO TWO WHITE SAILORS, BELONGING TO THE BRIG HERO, OF LIVERPOOL; but as this case is detailed in the law report of it, in the Trinidad Gazette of the 7th ult., I shall not trouble you with any further recital of it.—I can, however, vouch for the facts so detailed, as I was in court when the case occurred. At the same time, allow me to say that the Court of first instance of Civil Jurisdiction, in ordering such punishment to these sailors, had *no legal* power to do so: for that court has no criminal jurisdiction under the new-fangled orders.”

[The conclusion of this extract *has not* hitherto appeared in print: it is as follows. J. J.]

“ When this story, I mean the report of it in the Trinidad Gazette, reaches England, and becomes pretty generally known in the seaports of the kingdom, I am inclined to think that it will be more difficult to get sailors to enter on a voyage to Trinidad in merchant ships, than to man the navy. Again, IN THE CASE OF AN IRISH SHIP, A SAILOR, A YOUNG MAN OF ABOUT TWENTY YEARS OLD, WAS SENT TO THE WHEEL. * * * * was present in prison. The charge was disobedience, and striking the master of that vessel; and the boy, *after seven minutes* treading, became *so weak*, as to induce his Excellency to order him to be taken down, and not to apply the punishment to him any more. He was accordingly taken down, with his pores issuing forth perspiration in such a manner, that seven minutes more on the Wheel would most probably have terminated his misery. Such are the benefits and advantages that we are likely to derive from the new order of things—the old was bad enough.”

The letter just given was described in the *Morning Post* as "received by a King's Counsel and M. P." The annexed paragraph from its next day's paper will explain how the error arose : — "We are requested by the gentleman who furnished us with the extract of a letter from Trinidad, respecting the introduction of the *Tread-mill* into that island, to correct an error into which he fell, of stating that the letter was addressed to a King's Counsel and M. P. The letter was received by a very highly respectable party, but who was not of the profession above stated. Our correspondent received the extract from a friend, and committed the mistake through misunderstanding some mention made to him of the parties into whose hands the very important letter was put."

Paragraph, from the Morning Post of the 16th of October.

THE TREAD-MILL.

KINGSTON SESSIONS.—The Act of last Session respecting the regulation of prisons, directing that the Governors, Chaplains, and Surgeons, who attend the several County Prisons and Houses of Correction, should give in quarterly reports to the Bench of Magistrates on the subject of the health, morals, &c. of the prisoners, the greater part of the day was occupied in the consideration of those reports, and of some other matters of mere local interest.

Amongst the reports handed in was one presented by the Visiting Magistrates of Brixton gaol, where the celebrated Mill was first erected. It stated that the prisoners enjoyed a good state of health generally; that they were kept regularly at work, but by no means in such a manner as to cause any injury to health. The prison was not intended when it was built to receive so many inmates as were constantly sent to it, and the excess had rendered

an increase of the classes from six to ten necessary. *Much had been said in opposition to the labour of the Tread-mill*, but NOT ONE OF THE OBJECTIONS ENUMERATED HAD ANY APPLICATION TO THE BRIXTON MILL, and doubtless the defects of other Mills built upon the same principle were also much exaggerated. In fact, health, cleanliness, and good order prevailed in the highest degree, and were attributable to the excellent discipline, superintended by the governor, surgeon, and chaplain. The duties of the surgeon were represented as extremely severe, and his salary as greatly disproportioned to his labour, perseverance, and skill. ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES UNDER WHICH HE WAS SAID TO LABOUR WAS THAT OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THOSE PRISONERS WHO WERE REALLY AND INEVITABLY ILL, AND THOSE WHO * ENDEAVoured TO BE SO, IN ORDER TO AVOID THE PENALTY OF LABOUR. Those persons who came under the professional care of this gentleman amounted to no less than five hundred in one year. The visitors represented the necessity of increasing his salary, AS HIS LABOUR WAS DOUBLE WHAT IT USED TO BE, or what it was intended to be. They represented, that notwithstanding the great benefits derivable from the Brixton Gaol Discipline, *it would still be an evidence of enthusiasm to suppose that the majority of those who underwent the punishment prescribed would abandon their evil habits!!!*

A desultory conversation, which it was extremely difficult to catch, took place among the Magistrates, who seemed to consider the subject one of the utmost importance. After some observations upon the necessity of ascertaining, whether a person who has some ground close to the gaol is not encroaching upon the Act of Parliament by building tenements—a proceeding which may, in the opinion of the Bench, militate against the health of the inmates—The subject of the Tread-mill was alluded to. It was *universally admitted that the health of the prisoners was a paramount object. A complaint had reached the Bench that the Wheel at Brixton was so constructed, or rather so defective in its construction, as to occasion a painful jerk*, and that the prisoners found

* [One moral effect of the Mill. J. J.]

this defect a considerable obstruction to their efforts, and *a most rigorous addition to their punishment*. Several of the Magistrates inquired whether this defect actually existed, and why, if it did, the person who made the Wheel had not been informed of the fact? It was replied, we understood (the conversation was rapid and in a low tone), that THE CONSTRUCTOR HAD BEEN WRITTEN TO UPON THE SUBJECT; NOTWITHSTANDING WHICH, NO REMEDY HAD BEEN APPLIED.

Mr. Trotter, who occasionally takes the chair at the Sessions-house, Newington, said it was particularly necessary to guard against any complaint of this kind, as, should any accident happen, exaggeration must be expected.

Another Magistrate observed, that the complaint about the Wheel had been made by a person who afterwards contradicted it. The general opinion of the Bench, however, appeared to be, that the Brixton Wheel was liable to the objection of inflicting an unnecessary and rigorous degree of punishment.

Mr. Denison, the Member, expressed his surprise that the maker of the Wheel, who was under obligations to prevent it from becoming oppressive to the prisoners, had not remedied the defect. It was, he added, necessary to give the constructor of the Wheel notice, and if he continued to pay no attention to the direction, to sue him for the penalties.

In this opinion the Bench unanimously acquiesced; and Mr. Lawson, the Clerk of the Peace, was directed to write to the manufacturer to the above effect.

In the report concerning the county prison, it was represented that the plan of putting the prisoners in irons being dispensed with, the facilities of escape were increased, and it therefore became necessary to have GRATINGS THROWN OVER THE AIRING YARDS, out of which even prisoners in irons contrived to escape. Of course prisoners with free limbs would find less difficulty in becoming their own masters.

Letter, inserted in the John Bull Paper of the 19th of October.

SIR,—Having read in your paper of last Sunday some account respecting the use of the Tread-mill in the island of Trinidad, I beg leave just to give you the fact of the circumstance attending the accident, when one of the negroes was put *in* to work. He actually, from design, pushed his leg through the tread-board, choosing to break his leg rather than work. The governor immediately ordered the Wheel to be *lined inside*, and thus prevented what many refractory slaves would have done rather than work in any manner, in any way.

Respecting the operation of the Mill-wheel, altogether taken, it is so made, that the weight of motion can be exactly suited to the strength of the person to work it—even if very young.

You have so very justly borne testimony to the humane, well-known character of Sir Ralph Woodford, that it would be useless in me to pay any compliment to you upon that act of public justice.

I cannot help, sir, feeling gratified that in this country there is one paper, at least, like the watchful eagle, that keeps so good a look out upon the vile crew that take such pleasure in casting an odium upon the characters of every public man who receives the approbation of his sovereign and country. I remain, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

R. S.

Doctors' Commons, Oct. 16, 1823.

From the British Press of the 20th of October.

ACCIDENT AT A TREAD-MILL.

A most shocking accident happened in the Swaffham Gaol on Saturday se'nnight. As Wm. Burton Peeling, who had been working on the Tread-wheel, was resting himself in the usual routine, off the Wheel, he very incautiously kneeled down by the

partition which separates one working class from another, for the purpose of conversing with the persons in the next division (which is contrary to the orders of the prison), and, it is supposed, that in drawing himself back he lifted his head within THE WHEEL, which DREW HIM IN, AND CRUSHED HIM TO DEATH IN AN INSTANT. It appears by the evidence upon the Coroner's inquest, that he had been holding a conversation, two or three times before, on that morning, in the same manner, with the persons of the adjoining class. The Coroner's inquest was taken the next day, and the unanimous verdict of the jury was as follows:—"Wm. Burton Peeling came to his death by inadvertently and incautiously kneeling down, and was caught by the Tread-wheel." We understand that the possibility of such an accident in future is now prevented by closing up that small aperture by which Peeling attempted to hold a conversation with the next class.

Letter, inserted in the Morning Post of the 21st of October.

KINGSTON SESSIONS—TREAD-WHEEL.

SIR—In the disputed question concerning the value or mischief of the Tread-wheel discipline, the facts disclosed in the account of what occurred at the late Quarter Sessions, at Kingston, respecting the celebrated Brixton Tread-mill, and published in the *Morning Post* of the 16th instant, are of very high importance; and, probably, to adopt the language of the chairman of the Sessions, as urged upon this subject, on another occasion, "will mainly tend to set that question at rest for ever."

It must be remembered that this is the Mill whose construction, under Mr. Cubitt's own eye, has been chiefly looked up to, as affording a specimen of perfection, and whose discipline has been so skilfully maintained as to produce a boast, that not a

single injury, or complaint of any kind, has ever occurred; such was the account of it returned to Government on the 21st of January of the present year, under the authority of the Chairman of the Sessions, the surgeon, and the governor of the prison: and such, it now appears, was the character given of it in the report of the visiting magistrates (at the Quarter Sessions above alluded to), in which we are told that "the prisoners are kept regularly at work, but by no means in such a manner as to cause any injury to health," and that "NOT ONE OF THE OBJECTIONS ENUMERATED HAD ANY APPLICATION TO THE BRIXTON MILL." Now, one of the objections that has always been urged against it, and a VERY POWERFUL objection it has ever been felt, is, that from the complicated and unwieldy nature of the machinery, it is difficult to bring it to any degree of perfection whatever; that it must be perpetually liable to get out of order, and OCCASIONALLY TO BREAK, ABRUPTLY, IN SOME MAIN PART; and hence that it must constantly put the health of the labourers into jeopardy. That THE AXLE OF THIS MACHINERY HAS ONCE BROKEN ABRUPTLY AT BRIXTON is now too well known to be denied, though no official notice has ever been taken of such a casualty; and from incidental information, communicated to the magistrates after the above report was received and read, and which *one of the magistrates* present, it seems, *endeavoured*, at the moment, *to quash*, it was ascertained, that this "machinery is so constructed, or rather so defective in its construction, as to occasion a painful jerk; and that the prisoners found this defect a considerable obstruction to their efforts, and a most rigorous addition to their punishment;" and that "the constructor had been written to upon the subject, notwithstanding which no remedy had been applied." I have a pleasure in adding, that at the suggestion of Mr. Dennison, it was ordered that the constructor of the Wheel should again have notice, and that if he continued to pay no attention to the same, he should be sued for his penalties! Upon this fact there are two remarks to be made: the first is, that the defect complained of being in the construction of the machine, *the prisoners who have been employed upon it have been suffering under a painful*

and oppressive labour from its very erection ! The next is, that as this Mill is held up as the most complete of its kind, and has been especially boasted of as such by the constructor himself, what must be the nature of those machines in the other Tread-wheel prisons, which have taken this as a pattern, but which, it is generally allowed, do not equal it ? But a still more important observation than either of these remains to be made. How comes it that this radical fault in the construction of the machinery, and this continued series of painful and oppressive labour, which are now admitted, by the magistrates themselves, at their Quarter Sessions, to have so long had an existence, should never, till this time, have been brought before the world ; and even now only have been brought before it by chance ? WHAT CAN BE THE VALUE OF THE REPORTS OF SURGEONS, AND EVEN OF VISITING MAGISTRATES THEMSELVES, IF, WITH SUCH EVILS STARING THEM IN THE FACE, THEY WILL NOT ONLY NOT NOTICE THEM, BUT BROADLY ASSERT THAT NO SUCH EVILS HAVE OCCURRED ?—The other class of the objections which have been urged against the Tread-wheel, is the limited use that can ever be made of it (even if its play were perfect) from the strain and distress it produces on particular muscles of the system, or on the system generally. Some have gone so far as to contend that on this account it is, and ever must be, injurious to even the most healthy and able-bodied ; while others have thought that strong and muscular men may work on it with impunity, but that no man in ill health ought to be trusted upon it ; while for the women it is as injurious as it is *indelicate*. In either view, however, the end for which this machine was devised completely and equally fails ! for it never can be employed as an equable and universal mode of punishment, though the expense of such erections is enormous. Now, what is the bearing of the sentiments officially disclosed at the late Surrey Sessions upon this point ? According to the tenor of the report furnished by the visiting magistrates, so much of this principle is admitted, that, though the labour is enforced on the hale and robust, ill health is allowed to furnish a plea for

exemption generally; and so numerous are the ramifications into which the term *ill health* branches out, and so freely is the plea conceded to, that even those who are in good health are perpetually endeavouring to avail themselves of it: and “one of the difficulties under which the surgeon has to labour, is that of distinguishing between those prisoners who are really and inevitably ill, and those who endeavour to be so, in order to avoid the penalty of labour;” in consequence of all which “the labour of the surgeon is double what it used to be,” and the county, it seems, is to be saddled with a double salary for his additional trouble!! Putting aside, then, for a moment, all the powerful objections that have been urged against this novel kind of discipline by Sir John Hippisley, Dr. Mason Good, Sir Wm. Blizard, and other professional characters of the first eminence, let me ask whether the various facts that have thus crept out at the above Quarter Sessions are not of themselves decisive upon the subject?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JULIUS.

Saturday, Oct. 18, 1823.

[After the appearance of this letter a notice was inserted in the papers that a mistake had been made in the reporting of what occurred at the Quarter Sessions, and that the wheels complained of were those at Guilford, not at Brixton Prison. It has been shown, however much Brixton Mill may be, *per se*, exonerated by this announcement, the Tread-wheel itself, as an ENGINE of punishment, is incalculably brought into discredit by it! For Guilford Gaol is the *identical* gaol from which the surgeon, Mr. Jackson, sent up to the *John Bull* paper, of the 14th of September, an elaborate and unqualified defence of the Wheel discipline, founded upon his own observation of its effects, in which this already-noticed asseveration occurs: “I DO MOST SOLEMNLY DECLARE THAT I HAVE AS YET WITNESSED NO BAD EFFECTS ON THE LEGS, ARMS, OR BODIES OF THE PRISONERS FROM THE USE OF THE TREAD-MILL!!” It may be well, again

to request that this sentence be placed in juxtaposition with the admitted sufferings, contained, by quotation, in the preceding letter, and stated more at large in the paragraph from the *Morning Post* of the 16th of October; and again to demand whether Mr. J.'s want either of care and close inquiry, or of discrimination, has not led him into a statement the reverse of that which is here most justly and officially put forth. J. J.]

Paragraph, from the Morning Chronicle of the 22d of October.

PUNISHMENT OF UNTRIED PERSONS.

THE following proceedings have lately taken place on the above subject, in the North Riding of Yorkshire:

On Tuesday, the 15th of October, at the Sessions at Northallerton, Mr. Stapylton HAVING, the preceding day, in the private room, FAILED IN HIS ENDEAVOURS TO OBTAIN AN IMMEDIATE DISCUSSION on the subject of continuing to put untried prisoners to the Tread-mill, delivered in open Court the following Presentment. IT WAS REFUSED TO BE READ, but was deposited with the Clerk of the Peace:

"To the Magistrates of the North Riding of Yorkshire, assembled in their Sessions, at Northallerton, Oct. 14, 1823.

"I, Martin Stapylton, one of his Majesty's justices of the peace for the said Riding, having discovered an ABUSE in the house of correction, namely, that prisoners *committed for trial* are compelled to work on the Tread-mill, and that such punishment has been inflicted on *untried prisoners* during the last week, in CONTEMPT or misapprehension of the Act of Parliament for regulation of Prisons, the 4th of Geo. IV. cap. 64, which was to take effect on the 1st day of September last, and which expressly orders the employment of such *untried prisoners*, with their own consent only, DO hereby REPORT THIS COMPULSORY EMPLOYMENT

AND PUNISHMENT AS ILLEGAL, and according to the 17th section of the aforesaid act, I demand that this abuse be taken into immediate consideration, and rectified!!!!

“Oct. 14, 1823. MARTIN STAPYLTON.”

Mr. Stapylton informed the prisoners in the house of correction, with due caution, that NO UNTRIED prisoners could be legally put to the Tread-mill! And, in the subsequent discussions with his brother magistrates, expressed his determination to move the Court of King's Bench for a criminal information.

Article, from the Morning Chronicle of the 23d of October.

WE rejoice to observe that some proceedings have taken place in Yorkshire relative to the extraordinary practice of subjecting untried prisoners to the punishment of hard labour on the Tread-mill. It is a sound maxim of jurisprudence, often quoted but little observed, that every man should be presumed innocent until he be proved guilty; and nothing can be more anomalous than the custom of INFLICTING A SPECIES OF TORTURE ON ONE CONSIDERED innocent in the eye of the law. There is also another absurdity and glaring injustice in the practice. When a prisoner is found guilty, what he has undergone in prison antecedent to the trial is, in ordinary cases, taken into consideration by the Court, and the question of future suffering is mitigated accordingly; but THE ACQUITTED HAS ALREADY UNDERGONE THAT WHICH IS THUS RECOGNIZED AS A PUNISHMENT FOR THE GUILTY, and the verdict of acquittal only delivers him from AN INFLICTION THUS VIRTUALLY CONFESSED TO BE UNJUST! But the truth is, that our legislators and magistrates have discovered a new crime, and that is the crime of suspicion. On supplying this term, all the anomalies in the late statutes disappear. If a man be guilty of the offence of being suspected, he is committed to gaol, and his body is mortified on bread and water, together with a curious decoction of meat, called by school-boys “pump-handle broth.” This invigorating diet is to support him when working at harder

labour than he has probably been accustomed to when well fed and at liberty; we are also to take into the account, if he be good for any thing, mental anxieties, the feeling of disgrace, loss of character, of time, and possibly anguish for a family left in a state of destitution. All these things he undergoes till he is tried,—if acquitted, they must be viewed as the *punishment apportioned to the crime of being suspected*; if guilty, that offence vanishes, for suspicion is converted to certainty, and the prison labours and bodily mortifications are in many cases carried to the general account, and mitigate the sentence proportionately: thus the innocent man suffers, while to the guilty it is a matter of indifference, OR SO MUCH PUNISHMENT BEFORE, instead of SO MUCH AFTER TRIAL. Mr. Peel, last session, defended most strenuously this practice, but supported it by nothing approaching to an argument; he seemed partial to it, as he avowed himself “partial to whipping,” without explaining on what his liking was founded—it appeared a sort of penchant, a taste, a *gout*.

But though we have sufficient reason to believe that untried prisoners are subjected to hard labour, we yet cannot discover that the practice is warranted by the late Gaol Act, and agree with Mr. Stapylton, who has taken the affair up in Yorkshire, that the statute must *either have been contemned or misapprehended*. In the Rules and Regulations we find this condition:—

“Fifth.—Due provision shall be made in every prison for the enforcement of hard labour in the case of such prisoners as may be sentenced thereto, and for the *employment* of other prisoners. The means of hard labour shall be provided, and the materials requisite for the *employment* of other prisoners shall be purchased under such regulations as may be made for that purpose by the justices,” &c. &c. &c.

Again, section 35:—

“And whereas persons are often committed to prison for trial, who *are willing to be employed* in such work or labour as can be conveniently executed or done in the prison to which they are so committed, and it is fit that such persons should be so employed, rather than that they should be obliged to remain idle during their confinement; be it therefore enacted, that it shall

and may be lawful for any one or more visiting justice or justices of any prison to which this act shall extend, to authorise, by an order in writing, the employment of any such prisoners, *with their own consent*, in any such work or labour; and it shall be lawful for the keeper of such prison to employ such prisoners in such work or labour accordingly, and to pay to such prisoners any such wages or portion of the same, and at such periods, as shall be directed by such justice or justices," &c. &c.

This all appears clear enough, but we know not how to reconcile it with the language held by Mr. Peel, or with the practice which seems to prevail, and to be so vigorously defended by magistrates. Goldsmith, in his "Good-natured Man," makes one of his characters say, "When I have made up my mind, I have no objection to listen to reason, because then, you know, it can do no harm;" but the Northallerton magistrates appear to have thought otherwise, and though they had made up their minds, yet fortified themselves against Mr. Stapylton's remonstrance by REFUSING TO READ IT! That gentleman distinctly affirms that persons *committed for trial* are compelled to work on the Tread-mill, and that such punishment has been inflicted on untried prisoners, in contempt or misapprehension of the 4th Geo. IV. cap. 64, the applicable clauses of which we have above quoted. We shall be curious to see more of this matter. On the law we dare not confidently pronounce an opinion, for the law of England passeth all human understanding, but the justice of the case is sufficiently clear. Certainly when Mr. Peel spoke in favour of the practice, he must have been ignorant that a bill annulling it was passing through the House.

It may not be amiss to observe, that prisoners under the Vagrant Act come under the description of *untried*, or not, according to their knowledge or ignorance of the law. If they are read in the Statute Book, or can afford an Attorney, or are not spirited away like Mr. Watts, they may give notice of appeal, and so procure a trial, as we believe all men would do, were they aware of that resource; but some magistrates do not care to put litigation into people's heads.

Paragraph, from the Morning Post of the 24th of October.

THE Tread-mills seem to have attained the highest step of their popularity: not a convict now can be induced to speak well of them. Surely there is a tide in the affairs of Mills as well as men.

Article, from the British Press of the 24th of October.

THAT the punishment of the Tread-mill should have been inflicted on *untried* prisoners is so obvious an OUTRAGE on all the common principles of justice, that but for the presentment of Mr. Martin Stapylton, at the Sessions at Northallerton, addressed to the Magistrates of the North Riding of Yorkshire, we should have felt disposed to doubt that any such instance had occurred. We are still willing to persuade ourselves that it must have been confined to this district; because the infliction of this PUNISHMENT BEFORE TRIAL is so totally unwarranted by the statute 4th Geo. IV. and is so wholly unsupported by any construction, however strained, that can be put upon it, that we think no body of Magistrates in any part of the kingdom would venture upon a proceeding, of the ILLEGALITY of which they must be aware, and by which they must incur so PUBLIC AND SO SERIOUS A RESPONSIBILITY. Persons in office are apt enough to violate the maxims of the Constitution, but they seldom do it without some adequate motive; and we can see nothing here that would lead to it. When any political example is to be made, then indeed some ram may be caught in the thicket, and there will be no dearth of assistants at the sacrifice; but in the ordinary detail of magisterial duty, *so flagrant a breach of law*, and so PUNISHABLE AN ABUSE OF POWER AS THIS would be, we believe to be rare. It is on this ground that we feel inclined to defend Mr. Peel against the imputation in the *Morning Chronicle* of yesterday, of avowing himself "partial to whipping," with reference to its infliction

on any innocent or untried individual. We certainly have no very rooted attachment to Mr. Peel, but we should readily acquit him of any deliberate fondness for oppression of any kind. If colloquial pleasantry and natural goodness of heart were required to form a great statesman, the Home Secretary might take rank among his colleagues. But the political wisdom, the persevering integrity, the manly, firm, honest independence which go to the formation of that character, is quite another thing. In the meantime let us give our thanks to Mr. Stapylton: SUCH CONDUCT IN ANY OF HIS MAJESTY'S JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IS AN ADMIRABLE EXAMPLE TO THEM ALL; and such an example, in *that quarter*, was never more wanted; it is a quarter to which public attention is at present very steadily directed.

Article, from the Courier of the 24th of October.

It is stated in the *Morning Chronicle* of yesterday that Mr. Peel, in the course of last Session, defended, most strenuously, the practice of subjecting prisoners committed for trial to labour at the Tread-mill. So far from this being the case, Mr. Peel gave a *decided* opinion, that a distinction ought to be made between prisoners convicted, and prisoners committed for trial, and that the latter ought not to be compelled to labour at the Tread-mill.

Extract, from an Article in the Courier of the 25th of October.

"WE are anxious that a proper explanation on this subject should go forth to the Public, merely on public grounds, LEST ANY MAGISTRATE, TRUSTING TO THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF THE CHRONICLE, SHOULD ACT UPON THEM, AND FANCY, IN SO DOING, HE HAD THE AUTHORITY OF ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MINISTERS."

Extract, from the John Bull Paper of the 26th of October.

TREAD-MILL.

“ A NEW champion has appeared in the Tread-mill contest, who has taken up new ground, and who is, in due form, taken up by the Chronicle.

“ Martin Stapylton, of Mytton, Esq. has published a PROTEST against the labour of untried convicts, IN WHICH we must confess WE AGREE ; but the Chronicle charges Mr. Peel with having advocated and defended the practice during the last session of Parliament, whereas, the fact is directly the reverse of the Chronicle's assertions. Mr. Peel, so far from defending such conduct, did, no longer ago than the 17th of May, state in his place ‘ that it would be very wrong, on every account, that the distinction between commitment for trial, and conviction of an offence, should be confounded.’

“ The Chronicle jests upon the supposed conduct of Mr. Peel, of whom they say, ‘ he avowed himself partial to WHIPPING, without explaining on what his liking was founded—it appeared a sort of *penchant*—a taste, a *goût*.’

“ If the statement of Mr. Stapylton be true, THERE IS CERTAINLY SOME MISMANAGEMENT.”

Article, from the Examiner of the 26th of October.

WE observed in a recent paper (on the comparative liberty of France and England), that the only check in this country to the progress of despotic principles and practice was public opinion, exerting itself chiefly through the medium of the press. An attention to the perpetual attempts at encroachment upon the subject's rights, on the part of the inferior depositaries of power, will, we think, supply almost every week a new confirmation of the truth of this observation. We have seen enough, lately, of

the bad spirit which actuates the police justices; the county magistrates seem disposed not to be far behind-hand in the display of a similar eagerness to oppress, by the stretching or the perversion of the law. The reader will find in another column, a Report of Martin Stapylton, Esq. at a late Quarter Sessions in Yorkshire, against THE MONSTROUS PRACTICE of putting untried prisoners to the Tread-mill. This protest, it seems, was without effect; consequently, Yorkshire continues to exhibit the blessed spectacle of THE INFLECTION OF PUNISHMENT UPON MEN DETAINED UNDER SUSPICION, who may, after all, be pronounced innocent, and therefore DESERVING RATHER COMPENSATION THAN PENALTY! *Even the Courier seems ashamed of this*, and denies that when the subject was mentioned in Parliament, Mr. Peel justified the proceeding, as the Chronicle had asserted. In proof of this, he quotes from the debate, or rather mis-quotes; for, in the fuller account, republished in yesterday's Morning Chronicle, Mr. Peel is reported to defend the practice, provided the untried and convicted prisoners are not mixed together—a *distinction which scarcely affects the question*. Common justice requires, that *simple detention* is all that untried prisoners should be subjected to, and even that no privation should be enforced beyond what the security of their persons requires.

Mr. Peel will allege, perhaps, that hard labour is a good thing for their health, and therefore not to be viewed as a punishment. But is it not in fact a punishment adopted by law; and can the mere dictum of a minister remove the sense of wrong and DEGRADATION which the subjection to this punishment, in common with convicted criminals, produces in men who may be conscious of innocence? Nay, Mr. Peel himself said, in the very same debate, that THE OBJECT OF GOVERNMENT WAS TO RENDER THE TREAD-MILL A STIGMA; and does he suppose that the sense of that will be removed from the untried prisoners, merely because they are doing the same work as the convicts, in a separate yard? There are other sorts of labour and regimen conducive to health; yet their compulsion could not be felt otherwise than as a *humiliating* penalty. Make what distinction they may—to be

compelled to a certain species of hard labour, *commonly used as a punishment* for crime ; to be made to work without payment, is what men against whom no offence is proved can never be subjected to without feeling a strong sense of cruelty and humiliation, nor consequently without the most revolting injustice, on the part either of the framers or the enforcers of the laws under which it is committed. We trust public opinion will declare itself on this subject in a manner to rectify the abuse.

Extract, from the Morning Chronicle of the 27th of October.

“THE Courier still persists that we have *misrepresented* Mr. Peel, in describing him as having defended the practice of employing untried prisoners in the Tread-mill, and resorts to questioning the accuracy of our parliamentary report in this particular instance. We have therefore examined the reports of the other morning papers, which we find to agree with ours, with the single exception of *The Times*.

New Times, May 17.

“ ‘ Mr. Secretary Peel believed the Noble Lord (Lord Milton) would find the practice warranted by the 19th Charles II., and he begged to be distinctly understood *as not opposed to the employment of persons committed for trial.*’

The Morning Post, May 17.

“ ‘ Mr. Secretary Peel said, persons might be put to work before trial, but he thought it objectionable to put them to work the Tread-mill in company with those who had been tried. Though prisoners might be set to work before trial, if the labour of the Tread-mill was considered to fix a stigma on them, this punishment ought to be spared.’

British Press, May 17.

“ ‘ Mr. Peel said, it was not considered as a stigma for persons to be employed on the Tread-mill when committed for trial, unless they were mixed up with those who had been convicted of crime.’

“ All these reports thus concur in representing Mr. Peel as approving of the practice of employing untried prisoners on the Tread-mill, but as objecting to the stigma which might belong to confounding them with the guilty—give them the punishment, argues he, but spare them the disgrace. In the Times report, on which the Courier solely relies, this is, however, not so clear; but as it differs from the other four morning papers, we may safely pronounce its correctness to be more than questionable.

Times, May 17.

“ ‘ Mr. Peel said, that it was most desirable to render the punishment of the Tread-mill efficient, by making it *a stigma and a disgrace*. It would, however, be very wrong on this, as well as every other account, that the distinction between commitment for trial and conviction of an offence should be confounded.’

“ This report may, however, be reconciled with those of the above quoted journals; for Mr. Peel is, in each report, represented as solicitous not to confound the moral distinctions between guilt and innocence, and simply argues in favour of inflicting the BODILY PUNISHMENT ON THE UNTRIED PRISONERS, but without attaching to them any thing like stigma or disgrace.”

Article, from the Courier of the 27th of October.

WE have no intention to continue the controversy with the Chronicle upon the subject of Mr. Peel's sentiments concerning

the employment of the Tread-mill for persons who are ONLY committed to take their trial.

We were merely anxious to prevent the possible MISCHIEVOUS CONSEQUENCES of the misrepresentations of the Chronicle, by stating what really were the opinions entertained by the Right Honourable Gentleman. This we have done, and we shall not trouble ourselves about the comparative accuracy of the reports published at the time.

AN October number of "The Bonne Bouche," one of the Three-penny Publications that have lately sprung up, and which most unaccountably bears no date, gives the following anecdote, which appeared in several of the daily papers.

TREAD-MILL.

"A French boy who was regaling the ears of the public, in Cheshire, a few weeks since, with 'Chansons Français,' fell into the hands of the police, and WAS SENT TO KNUTSFORD TREAD-MILL, under THE NEW VAGRANT ACT, FOR A MONTH. A gentleman who visited the gaol was accosted by the young melodist from the summit of the Wheel, with 'Eh, Monsieur, how many Tred-mils is between dis and Londres?' 'About ten, my boy,' said the gentleman; 'but why do you ask?' 'Because I must sing all de vay to Londres, and, malheureux dat I am, I shall be *ten month* before I get dere.'"

Article, from the Medical and Physical Journal for the 1st of November.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE TREAD-MILL,

By B. Hutchinson, Esq. Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in London.

It must be allowed that the public (equally with ourselves, who are bearing *the very easy weight of a very amicable contro-*

versy), are much indebted to you for the admission into your journal of observations, which, on a first and superficial view of the subject, might appear to be foreign to the general and professed objects of your useful and excellently-conducted work. When, however, we take into our consideration the improvement of the health of the numerous inhabitants of our prisons, *both physical and moral*; and that the question of the Tread-mill's expediency or inutility is deeply involved in this inquiry: all sentiments of that nature must completely give way to the gradual establishment of truth and positive facts, and to the exclusion of all hypotheses and preconceived theories.

I beg thus publicly to thank Dr. Good for his donation of Sir John Cox Hippisley's "*Correspondence on Prison Discipline*," and for *the candour and liberality* with which he has received my remarks. The careful perusal of this "*Correspondence*" has not produced the slightest change in my sentiments on the subject, which has so seriously and *laudably* engaged his closest attention. My personal and daily observations of the excellent and efficient operation of the Tread-mill, as far as regards the health of the prisoners in the House of Correction at Southwell, tend to impress on my mind a conviction of the accuracy and truth of my statements in the communication which you did me the honour of publishing two months back, and which will be further illustrated in the course of this letter by an experimental inquiry, made before the Rev. J. T. Becher, one of the Visiting Justices of this House of Correction.

Although I cannot attach that importance to my omission of dates and numbers, which Dr. Good considers as points of the utmost moment in the present inquiry, I shall nevertheless undertake to furnish the Doctor with the information he solicits, and which I have obtained through the permission of Mr. Becher. This information cannot be conveyed in a more distinct manner than by detailing the questions which were this day asked Mr. Mole, the active and intelligent governor of the prison, by Mr. Becher, and the replies which he made to them.

1. When was the Tread-mill established?—December 23, 1822.

2. What number of men have been employed on an average?—Daily average, from December 23, 1822, to 17th September, 1823, both days inclusive, $44\frac{1}{2}\frac{8}{3}\frac{1}{2}$.

3. What number of men are this day employed?—Fifty.

4. What complaints have been made to you by any prisoner employed in this mode of discipline?—None; not a single complaint*.

5. What accidents have happened to the men, and what to the machinery?—One man had his foot slightly bruised, but this occurred through his own wilful neglect in coming off the Wheel. No accident has happened to the machinery.

6. At what periods are the men relieved?—One man gets off the Wheel every minute, allowing each never less than one-fourth rest, and occasionally nearly one-half, *according to the number employed at each Wheel*:—viz.—If twelve are employed at a Wheel, nine are on the Wheel, and three off, which gives one-fourth rest. If ten are employed at a Wheel, seven are on the Wheel, and three off, which gives near one-half rest; one man getting off, and one on, every minute.

7. In what periods do the Wheels revolve?—Two of the Wheels on the ground-floor make two revolutions in a minute; and the two Wheels on the upper floor make three revolutions, while those on the ground-floor make four †.

8. What is the rise of the steps?—Eight inches.

The dietary of the House of Correction at Southwell cannot be considered as one of the highest class; but from which the prisoners on the Wheel have received a sufficiency of nutriment to preserve the functions of the human machine in a state of healthful vigour. I have not found any necessity to increase the quantity or quality of the allowance, the dietary remaining the same as before the Tread-wheel was established in this prison!

* [To Mr. H., however, *many* of the men more or less complained, as will have been observed in the examination which has already been given in these pages. J. J.]

† [A walk, a trot, and a canter. J. J.]

This dietary consists of a loaf of coarse wheaten bread, weighing one pound and three quarters, and a pint of new milk to breakfast; one pint of oatmeal-gruel at noon, and the same in the evening; and a quarter of an ounce of salt per day. Awakened as the public mind has been to the subject of prison dietaries, by the parliamentary investigation which has lately taken place respecting the Millbank Penitentiary, I may perhaps be permitted, after an experience of twenty-eight years, to make some professional remarks upon this subject. I find it stated in the "Rules for the Government of Gaols," published by the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline:—"N.B. One pound and a half of good wheaten bread, and a quart of gruel or soup daily, or a ration equivalent to this, is considered quite sufficient for the maintenance of a prisoner employed in ordinary labour," (p. 41); and Mr. Webbe, surgeon of the House of Correction in Coldbath-fields, affirms that half a pound of solid flesh every other day, with good animal soup in the intermediate day, besides a sufficiency of bread and other farinaceous food, is necessary; as, without this increased diet, the workers on the Tread-wheel would be soon in the situation of the convicts at the Millbank Penitentiary. My practical knowledge is at direct variance with both these dietaries; for *I pronounce our present dietary sufficient for any employment that can be exercised within the walls of a prison, having adequately sustained the prisoners upon it while they were excavating the foundations of the Tread-mill in a treacherous soil, and digging and wheeling from a depth of fifteen feet beneath the surface of the ground, as well in other laborious occupations.* Collecting my information from other gaols, when originally directed to determine the dietary, I proposed daily one pound and three-quarters of coarse wheaten bread, half a pint of gruel at breakfast, and one pound of boiled potatoes to dinner. Not being satisfied with the general state of health, I recommended the addition of half a pint of gruel before retiring to rest. Finding an improvement in the scale of health, though not completely corresponding with my wishes, and apprehending that a diet strictly farinaceous, like that then in use, would ad-

mit of considerable improvement by introducing a substance partaking in some measure of the properties of animal food, I advised the substitution of one pint of milk daily instead of one pound of potatoes; and it is gratifying to announce that the result has been completely satisfactory, and that I am enabled to state my conviction of *its sufficiency both for the purposes of labour and of general health*,—not as a theoretical surmise, but as an indisputable fact falling within my knowledge, in discharging the duties of my official situation. As surgeon of the establishment, the Visiting Justices allow me a discretionary power of improving the scale of diet according to the exigencies of particular cases; which power I, of course, find *an almost daily occasion to exercise* among the patients sent to the infirmary: it has never occurred, however, in a single instance, that an improved diet has been rendered necessary from any excessive fatigue, or from any morbid derangement produced by the exercise of the Tread-wheel.

In opposition to the assertion, that the labour and mischiefs of this machine exceed that of any invention which has hitherto undergone the test of experience, Mr. Mole, the governor, on questioning a prisoner in the presence of Mr. Becher, whether he would prefer breaking flax with the patent machine to the labour of the Tread-wheel, gave a decided preference to the Wheel, in consequence of the labour of the latter being so much less fatiguing than that of the former. Dr. Good's question, respecting the employment of female prisoners on the Tread-wheel at Southwell, is answered in the negative; *female delinquents never having been ordered, at present, by the Visiting Justices, to be subjected to this punishment.*

In reference, now, to Sir J. Cox Hippisley's correspondence, pp. 11, 12, 13, and 14, I beg to state that his former objections to the use of the Tread-wheel (which I shall briefly recapitulate), are completely and in the most satisfactory manner contradicted by the personal communications of between twenty and thirty prisoners, who had been labouring for different periods at the Tread-wheel. These objections consisted "in the treading on

tiptoe up an endless hill," &c. [which continuing down to "House of Correction, when once released," have already been placed before the reader. J. J.]

In Dr. Good's letter to Sir J. C. Hippisley, pp. 26 and 27 of the same volume of "Correspondence and Communications," are the following observations :

[These observations also, commencing at "From the tortuous attitude," and ending with "prematurely undermined their health," will have been met with more than once in the course of this volume. J. J].

In page 32 of the same volume, Dr. Good describes his visit to, and his observations on the operation of the Tread-wheel, at the Coldbath-fields prison ; of which I must beg leave to present a brief copy.

[These observations also, opening at "I inspected the men," and closing with "the original distress," are familiar to the reader. J. J.]

I have taken the liberty of making these copious extracts from Sir John Cox Hippisley's volume, under the impression that the book is not in the hands of the majority of the readers of your journal, and who would be unable to form a proper or just estimate of the arguments on each side of the subject, without some assistance of this description. My labour of refutation will be rendered very easy and compressed, by transcribing, in the first place, a letter published in the John Bull Newspaper of September 14th, from Mr. Jackson, the very intelligent surgeon of the Guildford House of Correction ; followed by the result of an examination of between twenty and thirty of the prisoners in the Southwell House of Correction, just taken from the Wheel.

[The letter has already been given among the introductory matter of this volume. J. J.]

The same number of John Bull contains a letter addressed to the editor of the London Medical and Physical Journal, from Sir John Cox Hippisley, with some remarks on my former communication to you on the subject of the Tread-wheel. Sir John

appears to retain his former sentiments and antipathies, without, however, producing any new arguments in any way bearing upon the point in question, or in the slightest degree weakening the force of facts so formidably arrayed in opposition to *delusive hypothesis* and *vague conjecture*.

I shall now beg leave to state the result of the examination before alluded to at the Southwell House of Correction, in full confirmation of the opinions I have so frequently offered. In this examination, I was most kindly and ably assisted by the Rev. John Thomas Becher, one of the visiting justices of this prison, and in the presence of Mr. Mole, the governor. The prisoners were distinctly informed that this examination would operate neither to their *advantage* nor detriment*.

[This examination will also be seen among the introductory matter of this volume. J. J.]

However diffident I may feel respecting my own judgment, I stand on this occasion supported by the concurrent opinion of those accustomed to minute and accurate investigation. After the twenty-four prisoners, whose depositions are here given, had been individually examined by Mr. Becher, without any previous knowledge of the purpose for which they were brought before him, and had, by their unanimous testimony, produced a confirmation of my original statement, *twenty-six fellow-prisoners*, who were *also* employed upon the Tread-wheel, were summoned; and the whole fifty being collected, were desired to state, without intimidation, whether they experienced any disorder, or any other sensations than those which are common to the soldier at his drill, the mechanic at his shop, or the labourer in his barn? The result was, that every man, exercising what is denominated a laborious occupation, had frequently *sustained*, from a continuance, much severer and more distressing *employment*; that THE

* [If the examination had proved any thing of importance against the discipline, it should have operated to "their advantage." The former part of the declaration was as premature as the latter was just. J. J.]

SENSATIONS AND PAINS were *nearly* allied to those succeeding a drill, *especially at the balance step*; and that the framework knitters and lace manufacturers of this county, who exercise an art, requiring a peculiar flexibility of muscle, and an extreme delicacy of touch, were not in the slightest degree prevented from resuming their usual employments after their discharge from the Tread-mill.

Mr. Mole, the governor, I may take the liberty of mentioning, is a man of indefatigable vigilance and acknowledged humanity; his whole time is devoted to the duties of his office; the prisoners, while on the Tread-wheel, are always immediately before his window. He was originally bred at Birmingham to the manufacture of arms, after which he served as lieutenant, in the 32d regiment, for several years, with very considerable reputation. On leaving the army, he resumed the superintendence of a large manufactory at Birmingham, and I leave it for the public to determine whether such a person is likely to be deceived in matters submitted to his daily and hourly inspection, and whether his duty to the magistrates, as well as his own sentiments of justice and humanity, would not have impelled him long since to have made a formal representation, if all or any of the evils ascribed to this machine had existed within our prisons? With less circumspection in conducting the examination of the prisoners, it is neither impossible nor improbable that the hopes of reverting to that idleness which has disgraced our prisons, and drawn such multitudes within their walls, might have proved a powerful inducement to attempt *delusion* by representation, arising rather from interested motives than from actual suffering.

The question of the utility, or the injurious tendency of the Tread-wheel being, in my opinion, *satisfactorily* determined by the testimonials offered in the preceding pages, as well as by the concurrent opinions in its favour of the respectable medical gentlemen whose sentiments on this subject have been publicly and most impartially given, I shall beg permission to state the enviable degree of health which has been obtained at the Southwell House of

Correction, by the excellent system of ventilation, cleanliness, and general good management, adopted and enforced by the Visiting Justices of that prison. I will first mention that one death only has occurred during the last five years,—Robert Smith, who entered the House of Correction with symptoms of confirmed phthisis pulmonalis. So far, indeed, had structural disorganization advanced on his commitment, that he lived only a few days after his admission. The gross number of prisoners committed during that period (five years) amounted to 3227; and the average number of prisoners daily confined for the last year, commencing 25th of June, 1822, and ending 24th of June, 1823, both of the above dates inclusive, amounted to $81\frac{2}{8}\frac{3}{6}\frac{8}{5}$. The number on the sick-list at this time is *fourteen*: many of these cases are of minor importance, and not one of them depending either on the effects of the Tread-wheel or of incarceration.

As to the abandonment * of the Tread-wheel by Parliament, in the recent Gaol Act, I can only affirm that, among the several Prison Bills which during the last few years have been submitted to my inspection, I have not discovered that any such clause was ever adopted; neither am I acquainted with any provisions in any statute prescribing imperatively the particular mode of hard labour. The Magistrates exercise their office gratuitously, in favour, and *to the great obligation, of the public*; it is, therefore, I conceive, more consonant with the respect due to their office, that Parliament should promulgate the *general* system to be adopted in prisons for the punishment and reformation of criminals, and that the *details* regulating the mode of carrying the intentions of the legislature into effect should be governed by the judgment of the Magistracy, according to local opportunities and existing emergencies.

Southwell, October 1, 1823.

* [Mr. H. has misunderstood what was said on this subject. The Tread-wheel certainly is not legalised; the clause alluded to was cut off the draft of the Gaol Bill, where it had found a place, BEFORE the Bill was submitted to Parliament. J. J.]

Review, of Dr. Good's Letter, from the New Monthly Magazine for the 1st of November.

THIS able and conclusive pamphlet, which is reprinted from Sir John Cox Hippisley's work on Prison Discipline, is deserving of general attention. The opinion of an acute physician, founded upon FACTS AND EXPERIMENTS WHICH CANNOT BE QUESTIONED, must convince every rational person of the *danger and cruelty* of employing THIS RACK OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, as a mode of deterring offenders from the commission of crime. It is more especially the *duty* of the Magistracy, to give this tract a careful and *candid* perusal. In some instances, the zeal of these gentlemen has led them to send prisoners, before trial, to the Tread-mill. Let them reflect, that this may lay the foundations of obstinate and dangerous complaints, under which innocent individuals may be made to suffer. We have no doubt, however, that THE PROCEEDINGS ARE ALTOGETHER UNLAWFUL, and we trust, that if the practice is persisted in, the question will be speedily raised.

Article, from the British Press of the 15th of November.

THE refusal of the rule against the Magistrates of Northallerton, in the case reported in our paper of yesterday, must have created an impression on the public mind by no means favourable to those sentiments of respect and reverence which *it is always desirable* should prevail towards those who are the dispensers of *justice*, in the great judicial tribunals of the country. To inflict PUNISHMENT—more especially a *punishment so severe and so degrading* as the Tread-mill—*before* any offence is proved to have been committed by the persons upon whom it is inflicted, is so wholly out of the course of distributive justice, and so contrary to every principle of English law, that we are unable to comprehend the grounds upon which these Magistrates have been pro-

tected in this exercise of authority; and this, too, when the application on behalf of the principles of public law and of personal justice *was made by one of the Visiting Magistrates*, in whom *an equal authority* resides, and who came forward, in a manner most honourable to his character, to appeal against the abuse of it. Mr. Stapylton, on visiting the House of Correction, found prisoners, who were merely *committed for trial*, subjected to the labour of the Tread-mill. Where is the law which authorizes this? THERE IS NONE. The statute of the 4th Geo. III. c. 24. gives not even the most indirect sanction to this injustice. It is *a breach of the first maxim of our Constitution, in support of which no law can be pleaded, nor any statute produced.* The preamble to this Act, which was passed last Session, for consolidating and amending the law relating to the regulation of gaols, distinctly states, that whereas it is expedient that such measures should be adopted “as shall ensure the proper measure of punishment to *convicted* offenders.” In the regulation of sect. 10 it is enacted, that—

“Fifthly—Due provision should be made in every prison for the enforcement of *hard labour* in the cases of such prisoners *as may be sentenced thereto*, and for the *employment of other prisoners.*”

And the 13th regulation enacts, that

“Every prisoner maintained at the expense of any county, &c. shall be allowed *a sufficient quantity of plain and wholesome food*, to be regulated by the Justices in General or Quarter Sessions assembled, regard being had, so far as may relate to *convicted prisoners*, to the nature of the labour required from or performed by such prisoners, so that the allowance of food may be proportioned thereto.”

The 37th section, which empowers justices to employ prisoners, grants this power under the following express restrictions, which, we confess, appear to us to be drawn up with a considerable attention, as well to the dictates of humanity, as to the rules of sound and rational policy.

Section 38—“And whereas persons *convicted* of offences are frequently sentenced to *imprisonment*, without being sentenced

to *hard labour*; be it therefore enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for two or more Visiting Justices of any prison, to order that all such persons, confined in such prison, *in pursuance of any sentence or conviction*, except such prisoners *as maintain themselves*, shall be set to *some work or labour not severe*; and it is hereby declared, that no *such* prisoner who shall be of ability to earn, and who shall have the means of earning, or of otherwise providing for *his own subsistence*, shall have any claim to be supported at the expense of the county; or provided that, when such ability shall cease, by reason of sickness, infirmity, the want of sufficient work, or from any other cause, *every such person* shall, during the continuance of his inability, receive such provision and support as shall be directed for *other convicted* prisoners in the same prison." It then proceeds to enact, "that an account shall be taken by the Keeper of the Gaol, of the work performed by such prisoner, who shall account to him for so much of the net profit of his earnings as the regulations of the prison shall direct."

All this, if there were nothing more, is *conclusive* against the conduct of these Magistrates of Northallerton, in inflicting punishment *before conviction*, and in imposing *their own sentence* of hard labour upon persons whom no jury has yet found guilty of any offence. With every disposition to attend to any, even the least shadow of reasoning, which, in the argument on this case, could be adduced by the Judges in justification of *these judges of the North Riding*, we are really at a loss to find any thing, even of plausibility, in the answer to the charge which it involves. In reply to the argument, that these justices are not warranted in employing prisoners, *before trial*, in the labour of the Tread-mill, Mr. Justice Bayley asks—

"Are not the magistrates the best judges of what labour is most suitable to the prisoners?"

But, with due submission to his lordship, *this answer* does not meet the question, but *evades it*. If the question were, whether, when a statute sentences any man, *on conviction* of a given offence, to be imprisoned, and to be confined to *such labour as the justices in their discretion shall direct*, in that case, if the jus-

tices directed them to undergo the labour of the Tread-mill, and it became a question before the Court, whether this was a *kind of labour* within the meaning and intention of the statute—the answer of Mr. Justice Bayley would be applicable—

“The magistrates are the best judges of what labour is most suitable.”

But the question here was, whether, before a man is tried, and consequently, while, in the eye of the law, he is innocent, the justices are warranted in sentencing him to the *Tread-mill*, and thus anticipating his *punishment* before he is found *guilty*? And to this important question the above is no answer, because it manifestly shifts away from the case. The same remark applies to the next observation, which equally keeps the main point in the back-ground.

“Mr. Justice Bayley—Then this court is to become the judge of what is suitable and wholesome employment for prisoners.”

We answer, No. The fact before the court, and which they are to judge of, is, not what is suitable and wholesome employment for prisoners, but whether the Justices of Northallerton were justified, in the legal exercise of their authority, in imposing THE PUNISHMENT OF THIS WORST AND MOST DEBASING SPECIES of *hard labour* upon *unconvicted* prisoners, when the law imposes it only on *convicted* prisoners. This was the true point at issue. This was the point fairly under discussion before the court, and to which the answer of the court ought to have been distinctly and unequivocally directed.

Alluding to the diet of bread and water, the Counsel (Mr. Scarlett) adverted to the 10th section of the Act of last Session, which provides that the food of prisoners shall be “sufficient and wholesome.”

“It certainly,” he added, “does not require the justices to furnish any particular supply of food, but it enacts that what is supplied shall be sufficient and wholesome.”

“The Lord Chief Justice—That is the difficulty the court feels. Is there any statute which makes it compulsory on the justices to provide food for all prisoners before trial?”

“ Mr. Scarlett admitted that he could not discover any statute precisely to that effect.”

Do we then *want* any statute precisely to that effect? What! do we hear the same judges declare, one day, that “ *Christianity is part and parcel of the law of the land;*” and ask, the next, where is the statute which makes it *compulsory* to provide food for prisoners, who, being in confinement, must either be *fed* or be *starved*? Those who have more sagacity than we can boast may reconcile this. It is beyond the reach of our philosophy.

Letter, inserted in the Morning Post of the 22d of November.

THE TREAD-MILL.

SIR,—There is at this time, toiling at the Tread-wheel in Guildford Gaol, *a mother giving suck*. Her *crime* is her inability to support her infant, which is illegitimate; and *she is placed at the same Wheel as the felons*: while she treads, some relieved treader, out of common humanity, holds her infant. I dare not trust my pen to express my sentiments on this fact, but the public when they hear of it will not, I hope, impose upon themselves that restraint which I find necessary in my own case. I attach my address to this statement for your private satisfaction of its veracity.

I am, sir,

Your very obedient servant,

JULIUS*.

November 20, 1823.

* [This letter was *instantly* copied into the News, Examiner, Public Ledger, Globe and Traveller, and other Papers. J. J.]

Letter, inserted in the Morning Post of the 27th of November.

TREAD-MILL.

SIR,—With a certain description of people it is a fashion to hold up wholesome laws as obnoxious, and the magistracy as unfeeling and incorrect: as a constant reader of your valuable paper, I observed a letter, dated 20th instant, signed “Julius,” detailing a case, he found in Guildford gaol, of a *mother, giving suck**, toiling at the Tread-wheel, and placed at the same wheel as the felons. Her crime, he states, “is her inability to support her infant, which is illegitimate!” Julius, before he ushered *the overplus of his feelings* to the public, would have done well to have made some inquiries on the case, instead of indirectly charging the magistrates with an act of cruelty: let him look at the 18th of Elizabeth, cap. 3, and 7th James, cap. 4, relating to lewd women *and* bastard children, and let him attend the Assizes, Quarter Sessions, and Petty Sessions, throughout the country, and see the almost innumerable cases of bastardy, besides the immense number of cases before magistrates out of Sessions; a melancholy proof of depravity, looseness of morals, and want of chastity; perhaps, not one out of five hundred of these lewd women are ever committed.

I saw a woman brought before a magistrate, a short time ago, with her third bastard child, all by different men, and the last by a lad of about nineteen: this woman was not punished, and in due time, I have no doubt, she will favour her parish again. *The*

* [The letter of this misogynist makes one blush for human nature. It is conceived in the most fanatic spirit of the most loathsome puritanism; and with an insensibility to the claims on consideration which the weaker sex possesses, and which multiply a hundred-fold when maternal duties and maternal pains are its lot, that savage life never exemplified;—an insensibility that is the odious offspring of a species of civilization, in which pharisaic cant and hard-heartedness go hand in hand, and, as in the Cromwellian æra of drivelling and degeneracy, sets men on

“Singing psalms unto the Lord,
And cutting throats with one accord.” J. J.]

vice of bastardy, particularly prevalent amongst servants, I attribute to the want of an early *religious moral* instruction, bad examples from parents and others, the close familiarity of servants, and their gross manner of good living. From what I have stated *there appears too much lenity in the enforcement of corrective laws*. This *fling* of Julius at the Tread-mill is another of the many systematic attacks on that method of correction. I hope this letter of Julius will meet the eye of some of the Visiting Magistrates of Guildford Gaol, and a state of the case be given. With an apology for trespassing on your time, I am, sir, your most obedient,

KENT.

Nov. 23, 1823.

Letter, inserted in the British Press of the 27th of November.

SIR,—Any Englishman must feel indignant at reading such an article as appeared in a paper of Sunday last. TO KNOW THAT FEMALES ARE SUBJECTED TO THE DISCIPLINE OF THE TREAD-MILL IS SUFFICIENTLY APPALLING ; but here we see it distinctly stated, that even A MOTHER, ACTUALLY SUCKLING HER INFANT, is labouring on the Wheel, whilst her portion is with the common felons, in one of our gaols (Guildford); and *all this*, because THE INFANT, which is HER FELLOW-SUFFERER, is her illegitimate offspring.

I hope, sir, you will not suffer this affair to pass uncensured.

I am, yours, &c.

VINDICATOR.

Letter, inserted in the Times Paper of the 27th of November.

SIR,—I read in the Globe and Traveller of last night, that there is a *mother giving suck*, toiling at the Tread-wheel in Guildford Gaol! I do pray, sir, that you will call public attention to this fact. *This is the gaol from which an account was sent up of the harmless nature of the Tread-wheel labour*. I forgot to state, that the poor wretch is at the felons' wheel, and that her

crime is giving birth to an illegitimate child, without ability to support it—Just Heaven!!

Nov. 25.

A. Z.

* * * We know nothing of the case referred to by our correspondent; but we willingly give publicity to his letter, and shall with equal readiness insert any explanation which may be sent to us on the subject.—EDIT.

Extract, from an Article in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine for the 1st of December.

“SUNDAY gentlemen; fellows for whom the Tread-mill—‘clarum si non venerabile nomen’—by a stretch of modern genius, is made and invented.”

Article, from the Eclectic Review for the 1st of December.

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1. *Review of Prison Labour, Correspondence, &c. By Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. D. C. L. &c. &c.*
 2. *Letter to Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. on the Mischiefs incidental to the Tread-wheel, as an Instrument of Prison Discipline. By John Mason Good, M. D. F. R. S. 8vo. pp. 24. London, 1823.*

It is not a little singular, on what opposite grounds the system advocated by the Prison Discipline Society has been assailed by that very useful class of men, the *objectors*. If we recollect right, it was a *Somersetshire* magistrate who, in the House of Commons, a few sessions ago, deprecated their plans as tending to make gaols too comfortable and attractive. Till very lately, this was the objection, at all events, which they had chiefly to combat. Accordingly, in their Fourth Report (1822), the committee deemed themselves called upon to repel the charge, by explicitly declaring their opinion, that “severe punishment must form the basis of an effective system of prison discipline.” At the same time, they

as explicitly avowed their conviction, that "the prevention of crime will never be effected by the influence of fear alone." But "a considerable re-action in the public feeling," Sir John Cox Hippisley tells us, has since ensued; that is to say, this ground of objection has been found untenable; and we have now a Somersetshire magistrate and a learned physician charging the "laudable association" with patronizing a most horrible mode of chastisement, only less dreadful and baneful than the rack and the press-yard; a machine which, Dr. John Mason Good indignantly remarks, "subverts the order of nature, making the feet take the place of the hands." We must, however, explain to our readers that Dr. Good is speaking figuratively. The prisoners do not actually perform in a topsy-turvy position, and stand, as the expression might seem to intimate, on their head or hands, while the feet usurp the ascendancy. But the latter are made to execute the active work, while the hands are reduced to the ignoble office of maintaining the body in equilibrium—thus converting what ought to be a manufactory, into a pedefactory, to the manifest subversion of all order and propriety. These and other weighty objections, which we shall presently notice, Sir John "felt it to be his duty, as a magistrate and a man, to lay before the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and other Cabinet ministers, as well as to transmit copies of the correspondence relative to the subject, to the Judges of Circuit, and likewise to the Clerks of the Peace of the several counties of England, for the information of the provincial magistracy." Mr. Peel, in consequence, as it should seem, of Sir John's communication, directed a letter to be addressed to the visiting magistrates of the several gaols and houses of correction where Tread-mills had been produced, requesting information as to whether any injurious effects had been produced by the machinery. *All the returns contained answers in the negative**. Upon which, Sir John issues this book, and Dr. Good this extract from the same, in the more readable form of a tract.

The facts on which Sir John rests his objections are, *in substance*, these:

* [This is not the case. J. J.]

I. That, if the Tread-wheels are over-loaded, the shafts may break, and throw the prisoners on their backs.

II. That it is very hard work, resembling treading up hill on tiptoe.

III. That it makes the prisoners perspire, and consequently induces thirst, especially in warm weather.

IV. That it threatens to strain the organs and muscles immediately called into exercise.

V. That, by such over-exertion, peculiar complaints may be induced in the female prisoners.

VI. That labour "of a like description," as that of mariners, miners, and masons' labourers, has a tendency to produce ruptures and varicose veins.

VII. That, therefore, persons "under ruptures or consumptions," ought not to be put to the Tread-wheel.

VIII. That "*the unhappy culprits have a horror of the mill.*"

IX. That, as it is not proper for consumptive or ruptured persons, or for females, it "cannot or ought not to be exercised over more than one half of the delinquents," and therefore is not worth being erected for the other half.

X. That the beggar, the poacher, the shop-lifter, and the house-breaker, ought not to be put to the same hard work, or be placed "under the dominion" of the said Wheel, without regard to their respective gradations of delinquency, or to their feelings.

XI. That the Tread-mill does not answer the purpose of "hard prison labour."

XII. That the Hand Crank-mill is "*susceptible*" of being so improved as to "appear to offer a considerable approach to the desirable object" of being made an unexceptionable substitute for the Tread-wheel.

Now, of these incontrovertible facts, it is a little surprising that a *Doctor of Laws and Bench*er of the *Inner Temple* should not have perceived, that No. 1 proves only that the Wheel ought not to be overloaded; that Nos. 3, 5, and 7, apply equally to *all* descriptions of hard labour; that Nos. 2, 4, and 6, are but the same objection differently put—a medical objection, founded on

the alleged tendency of the exertion ; that No. 8 is an argument in favour of the Tread-wheel ; that No. 9 is a mere assertion, built on a mis-statement ; that No. 10 applies as much to the Hand Crank-mill, so far as regards the “one *kind* of labour” being inflicted on rogues of different professions ; that No. 11 is in direct contradiction to No. 8, and is, moreover, a begging of the question ; and that No. 12 is nothing to the purpose. If our readers will but glance again at Sir John’s “weighty positions*,” we think that they will agree with us, that his twelve objections may be summed up in this one : That, in common with other kinds of labour, such as that of mariners, miners, &c. who have to tread ladders, THE TREAD-WHEEL HAS A TENDENCY TO PRODUCE RUPTURES AND VARICOSE VEINS, besides endangering in women the usual consequences of over-exertion. Now, as this is a medical objection, resting, as we shall presently see, not on experience, but mainly on hypothesis, we may, without disrespect to Sir John Cox Hippisley, either as a Doctor of civil law or as a magistrate, dismiss him for the present, and call for the evidence of his medical authority, Dr. Good. Speaking of his impressions on his first visit to the Tread-mill, Dr. G. says :

“From the tortuous attitude,” &c.—[The quotation, commencing with the foregoing words, and concluding with “persevering in the same manner from day to day,” is already before the reader.—J. J.]

In these paragraphs, our readers have the substance of Dr. Good’s allegations respecting the mischiefs incidental to the Tread-wheel. His objections may be classed under three heads : 1. accidents to which the prisoners are liable ; 2. the excessive exertion occasioned by the nature of the labour ; 3. the ultimate tendency of the employment to produce maladies of slow growth.

* [The reader will doubtlessly be little prepared to learn, that these positions are the reviewer’s own, and not Sir John Hippisley’s. Perhaps so glaring an instance of flippant and impertinent criticism never was exceeded. To form defective *positions*, according [to one’s one whim, out of another man’s materials, and then gravely point out their defects, is the *ne plus ultra* of critical hardihood. J. J.]

Under the head of accidents, we must first notice the casualties arising from the giving way of the machinery, on which Sir John so repeatedly insists. Four accidents, it seems, of this nature have occurred in Cold Bath Fields House of Correction since the erection of the machinery. "Numerous *very severe* sprains and bruises" are stated by Sir John to have been the result, though "hitherto nothing more serious has occurred." (P. 92, *note*.) "No *severe* or protracted accident," says Dr. Good, "occurred in either instance. (P. 99.) *If*, in four accidents, by each of which twenty-seven individuals were thrown off, *no* severe accident occurred, we cannot but think that the *danger** must be somewhat magnified. Nevertheless, were there no possibility of obviating such occurrences, we admit that the alleged danger would form a serious objection. But the fact is, that in no other prison, so far as we can learn, has any such accident occurred. These accidents have all arisen from the defective construction of the machinery, or from its mismanagement, in one particular instance. In the Edinburgh prison, half of the semi-diameter of the wheel is sunk into the ground, so that a prisoner slipping off the tread would sustain no injury. Of this fact, Sir John and his physician are aware, and of the possibility, therefore, of obviating entirely the risk of casualties of this description. But what is their answer?

"Of such improvements it may truly be said with Dr. Good, that 'what is founded on an essentially wrong principle, no modification can right.' It must be recollected that the objection taken to the Tread-mills, so far as noticed by Dr. Good and the undersigned, was with reference to the inspection of those at *Coldbath-fields*." (P. 160.)

But, as it was urged as an objection to Tread-mills generally, this has too much the appearance of a disingenuous evasion. Sir John has placed it in front of the incontrovertible facts submitted to his Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department, that there is an "insuperable difficulty" in constructing a

* [Logic. J. J.]

Tread-wheel that shall not be liable to such perilous accidents* ; and now he tells us, that were this main objection obviated, it would make little or no difference in the matter. But, to return to Dr. Good.

The next class of accidents are such as cramp, breaking the Achilles tendon, aneurismal and varicose swellings, &c. Of these, the prisoners are represented as being in perpetual danger. Consequently, as these are not chronic affections, which may require years before they fully develop themselves, we should imagine that the returns must exhibit the proofs of such danger in the shape of accidents, if Dr. Good's apprehensions are well founded. But the returns ONE AND ALL declare, that *no* injurious effects of this description have been produced on the bodies or legs of the prisoners by this species of labour. At Reading, a case of rupture occurred, occasioned by a violent fit of coughing, which the surgeon to the gaol is of opinion, " would in all probability have happened, independent of the exertion on the Mill." At Dorchester, a few of the female prisoners are reported by the surgeon to have been subjected to certain complaints incidental to women, more than usual, the consequence (in his opinion) of the exertion *and exposure to cold*. At Lancaster, a prisoner in a diseased state of body had a degree of inflammation induced by the exercise. But not one case has occurred of cramp, aneurism, snapping the tendon, or any other mischief of the specific kind which the nature of the labour is said by Dr. Good to have a constant *tendency* to produce. At Bedford, the average number of prisoners employed at the Discipline Mill had been about thirty, and 212 had undergone the discipline for the whole term of their respective sentences, varying from two weeks to twelve months. The visiting magistrates had watched the effect with scrupulous attention, and they express their conviction, that no injurious result had arisen either to the general health, or to the body, or to the limbs of the prisoners. Thomas Lovesy, a convict who had been regularly kept to hard labour on the Tread-wheel for

* [There is a *recoil* whenever a fracture takes place, as also when there is bad play in the wheels. A half-sunk wheel would not obviate this and other perils. —J. J.]

twelve months, on being examined by the magistrates the day before his discharge, stated,

“ That he has enjoyed perfect health during the whole period of his year's hard labour at the Tread-mill; that he has never felt any pain in the loins or shoulders, or in the tendons near the heel; that he has experienced no numbness of hands or arms; that he has never heard any complaints from his fellow convicts, except that when some of them first began to labour on the Wheel in their high shoes, the stepping galled their ankles, but that after they put on proper shoes, no inconvenience was experienced by them.”

The surgeon to the Devon House of Correction, after reporting that no case of injury had occurred, or, in his opinion, could arise, except from wilful negligence of the individual, adds, as the result of his inquiry, that, after a few days' work on the Tread-mill, the muscles of the legs, thighs, and back, become habituated to it, so that *the employment ceases to be a punishment*. And the case is mentioned, in the same Report, of a young woman, who used to go on with her knitting while on the Wheel. Dr. Good, however, denies that habit will have any effect in rendering the work easier or less trying. The general law of the animal economy, by which the organs acquire strength by being called into exercise, “ is limited,” he says, “ to such employment as they are naturally fitted for.” Now, as our legs were never designed for the exercise in question, it is “ a gross mistake” to imagine that a person could ever acquire facility in executing so “ unnatural and tortuous an action.” This is a very important remark, because it applies to other modes of tortuous and unnatural action besides that required by the Tread-wheel. Some of our readers may have found, on first repairing to the sea-side, or to a hilly country, that the unwonted process of climbing the heights, produced a pain in the calf of the leg, a shortness of breath, excessive perspiration, or, it may be, left a stiffness about the loins; and they possibly have been so imprudent as to persist in this unnatural exercise, under the mistaken idea that use would mitigate these distressing and alarming symptoms. Nay,

they may even have fancied that such an effect really took place, that it fatigued them less, occasioned less perspiration and loss of breath, left no sensation of cramp or uneasiness about the loins, after they had for a few days accustomed their muscles to the tortuous action. But this has been, on their parts, a gross mistake; and had they but known what risk they ran of aneurism, varicose veins, snapping the tendon Achilles, ruptures, spitting of blood, &c. they would never have walked up hill, or run up hill again. "The first mischievous influence," Sir John Cox Hippisley's physician would have informed them, "will not be recovered from by a repetition, but will go on from worse to worse, till some one or other of those maladies are actually produced, to which such exercise predisposes from its earliest use." (P. 102.)

But Doctors differ. Sir Gilbert Blane, on being applied to by Dr. Good for his opinion, drily remarks, that he knows of no solid objection to Dr. G.'s physiological reasons, except that they are mere theory, and that "theory is *always fallacious till tested by experience.*"

"Perhaps," adds Sir Gilbert, "*the power of habit has not been sufficiently adverted to* as a principle of marvellous efficacy in renovating both the mind and body in untoward circumstances. Might it not also be asked, whether there are not many species of labour necessary for carrying on the useful and necessary acts (arts) of life, in which the virtuous and innocent members of the State are engaged, much more injurious to their health than the Tread-mill?" (P. 125.)

This hint of Sir Gilbert's is, however, lost on his correspondent; for, as to "the power of habit," Sir Gilbert has evidently fallen into the gross mistake above referred to,—a mistake proceeding altogether, as Dr. Good assures us, from "a wrong application of a right principle." Habit can never, it seems, render it easier for a man to mount a ladder, tread on tiptoe, or climb the ropes of a vessel to the mast-head, because for such actions men are "not naturally fitted." Hence, the Tread-mill is a most unchristian mode of discipline.

The second class of objections relates to the effects of over-

exertion. For, though an attempt is made to hold up ruptures, spitting of blood, loss of flesh, female complaints, &c. as peculiarly resulting from the specific action of the limbs in the Tread-mill, Dr. Good will not deny, that over-exertion of any kind would produce the same effects. The last-mentioned result, he is well aware, would be caused by over-fatigue from mere walking or dancing; and ruptures more frequently take place in consequence of *manual* and dorsal exertions, than of any other species of labour. The surgeon to the Truss Society represents the average number of individuals afflicted with hernia among the labouring classes as one (male) in six. We consider this to be much over-stated; but it must be admitted as a proof that the labouring classes, whatever be their employment, are very liable to this complaint. Yet, of all the hundreds who have been subjected to the discipline of the Tread-mill, not one individual has suffered any such injury, except in the case where rupture was produced by a violent fit of coughing. The presumption is, therefore, that the labour of the Tread-mill is less calculated to occasion ruptures than the carrying of loads, and various descriptions of labour in which the majority of the lower classes are occupied. Indeed, a "physician of the highest reputation" at Dublin gives it as his opinion, that the *Crank exercise*, for which Sir John and his physician so warmly contend, "may distress the lumbar muscles and kidneys, and threaten rupture as much as the Tread-mill." (P. 151.) With reference to which apprehension, Sir John has only to reply, "That the system of regulation, and the improvements proposed for the Crank machinery, will obviate objections of this kind, derived as they are from *its ordinary action*, and probably under a careless superintendence." Here, then, it is admitted, that the ordinary action of the Crank-mill endangers the occurrence of the very mischiefs charged exclusively on the Tread-mill, which mischiefs have, in fact, never been known to occur. Dr. Good, however, denies that the Hand-crank-mill is likely to induce any such complaint; and he adduces, in support of this denial, the testimony of two surgeons. Mr. Copeland thinks hernia *and varices* "much more likely" to be

produced by the labour of the Tread-mill, than by that of the Hand-crank-mill; an opinion reasonable enough as regards the latter complaint, and the coupling the two together takes off all the force of his opinion; though it amounts, at most, to no more than this, that such diseases are likely to be produced by both species of labour, but that probabilities are in favour of the Crank-mill. Mr. Macelwain simply states, that those modes of labour which call alternately into action different sets of muscles are the best adapted to promote health and strength; which general opinion is really little or nothing to the purpose. And these are Dr. Good's authorities.

But we must not pass over the *sarcophagous* effects of this monstrous machine. The Lancaster magistrates, desirous of ascertaining the effects of the Tread-mill on the general health of the prisoners, gave directions to have them weighed, in order to ascertain the average gain or loss of flesh produced by the labour; or, in the more ornate phrase of Dr. Good, "by putting this slow and snail-paced labour to the test of a pair of scales, which have been employed as a direct *sarcometer*, to determine the amount of struggle between the living powers of human flesh, and the destroying powers of the Tread-wheel." The result was as follows: [and is familiar to the reader. J. J.]

"There has been no alteration in diet. The prisoners have been kept solely on the prison allowance. As far as my experience goes, I am of opinion that the employment is very healthy, and I have not observed that this species of labour has had the slightest tendency to produce any specific complaint." (P. 49.)

These are the observations of the keeper. Upon this curious fact, Dr. Good indignantly remarks:

"Now what other labour under the sun, short of that of *actual torture*, to which men have ever been condemned, or in which they ever can engage, in the open air, has produced, or can be conceived to produce, such a loss of flesh and blood as that before us; where the rate of progression, whether up hill, down hill, or on level ground, does not exceed two miles for the entire day, and the labourer has to carry no bag of tools or weight of any kind?"

What the rate of progression has to do with the question, we cannot perceive; but we should really be glad to know, *what* species of *hard labour*, continued for ten hours and a half per day *, the workmen being kept on prison allowance, would not occasion a loss of flesh. Yet, this he terms the *experimentum crucis*! The prisoners, when over-worked, lost flesh; when the period of labour was shortened but half an hour, they recovered flesh faster than they had lost it. In the first instance, however, not only was no inroad made on the living principle, but they increased in weight as the result of this very species of labour, which is represented as coming short only of actual torture!!

But we hasten to notice the third class of mischiefs, those maladies of slow growth which the Tread-mill has an ultimate tendency to produce. Dr. Good, weary at last, as it should seem, of being questioned, loses all patience when he comes to speak on this point. "There is no end," he says, "to answering all the follies and caprices to which the Tread-mill must give rise from its intrinsic demerit." Then, after the remarks already cited on subverting the order of nature, the Doctor thus proceeds.

[The extract commences with "The question which I understand," &c. and concludes with "The mischief has worked itself into maturity." This extract also is familiar to the reader. J. J.]

We have heard it remarked, that tea is a slow poison,—so slow that it takes from sixty to seventy years to develope its fatal effect on the system. We suspect that the chronic affections produced by the Tread-mill will require a period scarcely short of this, in order to their development. It is some satisfaction, however, to find, that they are not of a more formidable nature than those to which the old age of the husbandman is subject. The reformed convict, therefore, when he feels the lumbago tugging at his loins as the sad remembrancer of a twelve month's apprenticeship to the Tread-mill some thirty or forty years

* [What consequence *how long* it be continued, if *only* two miles and a half up hill be slowly ascended? No answer is given to the doctor; but a concession is involved, that some other morbid effect is at work than what at first sight appears.—J. J.]

before, may console himself that he would have come off no better, had he spent his youthful strength at the plough. Cramps, rheumatisms, and paralysis, are, alas! among the ordinary ills that flesh is heir to; and we seriously doubt whether the Hand-crank mill itself, in its most improved state, will ever present an efficient security against such chronic affections among the labouring classes. If "the discerning physician who beholds the result as clearly from the first," as any second-sighted seer of the North, can really promise so much for the said Crank-mill, we should deprecate its introduction into prisons as, in effect, a bounty upon crime. What! are the honest and industrious to be exposed to ruptures, cramps, lumbago, poisoning, in following their respective callings, and shall the only species of labour* which presents a security and antidote against all such acute attacks or chronic diseases, be confined to houses of correction? How manifestly must this tend to make gaols and reformatories attractive to the commonalty!

But are there no chronic affections which the discerning physician sees are likely to be called into action by the labour of the Hand-crank mill? Are there no specific complaints induced by "the healthful and vigorous acts of thrusting, pulling, heaving, and bearing burdens," to which the manual labour of the Crank-mill is stated to be analogous? How comes Dr. Good to have overlooked this question? The fact is, that apoplexy, hæmoptysis, aneurism of the aorta, the carotid and subclavian arteries (diseases of a far more dangerous kind), are more likely to occur in the discipline of the Hand-crank mill, than aneurismal or varicose swellings, or sanguineous discharges in the Tread-mill exercise. In the case of consumptive persons, we should deem the latter the safest mode of labour; and ruptures are certainly not less endangered by violent muscular action of the upper limbs than by the labour of the Tread-mill. Dr. Good says, that "by the rotatory action of the cranks; the prisoner will render his joints more lithe and plastic than ever, and may, perhaps, call many muscles

* [Logic. J. J.]

into action, and employ them with ease, whose existence he has never before dreamed of." The frequent use of the feet is quite as likely to give the performer a knowledge of muscles whose action he never before dreamed of, as the frequent use of the hands: to deny the effect of exercise and habit in the one case, and to insist upon it in the other, is absurd and contradictory. As to the horror in which the Tread-mill is said to be held, those who know any thing of the character of the persons for whose special use it is intended, will sufficiently understand why nine or ten hours' hard labour should be regarded by such persons with dread and dislike, without having recourse to images of terror and torture. Hard labour will never be rendered palatable to those whose idleness has led them into crime, not even by the Hand-crank mill itself. Both modes of discipline may be advantageously employed. Both may become objectionable when pushed to excess. The dispute respecting them seems very much like raising a question as to which is the best exercise, dancing or dumb-bells. Either, we should say, may be hurtful, while both are good in moderation. Sir John Cox Hippisley is too grave a person to dance; it would be natural that he should prefer the dumb-bells. And were he to apply to his physician for his opinion on the subject, Dr. Good would doubtless deprecate as an absurdity, a scheme of exercise in which, "while the feet perform all the labour, the hands and the arms are in utter idleness." Dancing, he might say, "produces cramp, profuse perspiration, weariness, thirst, endangers snapping the Achilles tendon, varicose swellings, and what not. For such tortuous attitudes the limbs were never designed: it is a most unnatural exercise." And what chronic affections such "tiptoe mirth" has been the means of developing, is too well known to be insisted on. No; what is wanted is, an exercise that shall call into alternate action different sets of muscles, by the "double labour of hand and leg;" if, therefore, a man chooses to dance, let him dance on all fours*.

* [The spirit of sneering in which this Review is written is as unbecoming as

We think the public are much indebted to Sir John and Dr. Good for bringing forward all their ingenious objections. It is most desirable that such a subject should receive a full discussion; and we repeat, that we know no class of men much more useful than the objectors. We respect most highly Sir John's well-meant perseverance, and applaud Dr. Good's intrepidity of opinion. They will, we trust, take our freedom in good part, and give us credit for sincerity when we say, that they have made out the best case they could *versus* the Tread-mill, and if they fail in carrying their point, it is not their fault as counsel. We have done our duty in summing up the evidence, and leave our readers to agree in the verdict.

Extract, from an Article on Legacy Hunting, inserted in the New Monthly Magazine, for the 1st of December.

AGAINST frauds like these, the poor Legacy Hunters cannot be too guarded; for there is no Tread-mill to punish this species of vagrancy, unless, indeed, THE DEVIL, THE TRUE INVENTOR OF THAT ANTI-ENGLISH SPECIES OF LEGAL TORTURE, has a roundabout of his own, where, by the by, he cannot at least *punish the prisoner before trial and judgment!!*

its jesting is unseasonable. If the writer did not know how such distinguished philanthropists as Sir John Hippisley and Dr. Good were treated by others who differ in opinion from them, and ought to have been treated by himself, he was meddling with matters beyond his management, in undertaking to read them a lecture; and to do so on a grave and deeply interesting topic, in a self-sufficient style of jeering and laughter, besides being a proof of insufferable conceitedness, is according to that very low taste which would make the most serious calamities and the most momentous matters the subject of a joke.—J. J.]

Letter, inserted in the Morning Post of the 3d of December.

TREAD-WHEEL.

SIR,—If “Kent,” who (without disputing the fact, which fact cannot be disputed, that *a mother giving suck* is toiling at the Guildford Tread-wheel) upbraided me because I gave this fact to the public, as “of that description of people with whom it is a fashion to hold up wholesome laws as obnoxious, and the Magistracy as unfeeling and incorrect,” will turn to your columns for the last three or four years, he will find that “Julius,” is as strict a disciplinarian, and lover of social order and morality, as he could wish him to be. Let me assure him, that if the advocates of the Tread-mill defend its use, when the commonest humanity forbids it, themselves will much sooner procure its suppression than *those who are arrayed in unceasing and indefatigable hostility to it*. Let me assure “Kent,” that of some hundred and more individuals to whom I have mentioned the case, *not one* of them has evinced any sensation short of *absolute astonishment, pity, and indignation!!* HAD THIS DISSOLUTE MOTHER BORNE A BABE FOR EVERY PARISH IN THE METROPOLIS, THE COMMON INSTINCT OF OUR NATURE SHRINKS FROM THE IDEA OF WORKING HER, WHILE GIVING SUCK AND PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF A PARENTAL NURSE, ON THE TREAD-WHEEL. “Kent” should recollect that when well-disposed individuals detect and expose abuses, they do an essential service to the community, by rescuing the matter of accusation from the distorted and factious dress of hireling, reckless, and evil-disposed writers.

Not one word in the letter on which “Kent” remarks tends to make *the exception of the rule*; nothing is said or insinuated of the Magistracy as a body. The mere naked fact is placed before the public eye, and no palliation of the severity complained of has yet taken place.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

JULIUS.

*Article, from the Medical Adviser, (edited by Alex. Burnet, M.D.)
for the 6th of December.*

IMPORTANT MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS UPON THE TREAD-MILL,

As applied to Females at Cold-bath Fields.

(Authentically communicated.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the excitement which the introduction of the Tread-mill occasioned in the public mind, and the consequent inquiries which have taken place, it is, indeed, surprising that the most considerable abuse of that machine should, up to this moment, have escaped notice, with the exception of some pointed animadversions in the "John Bull" newspaper, namely, *its cruel and odious application to females!* We are happy thus upon our outset, to be the means of laying before the public important information upon this subject, assured, as we are, that it needs only to be known, to interest every man in the common cause of humanity; and more particularly in the protection, which nature imposes upon them, of the unfortunate and *forlorn* of the female sex.

At the House of Correction, Cold-bath Fields, females were put to work at the Tread-mill on the 17th of July, 1822, which was the day the machine commenced, in that prison, and they have continued at it ever since, with the exception of a remission of two months in the autumn of that year, and a like period this year, which took place in consequence of a greater number of male prisoners than those appropriated for the other Wheels, being then in the gaol.

Two yards, with a Wheel capable of employing from forty to fifty each, are appropriated for females—one for felons, and the other for misdemeanants, chiefly what are called "*idle and disorderly*,"—a term so vague, that almost any individual may come under its construction, according to the opinion of a magistrate,

and to *the degree of credence he reposes in the flippant oath of a common street informer.*

The Wheel is a cylinder of twenty-four steps placed at the distance of one foot and a half from each other. This rotates in a uniform motion; and as it moves round, the step on which the foot stands descends, while the next presents itself—and so on for the whole circle; so that the prisoner is thus compelled to ascend each step, or obliged to hang by the hand-rail which is parallel with the head. It is *the action of going up stairs; but the steps are more distant from each other, and more steep than in our ordinary stairs.* The prisoners work from seven in the morning until five in the evening*, in summer; and during the whole time of day-light in winter. Out of this time they are allowed one hour for breakfast, and two for dinner. The usual complement for each division of the Wheel is twelve; and they work nine on and three off. Each prisoner, in her turn, performs 864 steps, and then descends; one of those who are down taking her place: she then rests while others perform 288 steps, when she again ascends to perform 864 steps—and so on. Sometimes, however, they work seven on, and five off, which gives them a longer time to rest: but this is casual, and it is not in what may happen by accidental circumstances, that the labour of the Wheel is to be examined: we are to view it in its full extent, as the magisterial committee fixes it. And it cannot be denied that one magistrate (Bevill) in particular visits the prison almost daily for the purpose of seeing that the Wheel is worked, as he officially says, “*in due form.*”

In the action of stepping upon the Wheel the principal part of the labour is thrown on the *gastrocnimii* muscles, or those of the calf of the leg. They run down into a tendon which is firmly attached to the *os calcis* or heel bone; and *upon this little bone moves the whole weight of the body.* Independent of the

* [The women at this period did not begin treading till nine o'clock. An inaccuracy will also be observed in the alleged rise of the steps. J. J.]

great disparity which exists between the two sexes in point of general strength, if we consider that the muscles forming the calves of the legs are, in proportion to the weight of the body, possessing much less power than in the male, from the natural largeness of the hips, thighs, and breast, as well as from the quantity of adipose matter with which the female body is furnished, to give it that roundness it possesses ; and if we also consider, that from the size of the hips, the thigh bones describe a much greater angle to the knee, and consequently are rendered less capable of action, we must naturally conclude that such labour as the Tread-mill produces will affect the female *so much more than the male*. Thus we see HER CONDEMNED TO SUFFER A greater DEGREE OF PUNISHMENT THAN OUR OWN SEX, FOR THE same QUANTUM OF OFFENCE—a being not only much weaker in bodily strength, but infinitely more so in the mind, which produces the crime. And what nourishment have those unhappy females to support them in this excessive labour? A pound and a quarter of bread, a pint of thin gruel, and a pint of soup daily, which soup is substituted three days in the week for six ounces of tough, *indigestible* meat, and one day in the week (Saturday) for a pint of gruel. This must fall heavily upon the strength and spirits of women who when at liberty live so much better, and so very differently. Money or friends cannot alter their diet, for the magistrates will not permit them to receive assistance in that way. Now let us consider a more important point.

The labour of the Tread-mill, from its peculiar action, is calculated to bring on *certain illnesses* to which females are *exclusively subject*; even in the most robust, occasionally, but always in those who are predisposed in their systems, as is too often the case with the class of unhappy women who are consigned to a prison. Exposed to the operations of grief, cold, and sudden change of living—taken perhaps out of a damp watch-house, in which they had been a night or two without food, and under the effects of spirituous liquor, they become debilitated in a greater degree than males under similar circumstances, and, *in that state*,

they are put to work. From this proceeds still greater debility, which consequently effects those *illnesses* above alluded to: broken constitutions follow, and although the unfortunate woman outlive the period of her imprisonment, she probably ends her days by disease of which this is the cause. In reply, it will be said, that surgeons of prisons ought to except from labour, females, at certain periods, and under certain illnesses. This they do to the utmost of their power, and it, of course, renders the punishment less rigorous, less dangerous, and less shameful: but it is not always that they can prevent *occurrences the most pitiable.* A woman may go to work in the morning apparently well, and *from the action of this labour alone* become suddenly affected as above mentioned. She cannot speak to the turnkey *, or rather she *will not* (from motives of delicacy), but continues to work *until it can no longer be concealed!* THIS HAS OCCURRED, YET IT HAD NOT THE EFFECT OF DRAWING THE ATTENTION OF THE MAGISTRATES TO THE IMPROPRIETY OF THE PUNISHMENT!! We know that those illnesses are frequently preceded or followed by dimness of sight, giddiness of the head, and general hysterical affections; and hence it is common to see women *fall suddenly off the Wheel.* *The fact can be attested by their turnkeys,* and in the month of May last, a poor tradesman's wife, who had been committed for unlawfully pledging a shawl, fell from off the Wheel down through the trap-door (see plate) in the centre of the platform, and was the remainder of her imprisonment in the hospital; in consequence of which, Mr. Vickery, the governor, judiciously caused the trap-door to be removed to the end of the platform. What are termed "fits" occur almost daily in the women's yards, while they are scarcely ever known to the male prisoners. Females are extremely liable to hysterical affections from grief; and when undergoing the punishment of the Tread-mill, having arisen from their comfortless bed of straw, with but little sustenance in the

* Since March last, we understand that female turnkeys have been substituted for male; a measure of great propriety.—ED.

stomach, their feelings cannot be tranquil*. Add to this *the teasing, undeviating motion of their labour, acting upon nerves already predisposed to derangement*, and we need no longer wonder that the poor creatures fall in convulsions off the Wheel! These circumstances *are totally above the control* of the surgeon, they are purely accidental; but they occur so often as to warrant his opposition to the punishment, as a measure of medical prudence; however, having once permitted them to work at the Wheel, it is impossible for him to guard against the bad consequences. It must not be supposed that the medical men of the different prisons have all been so passive under the misapplication of THIS INQUISITORIAL WHIM OF THE DAY, as not to have given their real sentiments upon it. On the contrary, we know that *many* of them are decidedly hostile to it, and it is to be regretted that the regulators of the punishment *have not as yet been influenced by medical opinion upon this important point*. We know there is a difference of opinion in the committee of magistrates of the House of Correction, Coldbath-fields, upon the propriety of the punishment. Mr. Laing, of Hatton-garden, is of our way of thinking, as regards this mode of punishing women; while Mr. Bevil, of Worship-street, is a fierce advocate for it. Each have their adherents, and the consequence is, that no order, regarding the female prisoners, has hitherto lasted more than “for its brief day.” One time the number of hours for work were lessened; another time they were taken off altogether for a couple of months, then again put on. We trust, however,

* A circumstance which weighs particularly upon the spirits of many of the females committed to the Tread-mill, is the cutting off of their hair. As a measure of cleanliness, generally speaking, it is proper; but some females are particularly attentive to their hair, and do not require such a severity. *Many have been known to oppose this loss with tears, screams, and hysterics, and have required force to compel them to submit*. Women confined for some slight offence, and for a short period, look upon the loss of their hair as far worse than their punishment. It is a cruel practice, and ought to be carefully attended to by the surgeon.

that the humane party in the committee will carry their laudable intentions, so as to permanently abolish the abuse ; and we hope, too, that all other directors of Tread-mills will follow the example. Let the magistrates, in favour of the cruelty, consider our observations well ; let them look at our plate, and take a moral view of the subject, and whatever may have been their prejudices in favour of the Tread-mill, we hope sincerely, *for our nature's sake*—nay we are confident—that they will not continue it. Women could be kept to hard labour without resorting to *a mode so unbecoming their sex*—spinning, washing, basket-making, mat-making, plain work, carding wool, picking oakum, &c. &c. are employments more suited to their physical capability, and ought to be substituted. As members of the faculty, we declare that *the infirmities natural to the female sex render them unfit for such labour as that of the Tread-mill* ; and we again repeat that we sincerely hope the subject will meet due attention in THE PROPER QUARTER.

[The *Sunday Times* of the 7th of December refers to the preceding article, and insists that, if noticed in the *proper quarter*, it must produce a change. J. J.]

THE *British Press* of the 10th of December gives an extract from the Medical Journal's Review, beginning "To Mr. Cubitt," &c., and ending "taken down last summer," and which will be found by turning back to the cxlixth page.

Article, from the Medical Adviser of the 13th of December.

Mothers, suckling their Infants, at Guildford Tread-mill.

WE are requested by a humane correspondent to turn our attention again to the female Tread-mill ;—this we feel our duty,

so long as humanity is deaf to our appeals. For the present, we cannot do better than to publish his letter to us; and we regret the writer's modesty will not permit us to put his name to it, for we think he deserves to be known and honoured by every one.

To the Editor of the Medical Adviser.

SIR,—The enclosed slip is a copy of a letter that appeared in the Morning Post of November 22, and was copied out into most of the daily papers. Any rational man would have thought that the notoriety *this shocking fact*, thus immediately attained, would have operated to the liberation of the poor wretch condemned to *a punishment so horribly out of all proportion to her offence*; but was it the case? Since this letter appeared in print, another female, under the same circumstances, has been committed to the same gaol, so that *there are now toiling at Guildford Tread-wheel two mothers giving suck, their infants each no more than three months old, who, from the diminution of the mother's milk, produced by the exhausting nature of their labour, are in a state of starvation, which, combined with exposure to the cold, causes them to be incessantly crying!* I beseech you, sir, for the sake of humanity, to ADDRESS YOURSELF IN YOUR MEDICAL CHARACTER TO MR. PEEL, and not only call for THE LIBERATION FROM THIS TORTURE OF THESE POOR CREATURES AND THEIR UNOFFENDING OFFSPRING, but to demand, in the name of outraged humanity, THE DISMISSAL OF THE COMMITTING MAGISTRATE. Such things are *past endurance or pardon!!* I am, sir, your obedient servant,

* * * *

Who can read this letter and not feel indignation at the conduct of *those heartless beings* who have been the cause of such outrage? Where are the philanthropic and the supporters of national character that they have not interfered? Many of them have *the ear of Mr. Peel*, which we are certain *is never shut against the voice of humanity*, and it is well known that *magistrates have no more favour in his eyes than other men!* We hope that those

newspapers which find their way to the breakfast-tables of *high authority* will lend their powerful assistance to the abolition of this abuse. Let them consider our *medical* arguments upon the subject, and let them consult with their *own* medical friends upon the truth and justice of them, and we are convinced that their assistance (which would soon decide the affair) will not be wanting.

THE John Bull Paper of the 14th of December contains the following, among its Notices to Correspondents :—

“ We shall make inquiries about the case of the Tread-mill at GUILDFORD ; indeed, we have no doubt Mr. Jackson will afford an explanation of what appears to us a HORRIBLE BARBARITY.”

THE Sunday Times of the 20th of December makes a very considerable extract from the “ Important Medical Considerations upon the Tread-mill,” &c. published in the Medical Adviser of the 6th.

Article, from the John Bull Paper of the 21st of December.

TREAD-MILL FOR FEMALES.

No explanation having appeared in answer to letters which have been inserted in the daily papers, on the subject of a woman in Guildford House of Correction, who was said to be working on the Tread-Mill in that prison, having a child to nourish, in her arms, we hope to call public attention to the following facts, which as men and Englishmen *no power on earth* shall induce us to conceal.

Five weeks since a woman was sent to the Cold Bath Fields Tread-mill for being disorderly—she never had been in prison before. On the third day of labour she *dropped off the wheel in a fainting fit—the fall seemed to recover her*—her shrieks were agonizing—Mr. Bevill, and *several* other magistrates, were in the yard at the time, and left it immediately after the accident, *without making an inquiry.*

The woman was carried to the infirmary—and *there remained till her discharge*, last week.

Two women above fifty years of age are now at work on the wheel, with orders that they be worked as much as young women.

Two women have been on the wheel who have had *twelve children* each—one named Smith, the other Kelly—the latter, after treading for *three months*, is removed to the wash-house department.

Each woman is on the wheel eighteen minutes, and off eighteen minutes—they work from nine till one, and from two till four in winter, and till half past five in summer.

They complain of pains and achings in the limbs and loins, and of *cramp in bed at night*—they are also subject to swimings in the head—the perspiration *in this weather is profuse!*

We find at Brixton that there have been mothers on the wheel, as one is described to have been at Guildford, whose case appeared in the papers; a very short time was allowed for the mother to nourish the child, and if the poor innocent cried in the bitterest manner for its wretched parent, she was unable to go to it, till her time on the wheel had expired, let its cries be as cutting and as piteous as they might; at Cold Bath Fields, mothers, nursing, not only have extra allowance, but are *not compelled to work.*

WE CALL UPON THE NATION TO STOP THIS UNNATURAL, UN-ENGLISH PUNISHMENT; we relate facts, because we fondly love our country, and would wipe such a stigma from its reputation.

Mrs. Fry, accompanied by a lady of the name of Steele, has visited Cold Bath Fields, and *tried the labour of the Tread-mill—*

this is as it should be—bring home the punishment to the personal feelings and see the result—that lady declared it *must be injurious to females, and disgraceful to put them to it.*

As Mrs. Fry is one of the warmest *improvers* of prison discipline, we repeat her words as highly important.

As to natural work for women in prison, we know that at Clerkenwell, where the women worked at their needles, *four hundred shirts* have been made by *thirty women* in a week ; they received a penny or three half-pence per shirt—what was the consequence?—They worked steadily and assiduously, and only complained when one had more work given her (as a favour) than another !!

As for the *moral* operation of the mill, it makes women *sulky, sullen, and vindictive*—it *destroys the feelings of their nature* ; and as a proof of the injury it does, women who first go to the mill as being disorderly, will return after their discharge as felons, and again as disorderly—it is a rare thing for them to be *absent three weeks*, after having once been set to work. Jane Matthews, for instance, was re-committed *five times in twelve months*—indeed there is scarcely a strange face in charge !!

So much for the *moral* operation of the thing ; for we think it cannot be alleged that the frequent return to it *proves the lightness of the punishment*—IT IS ALL ABOMINABLE, and WE WILL NEVER REST TILL WE HAVE EMANCIPATED FEMALES FROM THE DREADFUL TOIL.

Letter, inserted in the John Bull Paper of the 21st of December.

“quid sit turpe, quid utile, quid non.”—HOR.

SIR,—Much attention was a short time ago excited, and with great justice, to a question most interesting to humanity, by the discussion of the impropriety or otherwise of subjecting female

offenders to the punishment of the Tread-wheel; but the details of the late tragedy in Hertfordshire, its causes and consequences, have more lately so exclusively engrossed the public mind, that opinions and feelings then very general, seem now, by as general a consent, forgotten or postponed, or at best (like so much of every thing that is laudable) transient and fruitless. Though I do not recollect that the affirmative of the proposition has publicly met with many advocates, it is notorious that very many intelligent individuals urge, and I believe from conviction, its propriety, and it is from this belief that I fear to see public opinion cooling on the subject—that I venture an attempt to prolong the discussion with no other ability for the task than *an utter and hearty conviction* of the impropriety of that punishment, and in the fear alone that silence and sufferance may eventually obtain for it that *toleration which reason and humanity deny*. Without professing to know any thing of the physical mischief resulting from this abuse of punishment, and on which much argument has been judiciously employed, I would willingly follow, for a few moments, on the same side, on the broader ground of principle and the common feelings of humanity, in the hope that the expression of one more opinion, however in itself valueless, may not be wholly so, if it could still excite to the discussion abler heads and hearts, as warmed by the subject as my own.

That our countrymen are deservedly celebrated for that warm feeling of respect and attachment to the female sex, which is the natural result of *the intrepid manliness of their character*, is a proud truth, which few Englishmen, and, to their honour perhaps, fewer foreigners will question. Indeed, of all our national virtues and vices, none is more strongly and more pervadingly marked. Amongst the classes least likely to act from the influence of such feelings, among our lowest and poorest, this character is observable in many habits of considerate attention, and in a kinder adaptation of employments and duties, strikingly contrasted in this respect with the less amiable selfishness of the customs of other countries. In the higher ranks of society, amongst the well-educated and the generous, still more strongly marked,

it forms *that high-toned gallantry, that chivalrous sense* of the propriety and the decorum, the respect and the attention, due to the fairest and best part of the creation, which renders English society (or that part of it yet uninfected by the poison of foreign follies) the pride of all who know how to value it. And who would wish to survive this honourable subject of national boast?—who would change the mild and moral spirit of Christian government, for the relentless stoicism of the Athenian?—Is IT NOT ENOUGH THAT OUR STATUTE BOOK SHOULD FIND ITS ONLY EXAMPLE IN THE BLOODY CODE OF DRACO, without adding to that severity (questionable in policy as it may or may not be) an UNNATURAL ABUSE of it hitherto unheard of? And yet such is indeed the infliction upon *females* of THE DEGRADING TORTURE OF THE TREAD-WHEEL. For the correction and punishment of hardened offenders of my own sex, I have no imaginable objection* to the change which the introduction of this machine has wrought in the discipline of our gaols, because I think it has substituted punishment for what was, before, its mockery, and by increasing the fear of the consequences has proportionably diminished crime; but, with respect to *females*, I can scarcely think that *I am living in England*, and advocating the non-application of the same rule. It is not many weeks since I first heard *the revolting fact*, that for sexes and circumstances so very different there is no distinction of punishment. *I heard it*, I most unaffectedly say, *with utter horror*, and for the first time in my life blushed for my country!! Are we indeed in the nineteenth century, in the very pride of civilization and refinement, guilty of a tyrannous abuse of the forms of justice, which, as far as it extends, *throws all former instances of barbarism into the shade!* Cruelty, in its worst exercise, with something like an instinctive assent to the common feelings of nature, has hitherto

* [If Juvenis would reconsider the arguments on which he objects to the Discipline for Women, he must find that some of the principal ones are *equally* valid against the Discipline for Men.—J. J.]

for the most part confined itself to the active and passive agency of its own author *Man*, and is it reserved for us to give it a feebleness and a less deserving victim?—What may be the baneful effects of this injudicious system on the comparatively slight texture of the female frame, I cannot estimate—they must necessarily be severe; but it is against the *principle*, which without a shudder can for a moment contemplate it in another yet worse aspect of its complicated wretchedness, that I raise my anathema, and it alone will make the picture sufficiently black.

Let us suppose a young female committed “to hard labour,” driven to her wretched task, and hour after hour, and day after day, wearing down, by ceaseless agony, a frame little qualified for such endurance, and by a *punishment so brutalizing, and even a public exposure of her sufferings and shame, degrading past all hope of redemption, a mind* which, under the influence of kindlier and more judicious correction, might have been given back to the world retrained to virtue. To add one more tint of horror to the picture. In a town like this, what is the largest class of unfortunate females who tenant our prisons*? *Are they not those most hapless of all the children of misery, who, the victims less of their own errors than the vices of others, nightly crowd our streets and public places, and thence, often at the ferocious caprice of a constable, and the necessary indiscriminateness of a police magistrate, under the sweeping definitions of a harsh Vagrant Act, are hurried, numbers at a time, to heal a broken spirit in the rigours of a gaol, and to expiate on the Tread-wheel the crime of being unfortunate!!!* Of this, it is to be feared, too large proportion of the *martyrs* of this cruel system, it is notorious also, how many add to present wretchedness *the unspeakable aggravation of the recollection of brighter days*, and with sensibilities still fine and keener from misfortune, harrow every thought and feeling into an intensity of woe that fearfully beggars actual suffering in the remembrance of what was once its glorious and happy contrast:—

* [Attention is earnestly requested to this humane reasoning.—J. J.]

this, this is the perfection of human suffering that mocks all thought and language—this is draining to the lowest dregs a draught bitter enough before—this is the “it is finished” of agony, bodily, mental, and universal—

“From whose hot throb—whose deadly aching,

“The heart hath no relief but breaking.”

To these, then, most unfortunate of human beings—to these pitied victims to the heartless treachery of scoundrels who can betray innocence and then spurn what they have made it—to these “miserable offenders,” as they are called—but, in my judgment, *offenders far more sinned against than sinning*—the Tread-mill, crowded by the misused power of many a mistaken zealot, who, in this exercise of it, thinks he honours heaven by breaking the bruised reed, offers its asylum, and there misery reigns at last alone: *there repentance meets disgrace—misfortune is soothed by torture, shame annihilated in infamy, agony goaded to despair*. And now, if the picture is complete, if it is frightful, and, above all, if it is true, up every feeling of indignant manhood, and forbid the longer endurance of what has far too long already outraged and disgraced the name—the sufferings of helpless females demand redress, and where is the manly heart that can hear the appeal unmoved?

The whole system is unnaturally mistaken and harsh. If in the more laborious offices of life it excites our compassion, to see a female reversing the curse of the Creator, and eating her bread in the sweat of her brow, how revolting ought to be the idea of subjecting her *to a punishment, under which the strongest manly frame sinks, and wearied and worn down confesses the severity of a discipline to which the nerve of limbs, toil-strung from their cradle, can afford no* * *adequate resistance*. The bodily pain of a state of labour so unnatural and excessive must be excruciating, and rightly render the combination of misery with which a female

* [Then not even the strongest manly frame should be subjected to it.—J. J.]

pursues her shameful task, indeed complete. And is woman to continue to bear this, and man to inflict it?—It cannot, must not be—every feeling is in arms against it—nature forbids, and heaven abhors it!!

The savage rigour of the system too, is not its only fault; its absolute injustice and *inadequacy, either to correction or remedy*, render it *as politically as it is morally objectionable*. Here even the, at best, bad argument, of necessity and expediency, cannot hold, for the punishment is in itself *utterly disproportioned to any offence*, which, generally speaking, a woman can commit, and nine-tenths of those who suffer it do so for offences which call for a very different correction. Measured even by the rigid rule of justice, it is iniquitous and harsh; but tried by the standard of humanity, it is *revolting and merciless, and monstrous*:—its existence is a disgrace to every honourable distinction we claim as a nation, and belies every right feeling we pretend to cherish as men;—uselessly and unqualifiedly barbarous, IT PRESENTS THE POLITICAL SOLECISM OF PUNISHMENT SEVERE, WITHOUT PRECEDENT, NOT HOLDING FORTH EVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF THE REFORMATION, WHICH IS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE END OF ALL PUNISHMENT, BUT FROM ITS VERY NATURE TENDING TO NOTHING BUT THE HASTENED AND IRRETRIEVABLE RUIN OF ITS VICTIMS.

I do trust, however, that we may now confidently look forward to not being much longer grieved by the existence of this crying enormity—every thing like cruelty is un-English, and this refined and unnatural species of it will soon give way before the better feelings which we all unite in. The Government itself will, I trust, lead the way in the work of charity, and willingly lend itself to the adoption of some approved change—it will gladly get rid of a charge which stains its own fairer policy, and meet the wish it shares. I am very far from wishing to be understood as blaming the promoters of the Tread-mill (even in the abuse of it I execrate) or the Government which has thought it (as I do) its duty to support it till it had been tried;—it has now been

tried and found wanting—its severity is proved to be only equalled by its uselessness, and the result cannot but be the immediate and utter abolishment of the use of it with reference to females. Such, I venture to predict, will be the spontaneous act of the Government.—Should, however, my anticipations prove unfounded, and some mistaken motive of policy still endeavour to retain a system so reprobated, I would still predict its downfall from the for once united voice of all parties, agreed, not upon a question of politics or expediency, but in the everlasting dictates of humanity and justice, DEMANDING IN THE SENATE, AND ENTREATING FROM THE THRONE THE RESTORATION OF THE CHARACTER OF THE NATION. How willingly would I (Tory, Mr. Editor, as I am to my very heart's core) to attain such an object, *for once* see all distinction of contending factions lost in one loud, and simultaneous, and irresistible expression of a warmer and a better feeling.

Until this much-to-be-desired change take place, might we not with reason suggest to the consideration of our Police Magistrates the enviable power they possess of tempering the rigour of the present system, by confining its operation to those who may be more justly amenable to it, and sparing *themselves the odium*, and *their country the disgrace*, of inflicting it at all upon females. I am not aware that the Vagrant Act forces upon a magistrate the painful alternative of punishing severely, or not punishing at all, by intending that every commitment under its enactments must *necessarily* be to hard labour. On the contrary, a fair discretion, in my opinion, is left, and is meant to be left, in the breast of the magistrate, to be used as circumstances may warrant ; and even if it were not so, where would be the difficulty or the danger of moderating an *in terrorem* kind of power (for that is the only construction that can excuse its existence) by that mercy from which it ought to be inseparable, and by preferring the spirit of the law before the letter, making “ even its failings lean to virtue's side.” A severer course is certainly in the power of our magistrates, and if they even adopt it from a conviction (however erroneous) that it is necessary, I am far from

blaming them ; but I will add also, that I am as far from envying them.

But it is now time to have done with a subject which, however in itself interesting, I am intruding upon you at far too great a length, and with far too little ability to compensate the inconvenience. May we soon, very soon, recognise the influence of a better spirit in the abolishment of *the loathed system of cruelty* I have endeavoured to deprecate ; and to hasten and insure it, may every right and kindly feeling that our nature claims enlist itself on the side of mercy, and every where join in the support of an appeal which is “ in the name of humanity charitable, and in the name of God just.”

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JUVENIS.

Hadlow-street, 5th Dec. 1823.

Paragraph, from the British Press of the 22d of December.

A POWER-LOOM has been attached to the Tread-mill in Lancaster castle, and the cloth made by it is said to be excellent.

Article, from the Medical Adviser of the 27th of December.

WOMEN AND INFANTS AT GUILDFORD TREAD-MILL.

WE insert the following letter, without comment on *the quarter from whence it came*. We would ask, however, why should *such an abominable act* have taken place,—was it the “ inhumanity” of the magistrates or of “ the underlings ?” When fault ceases, so should cease blame ; we shall therefore say no more upon this particular abuse : but until the barbarous practice of putting females to such labour as the Tread-wheel is abolished, *unequivo-*

cally, our exertions shall never cease*. We beg to direct the attention of our correspondent of * * to this reply to his letter.

To the Editor of the Medical Adviser.

SIR,

I HAVE been a reader of your valuable little work from its commencement, and from the impartiality with which it has been conducted, have little fear but that the following statement, in reference to a letter which it recently contained on the subject of the Tread-mill in Guildford gaol, will find a place in its columns

The writer of that letter stated, most unequivocally, that at that time there were toiling at Guildford Tread-wheel, two mothers giving suck, their infants, each no more than three months old, who, from the diminution of the mothers' milk, produced by the exhausting nature of their labour, were in a state of starvation, which, combined with exposure to the cold, caused them to be incessantly crying! The subject was one, if true, which demanded redress; and deeply feeling the stain it was calculated to make on the character of a nation boasting of the mildness of its constitution, and the clemency of its laws, I determined on making those personal inquiries which could alone enable me to judge with certainty of its accuracy. *The result has been satisfactory to me; though not to the extent which every principle of humanity would have led me to believe was probable. It is unhappily true that two women were, at the period in question (but not now) toiling at the Tread-wheel; but only for a limited number of hours. One of them had an infant as young as was stated in your correspondent's letter, the other one was much older. Neither had suffered from the causes which were stated†, but on*

* We should feel highly favoured by any information relative to magistrates' commitments of females to labour.—We have a warm corner in reserve for some of those dictatorial tyrants.

† [That they had suffered most severely, see the Supplementary Note to Dr. Good's Letter to Sir John Hippisley, inserted in the lately published Number (45) of the Pamphleteer, and the Appendix to Mr. Briscoe's Letter to Mr. Peel.—J. J.]

the contrary were in good health, and were amply provided for, through the benevolence and liberality of the governor's wife,—a person whose kindness and attention to female prisoners is the theme of almost every one of them. On no occasion are prisoners, be they male or female, put to the Wheel in Guildford gaol, until they have been visited by Mr. Jackson, the surgeon, a gentleman of whose humanity every one speaks in the warmest praise.

I have been induced to trouble you with this statement of facts, in order that no unmerited stigma should rest on the characters of individuals, in every respect, so worthy of opposite treatment. *I deplore, as much as any man, the fact of women, in a country like this, being exposed to suffering, beyond that which confinement brings with it ; but that is a punishment which the legislature has given certain individuals the option of inflicting, and where they sentence females to it, the inhumanity is with them, and not with the underlings, who are merely called on to see its performance.* I am, sir, your well-wisher,

December 24.

M.

The John Bull paper of the 28th of December, among its notices to Correspondents, puts the following direct questions to Mr. Jackson, one of the correspondents, who advocated, in its columns, the discipline of the Tread-mill.

“ WE are requested to inquire of Mr. Jackson, the surgeon of the Guildford house of correction, whether it is true that a sailor, who has had a piece of bone taken out of his leg, in consequence of a wound in some naval action, is at this time at work upon the Tread-wheel at that place, and whether he has or has not *lost thirty-eight pounds in weight* since the commencement of the punishment?—We also should be glad to know whether there are or are not *two mothers, with children at the breast*, also upon the Wheel?”

Paragraph, from the Morning Post, of the 30th of December.

THE Tread-mill at the Wilts house of correction, near Devizes, was set to work on Monday se'nnight, and has since been in full operation.

Paragraph, from the Morning Chronicle, of the 30th of December.

WE learn from a Sunday Paper, that Mrs. Fry and Miss Steel have tried the punishment of the Tread-mill upon themselves, and declared it unfit for females.

Reviews, from the Gentleman's Magazine for the 31st of December.

Of a "Description of the Tread-mill for the Employment of Prisoners, with Observations on its Management, accompanied by a Plate and Description of a New Instrument by which the daily amount of Individual Labour may be determined by Inspection, and regulated with uniformity and precision. Published by the Committee of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline," &c.

WE despair of adding any thing new to the account of Tread-mills, until we shall have to recommend a genteel kind, by way of family furniture, for the cure of gout and obesity. We shall therefore give a concise analysis of this well digested and philosophical description. The labour of the Tread-mill is similar to that of *ascending a steep flight of stairs*; and where the steps are eight inches asunder, and the revolution fifty steps per minute, the prisoner during that period "moves, or lifts his own weight over 33 feet and 1-3d, or maintains a rate of exertion equal to 2000 feet of ascent per hour" (p. 8); "and during a whole day's labour ascends 13,333 feet." *Ib.*

However, "the measure in feet ascent may be taken as the most simple and correct standard," we apprehend, that these lofty figures of thousands may convey exaggerated ideas of the quantity of labour. We shall therefore add, by way of supplying a desideratum, and preventing unnecessary alarm, that as half a mile is 2640 feet, the prisoner does not mount that distance in an hour; nor much more than two miles and a half in a whole day; a toil which is not equal to what many ladies, and gentlemen like ladies, have often undergone in ascending Snowdon, the Alps, &c. As to the power of the Tread-mill, the Committee have given an excellent account, founded on a memoir of M. Coulomb (an eminent French mechanic,) printed by the Institute. As it is very instructive, we shall give it in the Committee's own words:

"From the results of his [M. Coulomb's] experiments, it appears, 'that a man ascending a flight of steps, if by any means he could make use of his exertion, by throwing his own weight so as to raise another weight,' or perform any work thereby, he could exert a greater quantity of force for the day, than would be the case, if employed at almost any other effective labour. This observation, he adds, appears to me of the greatest importance in directing mechanics, in the construction of machines, intended to be moved by men."

It is remarkable how completely the Tread-wheel illustrates the truth of his problem; and a comparison of the amount of daily labour performed by a prisoner at the Brixton Tread-wheel, with the results of Coulomb's experiments, affords an interesting illustration of the justness of his conclusions. By Table 2, p. 21, a prisoner at Brixton, in summer, exerts a force equal to that of raising his own weight over 15,000 feet in a day; which being multiplied by the weight of his body (taken at 150lbs.), equals 2,250,000lbs, raised one foot per day. This result, for the sake of comparison, being taken at 10, the following will be the relative value of the several kinds of labour, detailed in Coulomb's experiments, when compared with that performed by the prisoner at the Brixton Tread-wheel.

The daily labour of men employed in carrying loads

up stairs, as	$3\frac{1}{2}$ to 10
Ditto, strongest man employed, as	4 to 10
Ditto, at pile-driving, as	$2\frac{3}{5}$ to 10
Ditto, stamping Coin at the Paris Mint, as	$1\frac{1}{4}$ to 10
Ditto, drawing water out of wells, as	$2\frac{1}{4}$ to 10
Ditto, working at the hand-crank or spindle-wheel, as	$5\frac{3}{4}$ to 10
Ditto, digging the ground with the spade, as	$1\frac{3}{4}$ to 10

The average cost of these machines, taken upon the number of prisoners each is calculated to employ, varies from 15*l.* to 25*l.* or 30*l.* per head, which includes in general the expense of the whole machinery, mill-house, &c. complete. The cost of repairs (at Hertford) amounted to 8*l.* 10*s.* in two years and a half. The saving to the county, or profit on grinding flour, is estimated at Brixton at 12 *per cent.* (pp. 30, 31). The most convenient size for a wheel is from 4 to 6 feet diameter, the height of the steps from 7 to 8 inches. (P. 9).

We agree with the Committee in thinking the Dietary (so various as it appears to be from the Parliamentary Returns) *deserving of Legislative consideration*, i. e. provided the College of Physicians is first desired to prescribe, what is, upon the whole, the best form of regimen. The machines mentioned in the title, and invented by Mr. Bate, Mathematical Instrument-maker to the Board of Excise, do him great credit.

The returns to the Secretary of State show *the folly* of supposing the Tread-wheels injurious to health. On the contrary, we think that the low diet and strong exercise would make many lazy luxurious persons live to a hundred, who now seldom reach fifty; and we are quite certain, that in these points of being both lazy and luxurious, there is no difference between thieves and honest men.

We need not add, how much the public is indebted to this Society; and how necessary the work under notice is to the Magistrate's library.

Of Correspondence, &c. By Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart. &c.

THAT particular modes of action have a tendency to produce certain diseases, is undeniable; *e. g.* pitching hay, or corn, often occasions hernia; weaving, phthisis; and so, *de cæteris*; nor do we think that the Hand Crank-mill, proposed as a substitute for the Tread-mill, by Sir J. C. Hippisley, would be found, upon more extensive trial, to be exempt from the possibilities alluded to. *The reports in favour of the Tread-mill far exceed those against it*; but WITH REGARD TO FEMALES, THE WORTHY BARONET, in our opinion, MAKES OUT A STRONG CASE. Modification may prevent the evils apprehended, so far as concerns males; for if the liability to disease be deemed a cogent argument in prohibition of certain modes of employ, what is to become of labour in mines, and manufactures without number, not one of which is so wholesome as the Tread-mill with all its supposed consequences? AT THE SAME TIME, THE HAND CRANK-MILL SHOULD HAVE A FAIR TRIAL; and if it be found to have the superior advantages presumed, BE MOST CERTAINLY PREFERRED TO THE TREAD-MILL. We sincerely respect the honourable Baronet, but these things are affairs of experiment.

1824.

THE following hits at the Tread-mill, by different hands, occur in the New Monthly Magazine for the 1st of January.

In an article headed "Vulgar Errors," it is announced that "natural infirmities, during the ensuing winter, will be deemed SUFFICIENT causes for penal inflictions."—"N. B. The Tread-mill is for the present, wholesome exercise, and bread and water a sufficient diet for UNTRIED prisoners!"

In a sketch of the character of Mr. Jeremy Bentham, it is said, "the lawless and violent spirit, that is hurried by headstrong self-will to break the laws, does not like to have the ground of pride and obstinacy struck from under his feet. This is what gives the *swells* of the Metropolis such a *dread of the Tread-mill*—it makes them RIDICULOUS. It must be confessed, that THIS VERY CIRCUMSTANCE RENDERS THE REFORM OF CRIMINALS NEARLY HOPELESS."

Article, from the Mechanics' Magazine for the 3d of January.

THE CHAIN-WHEEL.

THIS is an invention of the Chinese, and used by that ingenious and industrious people in the mechanism they make use of in irrigating their fields, *drawings and descriptions of which* are to be met with in almost every book of modern geography, and *have evidently given the idea of the Tread-mill* (THAT BASE ENGINE OF CRUELTY NOW AT WORK IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF LONDON) TO SOME MEAN-SOULED MECHANIC!! Wheels of this plan were first introduced into Europe by *wandering French Jesuits*, and were used in raising water out of the River Seine, for the benefit of the inhabitants of Paris. Afterwards they were brought to Britain, and used under various modifications, as in mines with slanting shafts, deepening of harbours, and dock-works.

About ten or fifteen years ago, a humble millwright in Scotland, of the name of Gladstone, who had never heard of the chain-wheel, or of any of its modifications, gave to the arts a variety of it, of great value; this was that well-known article in thrashing machines called the "travelling shaker," which not only conveys the straw away to a house, from the place it is thrashed, but also shakes out any grain that may be among it, thereby saving much labour to the husbandman.

When he found this answer its end so well, he applied the chain-wheel to another purpose, the "bucket-wheel," thus furnishing an outer wheel to mills, which required less water to drive or turn it than the one which it displaced, the common circle wheel: for these useful inventions he received a medal and a premium from the Agricultural Society of Scotland.

Still he thought that more might be done with this wheel: he accordingly set about applying it to the better propelling of steam-boats; and having fixed his chains, with paddles on them, to the sides of a large row-boat, he tried how things might succeed on a lake in his neighbourhood; the paddle-wheels were turned by the hands of men, and the engineer was astonished at the velocity with which the boat plowed the fluid. Having noted this, as to the time it took in sailing a certain distance, he took off the paddle-wheels, and affixed on the common sort; but the boat with these on, though the same power was given them, was three times longer in sailing the distance. What a difference was here! The same experiment was tried in one of the Liverpool Docks, and the result was the same.

By the aid of a friend, a patent was taken out, but no proprietor of steam-boats could be found, willing enough to exchange the old plan for the new. So the thing rests: an invention that would be of the greatest benefit is here laid aside; an invention equally secure with the other, one which makes far less noise when going, can be made with less expense, and answers the purpose three times better, is considered nonsense!

MACTAGGART.

[The British Press of the 8th of January copied this article into its columns. J. J.]

Article, from the Medical Adviser of the 3d of January.

HORRORS AT THE FEMALES' TREAD-MILL.

To serve as notes of reference for our future articles against that ABOMINATION, *The Females' Tread-mill*, we extract the following:—

Opinion of Dr. J. Mason Good, F.R.S. upon the Tread-mill: extracted from Sir John Cox Hippisley's book on Prison Labour; published by Nicol, Pall Mall. 1823.

[This extract begins at “The prisoner is deprived of all the healthful advantage of athletic exercise, *must be fatigued from the outset*,” &c., and continues down to “*even in the presence of the male keepers **,” and is already familiar to the reader. J. J.]

Speaking of Mr. Webbe's report to Mr. Peel, in which that surgeon states his opinion that “*he never in any one instance knew any ill effects*,” Dr. Good wisely remarks:—“but I have too great an opinion of Mr. Webbe's integrity, from an acquaintance of many years, to conceive, for a moment, that he had any *intention* to mislead; and indeed the brevity and modesty with which the report is drawn up, shows evidently that his mind was not decided upon the subject at the time †.”

“I inspected the men as they descended in rotation, from the Wheel, at the end of the quarter of an hour's task-work. *Every one of them was perspiring; some in a dripping sweat.* On

* See our remarks upon the females' Tread-mill, contained in our first number; which were written before we had the pleasure of perusing Sir John's *able* work.

† We have received a communication which will throw *some light* upon this surgeon's statement;—and perhaps a gleam or two upon the certificates of some of those crouching, and sweeping-opinioned apothecaries (we were going to say doctors) who have so *learnedly* declared in favour of their dictatorial masters'—the magistrates'—opinion of the Tread-mill, in opposition to Dr. Good, a physician of mature science, and deliberate judgment.

asking them separately, and at a distance from each other, where was the chief stress of the labour, they stated in succession, and without the least variation, that they suffered great pain in the calf of the leg, and in the hams.

“The palms of the hands in consequence of holding tight to the rail, were in every instance hardened, in many horny, in some blistered and discharging water.” Here is a labour for poor weak females! *If it existed in either France or Ireland, where popular feeling is as sudden as it is often just, parliamentary interference would not be thus COOLLY waited for; but those perverse and unnatural magistrates—those ignorant and unfeeling surgeons, and the inquisitionary prisons themselves, would share in one ruin by the pardonable fury of the people!!*

“The return of the Dorchester House of Correction is signed with the distinguished name of W. M. Pitt, and declares candidly and without reserve, that the female prisoners, notwithstanding they had at that time been employed at the Tread-mill for only about five months, ‘have occasionally been subjected to certain complaints, which the surgeon of the gaol has attributed to the working at the Wheel.’”

These are a few of the remarks of Dr. Good, which amongst many others which our limits will not permit us to copy have been laid by Sir John Cox Hippisley before Mr. Secretary Peel; yet the delays are of necessity so great, that months elapse without any positive relief being granted to the poor suffering women! So hard-hearted, so perverse, and so disposed, by the tyrannic bias of the human heart, to govern with an iron rod, are some of our magistrates, that a poor woman with her infant sucking at the breast, was sent to Guildford Tread-mill; and notwithstanding the inhuman act having been noticed in all the newspapers—another poor mother—with her infant—was committed by the same magistrate*! The temerity of ignorant power! Why should not such an abuser of humanity and national character be INSTANTLY DISMISSED?

In our second number we called upon the public journals to

* See our third and fourth number.

exert themselves in opposing the practice of sending females to the Tread-mill, and we are happy to find we have not called in vain. The John Bull has returned to the contest (the most virtuous, by the by, that paper ever was engaged in), and we heartily wish that the other journals would join in the attack. It is the laudable undertaking of hunting a *monster* from the community, and should be one common cause with all parties.

[The article which appeared in the John Bull Paper of the 21st of December was here transcribed at length. J. J.]

We refer our readers to a letter signed Juvenis in the same paper, for eloquent and powerful moral arguments against this punishment of females. We regret that when the writer used the following words—"what may be the baneful effects of this injudicious system on the comparatively slight texture of the female frame, I cannot estimate,"—he had not our professional demonstration of those effects, published in our first number, as well as the opinions of Dr. Good; we then should have had concentrated in one of the most able and manly appeals, incontrovertible physical, with the most powerful moral, arguments.

If our statement of the peculiar evils arising to females at the Tread-mill, which we laid down in our first number, be true (and where is the surgeon who can say it is not?) and if the enlightened and able Dr. Good's opinions are to be relied upon (and *who is the surgeon that can pretend to superior claims of credence?*) then does it not become a question, how far the upholders of the punishment are *responsible*?—either the surgeons of those gaols are ignorant, or compromise their honour and truth to the committees; or else the committees themselves act in opposition to their medical officers! In the last case, they are as responsible for their conduct as a commanding officer in the army or navy would be if he continued the punishment of flogging after the surgeon said it would be improper! But how are magistrates acting thus to be punished? Who is to support the unhappy sufferer to gain redress? Such a power should be only controlled by the acts of the legislature: and we hope it will be so ere long.

Mothers giving suck at Guildford Tread-wheel.

“Lo ! woman stretched, disfigured on the wheel.”

SIR,—In the 2d number of your work I stated that at the time I addressed you “*there were toiling at Guildford Tread-wheel, two mothers giving suck, their infants each no more than three months old, who, from the diminution of the mothers’ milk, produced by the exhausting nature of their labour, were in a state of starvation, which, combined with exposure to the cold, caused them to be incessantly crying !*” As the correspondent in your last (fourth number) who signs himself M. expresses humane feelings, I am less disposed than I should otherwise be to castigate him for making such a mockery of a plea in mitigation of my accusation as he has done.

He first avers that *the result* of personal inquiry, caused, as he *pretends*, by my letter, has been SATISFACTORY to him, and yet goes on to allow that “it is *unhappily* true that *two women were* at the period in question (but not now *) *toiling at the Tread-wheel.*” He then adds “but only for a limited number of hours.” Now, sir, his last statement leaves us as much in the dark as ever: why did not M., who well knew the number of hours, inform the public what that number was? *The trickery of this manœuvre is a downright insult to the public.* All the males and females at all the Wheels in the kingdom tread “only for a limited number of hours.” The reason, sir, that M. was guilty of this disingenuousness is, that these mothers were sentenced to the *same* quantity of labour as the other females! no distinction was made in their favour in the warrant of committal, and no distinction had been made (for in strict law no distinction could be made) up to the period of the visit about the result of which *M. would have the world think otherwise than the fact.*

* Simply because their period of imprisonment had expired.

He next allows that "one of the mothers had an infant as young as was stated;" but "the other one" (not the other mother, as the grammar implies) "was much older." The word *much* is here unfaithfully used; *both infants appeared to be about three months old*, and their mothers described them to be "*about three months old*!" a few days either way, or even two or three weeks, does not alter the enormity one tittle, nor impeach the description in any respect, except for the want of a minuteness of detail on one immaterial part of the case, which minuteness was totally incompetent to aggravate or mitigate the matter of accusation. He proceeds, "neither infant had suffered from the causes which were stated, but on the contrary were in good health, and were amply provided for through the benevolence of the governor's wife." I now tell M. distinctly, that *both infants had suffered from the causes which were stated*; viz. from hunger and cold; that the milk of the mothers was diminished by the labour; that the infants appeared the very reverse of being in good health; that *they were pining, and crying, and cold*, at the period of the visit; and that they were described by the mothers and other treaders to be almost all day long in that state. With such things before one's eyes, and such assurances in one's ears, the only wonder is, that a tale should be told in so *unvarnished* a manner as that to which M. so inconclusively replies.

It is perfectly compatible with all that has been alleged, to allow for kindness on the part of the governor's wife towards these mothers and their infants; she might supply some food for the children; but she did not, and perhaps felt that she might not supply sufficient nutriment to the mothers—if any *nutriment* could be *sufficient* to counteract the tendency of their toil to diminish the supply of milk.

Now, what opportunities, or conveniences, have mothers, under the circumstances of these unfortunate victims of *magisterial idiotcy* or *callousness*, to bring up babes of "*about three months old*" by hand? I repeat again, that *the infants were crying** and

* [See the Appendix to Mr. Briscoe's Pamphlet, for the amplest and most irresistible corroboration of this piteous statement.—J. J.]

pinning at the time of the visit, from hunger and cold, and were described to be frequently crying and pinning from the same causes. M.'s letter is evidently a defence of the governor of Guildford gaol—else what need of its asserting the humanity of *his* better-half, *as a reply* to a charge of inhumanity in certain magistrates, who dispensed a punishment which all the world will allow to be *a thousand-fold beyond the deserts of their* VICTIMS—a punishment the recital of which has made men's blood run cold, and their teeth gnash with indignation; and which should instantly bring down *official* as well as public *retribution* on the heads of *its miserable inflictors*. No language is adequate to the task of depicting in its true colours the anti-social and barbarous enormity of which the magistrates who committed *mothers giving suck* to the Tread-wheel have been guilty!!! There is much negative, if not positive, proof in M.'s letter that it emanates from Guildford gaol itself. What, sir, could induce you to say that you inserted it “without comment on the quarter whence it came,” I know not; but knowing what I do of the regulations of that gaol; knowing that no person can be admitted to view it without being *accompanied* by a magistrate, or introduced by the governor, it strikes me that were M. a stranger to the gaol he would of necessity, and for the corroboration of his statement, bring forward the testimony of his introducers; that he is not a magistrate himself is discoverable in every line of his letter, and in the whole mode of his arguing. To crown my suspicions, I may be allowed to state that *there are persons connected with the gaol who are opposed to the Tread-wheel Discipline*. M. will now see that the writer of this is more behind the scenes than he had the least suspicion of when answering his first letter. M.'s letter being distinctly a defence of the governor of the gaol, would not have been noticed by me, but that it involved in his exculpation a partial and unwarranted impeachment of statements, which thereby lost much of their value. This was occasioned by descending to improper and shuffling artifices, for the sake of carrying a point which was not brought on the carpet, and if it had been, might have been carried infinitely better without them. As M.,

however, seems to possess much of humanity, I trust his aberration from plain and above-board dealing was only an exception to his general rule of conduct, and I believe it was owing to an *interestedness* it was very natural to feel, but very foolish to betray.

I am, sir, yours, &c.

ACADEMICUS.

Account of the opening of the Surrey Sessions, inserted in the Times Paper of the 15th of January.

THE TREAD-MILL.

A most numerous meeting of the magistrates for the county of Surrey took place at the Sessions-house at Newington on the 13th inst. The members for the county, and upwards of forty magistrates, were present; Thomas Harrison, Esq. in the chair.

The reports of the Guildford and Brixton Houses of Correction were brought up, and read by the clerk of the court. By the reports, which were nearly similar, it appeared that the visiting magistrates had strictly attended to the operations of the Treadmill upon the health of the prisoners, moral and physical, and that they were convinced, that with respect to *the physical condition* of the prisoners, the greatest improvement had been derived from the application of the Mill as a punishment. They were also satisfied that the habits of those in confinement had been materially benefited—a fact which was apparent from the difference in the behaviour of the prisoners on the first day of their probation and on the last. The report added, that in every other respect the prisons were improved by the introduction of this mode of punishment.

Mr. Briscoe, one of the magistrates, then gave in a report*

* [This is an utter mistake: Mr. B. gave in, or rather circulated among the magistrates, nothing but his Tract, containing Cases of Prisoners at Guildford and Brixton Prisons.—J. J.]

which he had himself drawn up relative to the injurious effects of the Tread-mill. It stated that the Tread-mill was calculated to do essential mischief to the constitutions of those who were sentenced to work at it, and it particularly deprecated the practice of compelling females to labour at so dreadful an engine. After both reports had been read,

Mr. Briscoe said, he rose under very great embarrassment to state his sentiments to the court. This embarrassment arose particularly from the various severe strictures which had been made out of doors, very generally against the part he was known to have taken upon the subject of the application of the Tread-mill as a punishment. Insinuations had been thrown out reflecting upon his motives, but it was unnecessary to take any more notice of them than merely stating that they were undeserving of his attention, and required no refutation. He did not impute to the magistrates by whom he was surrounded any but the most honourable intentions. The most serious allegations, however, had been made against him, having for their source the governors of Guildford and Brixton Houses of Correction. When he visited those prisons for the purpose of ascertaining the grounds of the suspicion that an improper and injurious punishment was hourly inflicted upon those confined under sentence of hard labour, he had pursued a course of experiment the best calculated to arrive at the truth. He was shown round each of the prisons, and, after having questioned the prisoners upon the effect of the regulations of the prison upon their constitutions and strength, received the information contained in the report which had been read in his name. He *denied* that *he had ever used any inflammatory language* upon the occasion, or that he had encouraged any spirit of insubordination amongst those whose cases he considered liable to objection on the score of severity. He was merely influenced by the desire to render service to those who were confined, by adapting the punishment to their ability to endure; and to remove the stigma from those in power, of assigning what appeared to him and to others, who had made the most minute inquiries into the subject, an *arbitrary* and *unsanctioned*

penalty. *The punishment of the Tread-mill, he was convinced, operated to the permanent injury of the prisoners.* He had himself worked at THIS ENGINE OF TORTURE, and had learned that the complaints of the individuals whose cases had been read in court were established upon the firmest grounds. In the course of the painful investigation, *he had seen several unfortunate persons removed from the toil of the Tread-mill into the infirmary!* With respect to the case of the women, Hall and Loder, which had appeared in the public prints, although he had seen them while they were undergoing the punishment of the Tread-mill, he had not alluded to them. The motion of the Wheel, which compelled the person at work to exercise *the whole weight of the body upon the upper part of the feet*, proved that the work was of a nature which should not be assigned even to those whose strength defied ordinary labour! In *his own person* he had proved that the Tread-mill was the most overpowering engine that ever had been worked!! The substitution of any other punishment would soon alter the tone of health of the prisoners without tending to injure *their morals*, which certainly *could not be expected to improve under a system which was calculated to excite the feelings of revenge and obstinacy.* He had collected the testimony. The Crank or Capstan-mill would, in his opinion, be the most desirable substitute. He had seen two of those Mills lately in operation in Winchester Gaol, and was sure that the exercise, instead of inflicting diseases, was beneficial to the prisoners, and formed the best mode of Prison Discipline. Mr. Briscoe then handed copies of the statements made to him by various prisoners in both Houses of Correction to his brother magistrates. They stated, that the prisoners complained that they had entered prison in good health, and were ruined by the Tread-mill.

Mr. Briscoe then moved, "That a committee of magistrates be appointed to inquire into the nature and effects of the Tread-mill as an instrument of prison labour and punishment, in as far as it affects the strength and health of the prisoners."

Mr. Randle Jackson rose to oppose the motion of Mr. Briscoe.

Of the advantages derived from the Tread-mill there now existed not the slightest doubt*, and ALL that had been stated against it, as a mode of Prison Discipline, WAS UNFOUNDED AND UNTRUE. He had investigated the cases of the women, Hall and Loder, and had ascertained that instead of being injured by the work at the Mill, their health had improved, and their strength had increased *beyond all calculation*. When they entered the prison their persons were completely emaciated. One of them applied for leave to work at the Mill after having been removed from it, and she soon received an addition in weight of nine pounds. The other also was greatly benefited by the exercise †, which in no case was greater than the prisoners could endure. For the vagrant there was no punishment like that of the Tread-mill, the strongest proof of which was, that those who were longest in prison were in the best condition. Mr. Jackson then moved an amendment—“That in the opinion of the court the Tread-mill has, in an eminent degree, answered the purposes of its institution, both moral and judicial; and that the reports this day made by the visiting magistrates of the respective Houses of Correction are highly satisfactory, as well as the reports of the surgeons attached to those establishments, in whose opinions no effects injurious to the health of the prisoners have yet occurred.”

Mr. Holme Sumner said, that in consequence of the direction of the Secretary of State, he had caused an inquiry to be instituted into the cases of the two women alluded to, and had received a communication expressing that the health of neither was in the slightest degree affected. The good operation of the punishment upon the morals of the prisoners, as well as upon their health, had been ascertained *beyond all doubt*. A MONTH'S LABOUR WAS SURE TO REMOVE NUMBERS OF DISEASES; and those who had to undergo a long spell of discipline were sure to

* [This was asserted at the precise time when Mr. Peel had addressed his second Circular on the subject to the Visiting Justices of all the Tread-wheel Prisons, and by so doing had virtually declared that there were great doubts to be satisfied. Such conduct, then, in Mr. J. was not courteous.—J. J.]

† [It should be “by the food.”—J. J.]

leave the prison in *a most enviable state of health**. Certainly, in those prisoners who were accustomed to drink hard, the suddenness of the change caused a temporary falling off; but the admirable nature of the exercise soon restored them to a vigour of body *which surprised themselves*!! All sorts of attacks have been made upon the Mill, and there appeared in the *Medical Adviser* lately, an article of the most inflammatory tendency, but he disdained to read it, as he considered it unworthy of public notice on account of the tissue of falsehoods it contained†. The Hon. Member concluded by declaring, that the communication respecting the prisons gave rise to a very dangerous spirit of insubordination, and he would support the amendment.

Mr. Denison spoke strongly in favour of the Tread-mill, and denied that any other discipline at present in existence could exceed it as an instrument of punishment in prisons.

Mr. Allen (the magistrate of Union-hall) said, he had the strongest grounds for concurring with those gentlemen who approved of the Tread-mill, as a mode of punishment combining physical and moral effect. The surgeons who were in the habit of attending upon the prisoners had most unequivocally asserted that all the inmates were in an excellent state of health, and that the labour was calculated to preserve that health; and it was manifest that the active employment in which the prisoners were engaged was far preferable to the sedentary occupation of picking oakum, by which they were furnished with opportunities of engaging in idle and immoral conversation.

Several other magistrates spoke in favour of the Tread-mill. Mr. Briscoe's motion had but his own support‡. Mr. Jackson's amendment was carried with the approbation of all the magistrates, except the mover of the original resolution.

* [Really this borders upon the ludicrous.—J. J.]

† The ludicrous contradictions in this sentence need not be pointed out: the candour of a man who abuses what he has not read is certainly peculiar.

‡ [Mr. B.'s motion was seconded, and also supported by two or three magistrates.—J. J.]

The surgeon of one of the prisons was asked by the chairman, whether any of the statements made by the prisoners to Mr. Briscoe were correct?

The surgeon replied, that all the prisoners alluded to had been benefited in health by the Tread-mill, instead of being injured by it.

The tread-mill has thus received the complete sanction of the Surrey magistrates.

[This account appeared in ALL the papers. J. J.]

The *Mirror*, of the 17th of January, inserted the Verses against the Tread-wheel, which have been given in a former part of this Appendix.

Paragraph, from the Medical Adviser of the 17th of January.

AN EXAMPLE TO MAGISTRATES.

THE House of Correction at Kendal is to be enlarged and improved, but without THE DISGRACEFUL AND CRUEL appendage of a TREAD-MILL (as has been reported); THE MAGISTRATES having, GREATLY TO THEIR CREDIT, rejected THAT ODIOUS AND INHUMAN INSTRUMENT OF PUNISHMENT, and adopted the Hand-mills!!!—*Carlisle Journal* *.

No more *tumbling off the Wheels*, in hysterical convulsions, for poor females, in *this* gaol. Rome was not built in a day. Another year's *torture*, we hope, is *all* that wretched women will suffer from the INQUISITORIAL TREAD-MILLS!!!

* [This journal, according to the statement of a friend who regularly sees it, has most zealously and powerfully, in a series of articles, attacked the Tread-wheel.—J. J.]

Article, from the John Bull Paper, of the 18th of January.

THE TREAD-MILL.

THAT we have "taken a side" upon this question is true, and we have listened attentively to every argument which has been urged against our opposition to the punishment, because, from the weight and respectability of its advocates, their superior knowledge of its *moral operation*, and, above all, from their general humanity, we were led to believe that our feelings had carried us away, and that we were doing mischief, in attacking the discipline which appeared to be so popular with the magistracy.

One point we never shall, never can concede—we mean *the cruelty of submitting females to the toil*; and we were sorry to observe that at the meeting of the Surrey Justices, at which their sanction to the Mill was decidedly given, and to which it is our object to call the attention of our readers, this distinction was lost—nay, we were surprised to find Mr. Holme Sumner (an advocate for the Mill) saying that a "libellous statement of cases had appeared in the Medical Adviser, which he knew was false, because (forsooth) he had not condescended to read it."

Mr. Holme Sumner ought to have known, if he did not know, that we published that statement which the Medical Adviser quoted: and that if he mentioned the name of *that interesting little work*, in order to save us from the blame of having laid that statement before the public, we beg to say he was merciful overmuch:—that is a true statement—it has not been denied—it cannot be denied nor invalidated—we appeal to Mrs. Fry and her female friend, who tried the *mill*, and pronounced it *unfit for females*, whether we have exaggerated or extenuated any one fact or circumstance in THE HORRID DETAIL.

But while we confess that our objection, our *immoveable objection*, has hitherto been confined to the labour of females at this toil, we must add, that *we are now disposed—now that the whole of the Surrey magistrates have proclaimed their unqualified ap-*

*probation of its efficacy and healthfulness—to retract the opinion we had in the earlier stages of the discussion adopted—*WE BELIEVE IT TO BE DANGEROUS AND EXCESSIVE TOIL FOR MEN, as well as women, and we shall support this declaration by the following list of cases, selected, *all of them*, from the prisons of Brixton and Guildford, both being situated in the county of Surrey.

[The cases, given at length in the Bull Paper, will be met with, among a very large additional number, in the pamphlet on the mischiefs of the Tread-wheel, just published by Mr. Briscoe, and addressed to Mr. Peel. J. J.]

We put this list of cases before the public, and even though Mr. Holme Sumner should declare them all false and inflammatory, because he *disdains* to read them, we will vouch for the truth of them all—not only that the prisoners *said* what we have written down, but that *their looks confirmed their statements*. When we add that the pulses of the prisoners varied from 108 to 130 and 140, and that one woman's pulse was at 156—A WOMAN—perhaps this will not longer be doubted.

Mr. Peel's conduct in the investigation has been *most humane and honourable*: he has, within these few days, sent a second circular to the Tread-mill prisons, and to HIM we confidently look for THE SPEEDY ABOLITION OF THE DIABOLICAL INVENTION.

One circumstance is so very extraordinary, that we cannot fathom it. We can ordinarily sift facts, and generally give a pretty shrewd guess at motives, but we confess we cannot account for the uniform predilection of the magistrates in favour of THIS GIGANTIC NUISANCE!!

Whether it be, that it is an agreeable amusement to go and see men and women walking and working to no end; or whether the novelty of the machine, or the power it seems to give them over their fellow-creatures, have so interested the justices in its favour, we cannot say, but certain it is, that they are one and all as jealous of an attack upon their favourite "Mill," as they would be of an attack upon their wives or daughters!

Mr. Holme Sumner, who *disdains* to read of the barbarities of Coldbath-fields—all of which have been witnessed, and partially

endured by Mrs. Fry—calls our statement of the plain truth *inflammatory*. Let it be inflammatory for all we care—if an oppressive measure is adopted, *a measure which has the air of tyranny, cruelty, and unconstitutionality about it*, we wish our remarks upon it to be sufficiently inflammatory to overcome and overturn it.

Mr. Peel should be told what these justices (who are so devoted to THEIR TOY, that any man daring to meddle with it is deemed at once worthy of a place upon it) have done with respect to Dr. Mason Good, an eminent physician, and a generally talented man. Dr. Good saw the *danger and barbarity* of the discipline—(as did, by the way, the late eminent Dr. Baillie)—he visited the prisons with a view to ascertain the real state of the case; he found the facts confirmatory of his opinion. What, we ask, have they done with respect to this gentleman? The gaoler at Brixton has been ordered *never to admit him again!*

The magistrates, moreover, have directed Mr. Jackson, the Guildford surgeon, not to notice any thing we say, and are very angry because he wrote to us at all—this prohibition coming very seasonably at a moment when we inquired about TWO MOTHERS, WITH CHILDREN AT THEIR BOSOMS, WHO WERE AT WORK, and when we ventured to ask whether a sailor was not on the Wheel, the bone of whose leg had been partially destroyed in action.

But, as, unfortunately, the magistrates dare not hinder Mr. Jackson from communicating officially with Mr. Peel, we wish to call the attention of that Right Hon. Gentleman to the statement which we this day publish, and beg him to compare it with Mr. Jackson's return, in answer to his second circular letter, which is now lying on his table!

We say, after knowing what *that* return states, and knowing the truth of the foregoing cases, we are still in amazement to discover whence arises the extraordinary partiality of the magistracy for this discipline, or what the motive can be, to DISGUISE such facts as those which we this day submit.

If it had not been for the unqualified, and, with the excep-

tion of one voice, *unanimous* decision of the Surrey justices in favour of the Mill, we should not have been induced to mention the subject until Parliament had met—as it is, we are desirous that those, who, with the purest and best intentions, are deceived by appearances, and imposed upon by misrepresentations, should be aware of the real state of the case, and induced to repel with indignation A SYSTEM UNCONGENIAL TO THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION, AND A TORTURE FITTED ONLY FOR THE POLLUTED DUNGEONS OF A POPIISH INQUISITION.

Communication, sent to the New Times of the 19th of January.

THE TREAD-MILL.

MR. BRISCOE, the magistrate of Surrey, who moved a few days ago at the Sessions for a Committee to inquire into the nature and effects of the Tread-mill, as an instrument of prison labour, and punishment, referred to the opinion of a medical gentleman who had visited and examined the prison of Guildford. *This opinion, which, it seems, was not concealed from the prisoners themselves, excited, as will be seen by what follows, a very strong feeling of indignation amongst the Visiting Magistrates, who expressed a determination* never to admit the offending person to the prisons of Surrey upon any future occasion whatever.* The opinion of Mr. Briscoe's informant was to this effect:

“The Doctor had, on January 10, 1824, examined the prison, and state of the prisoners generally. He cannot but admire the general good order and cleanliness that prevail throughout the whole, but he has found all the ordinary evils produced by the Tread-mill discipline, as obvious here as in other prisons. The men and the women, in the presence of the Governor, have uni-

* [A determination as impracticable as it is petty and pusillanimous, and utterly unjustified by the facts of the case.—J. J.]

formly complained of its exhausting effects, and the pains occasioned in various organs; these exhausting effects and pains consist chiefly in violent perspiration, great thirst, and a very excited pulse, pains in the loins, the thighs, and the legs.

“The acceleration of the pulse is peculiarly entitled to notice, as it especially measures the degree of excitement. The lowest pulse in a male prisoner descending from the wheel was 108, the highest 142, the medium range 132!!

“In the women the acceleration and consequent excitement was still higher, as might be expected; the lowest pulse was 132, the highest 156, the medium range 142. The men complained generally of as much pain in the loins, after six months working, as at first.”

The following communication arising from the statement of the Doctor, introduced by Mr. Briscoe, was made on the succeeding day by one of the Visiting Magistrates to his brother Magistrates:

“January 11, 1824.

“Having witnessed the ill consequences to the discipline resulting from *the leading questions* which were addressed to the prisoners in November last, respecting the effects of the Treadmill, within a few hours after I had left them in perfect order and apparently well disposed, I have now the mortification to learn from the Governor, that yesterday a surgeon*, a mere visitor, introduced by Mr. Briscoe, and without any official connexion with this House of Correction, took on himself to adopt *the same mischievous course*, and to carry it to a greater extent, making at the same time many *improper remarks in the hearing of the prisoners, calculated to create discontent*. If this were allowed to go on, it would be impossible to preserve the discipline of the prison without having recourse to *those measures of severity*† which became necessary after a similar proceeding last November. As one of the Visiting Magistrates, I have therefore thought it my

* [Not a surgeon, but a physician.—J. J.]

† [The public will be very curious to know what these measures of severity were.—J. J.]

duty to direct that the medical man alluded to be not again admitted; leaving it to the next Visiting Magistrate who may happen to attend here either to confirm or rescind this order as he may judge expedient."

Mr. Jackson, the Visiting Surgeon of the House of Correction at Guildford, considered himself called upon to remove the impression likely to be made by the statement which followed the visit of the medical man introduced by Mr. Briscoe, and accordingly transmitted to the magistrates the copy of a letter which he had sent to Holme Sumner, Esq. one of the members for the county. It will be recollected that Mr. Sumner had been directed by the Secretary for the Home Department to make every inquiry into the complaints against the Tread-mill as a punishment.

The following is Mr. Jackson's letter :

"SIR,—In reply to your letter relative to the women who have been at work on the Tread-mill, I beg leave to inform you that two women, named Elizabeth Loder and Hannah Hall, each having a child at the breast, were committed to the House of Correction at this place, the former on the 11th of October, and the latter on the 17th of November. On the second day after her admission, Loder was put upon the wheel; but as she was evidently in a reduced state of health, she was immediately taken off, and directed to continue in her ward, where she remained for the space of a fortnight, at which time her health being re-established, she was again placed upon the wheel, where she continued to perform the usual labour, viz.—from half past eight in the morning until twelve, and from one to half past four in the afternoon, being on the wheel fifteen minutes and off ten minutes, until the fifteen of December, when in consequence of a slight *attack of cold** it was judged advisable again to remand her to the ward, where surrounded with every comfort the place could afford,

* [Produced by the exposure to sudden change, of heat and cold, which is a characteristic mischief of the Wheel Discipline.—J. J.]

such as a good fire, warm and nourishing food, &c. both for herself and child, her *dislike of solitary confinement* prevailed over her repugnance to the Mill, and she earnestly entreated to be permitted to return to the wheel. During the time this woman was at work, she as well as her child improved in health, strength, and good looks. The other woman, Hannah Hall, was committed on the 17th of November. During the time of her confinement she daily performed the usual labour of the Mill, *and was all the time in the most perfect state of health, having a redundancy of milk for the support of her child, and occasionally some to share for Loder's child when its mother was on the wheel.* Judging from the effects of the Mill on these women, as well as on the female prisoners in general, I do not hesitate to say, that in my opinion the punishment of the Tread-mill is in no wise injurious to the health or constitutions of women. Care has been taken at this place that no person be subjected to the discipline of the wheel during any illness whatever.

" I am, sir,

" Your obedient humble servant,

" EDWARD JACKSON."

The Visiting Magistrates caused the two women whose names are mentioned above to be weighed* during different periods of their confinement, in order to ascertain how far the increase or diminution of size was compatible with the reports amongst the public of the desperate effects of the Tread-mill labour. Loder was weighed on the 31st of October, after four or five days of work, and then weighed eight stone two pounds; and again on the 13th of December, having worked through the whole of that interval, and was found to have gained nine pounds weight. On the 15th of December she took cold, and was by the surgeon's order confined to her ward, and between that day and the 2d of January, the period of her liberation, lost two and a half pounds weight. (Loder was committed for bastardy, having had three children by different fathers, and was committed for three months.)

* [Why are not the weights of both these women given, since both were weighed?—J. J.]

Hall was committed as a vagrant for a month, and was in robust health the whole time.

[The *Herald* paper of this date inserted a similar communication to the above, but very properly omitted the rude remarks which stand in italics at the beginning of the foregoing article, J. J.]

Extract, from the Morning Post of the 20th of January.

THE TREAD-MILL.

THE following is a correct copy of the Report of the Guildford Visiting Magistrates:—

The Report of the Visiting Magistrates of the House of Correction at Guildford, to the Court of General Quarter Sessions, held at Newington, on Tuesday, January 13, 1824,

Sets forth the uniform state of cleanliness of the prison; the high state of cultivation of the garden for the use of the prisoners; the good conduct of the governor and the officers in enforcing the regulations for the discipline and management of the establishment; the orderly conduct of the prisoners at chapel—approves the conduct of the temporary matron, and recommends the court to appoint her permanently; states, that they have examined the bills for bread, meat, coals, and incidental charges incurred in the quarter, together with the governor's and secretary's bills for salaries, and approved and certified the same, and adds as follows: It cannot have escaped the attention of the members of the court, that incessant efforts have been made, and are still making, to prejudice the public mind against the modern system of punishing criminals by labour on the Tread-wheel; that in addition to and in support of the general clamour excited against the application of that system of punishment to females, *a strong and pathetic appeal* has been made lately to the sympathies of the

British public, against the practice of subjecting women, *with infants at their breasts*, to this discipline; and two cases of alleged cruelty have been held up to public execration, in which the conduct of the magistrates of the bench at Guildford, and of the visiting magistrates of this House, has been reprobated, and the higher authorities called upon to interpose and liberate the sufferers from torture, and dismiss the committing magistrates from the future exercise of their functions; and a strong call has been made upon the surgeon attached to this establishment to give, through the medium of the public press, explanatory particulars, relative to the cases alluded to. Your Committee have not felt themselves amenable to calls made upon them through such channels; and having disapproved of former communications made by Mr. Jackson to the editor of a public print, have felt it their duty peremptorily to restrict him in this, and all future cases, from making any reply to calls of this nature, except from the Secretary of State, the Houses of Parliament, or this court, unless by the special authority of the visiting magistrates for the time being. They nevertheless have felt it their duty to inform themselves of the facts of the cases alluded to; and, for the guidance of their own future conduct in this respect, to examine Mr. Jackson, not only as to these particular cases, but to require his opinion as to the effects likely to result from the infliction of labour on the wheel upon women similarly circumstanced; and lest the minds of any members of the court should have been influenced by the high-coloured inflammatory misrepresentations thus exhibited to the public, or that the court should think it right to correct the false impressions the statements made in these prints are calculated to (and as it appears have for their object to) make upon the public mind, to the prejudice of this most efficient system of corrective punishment, they have prepared, and are ready to exhibit it, if it shall be the pleasure of the court to call for it, a Supplementary Report on the two cases, together with the opinion of the surgeon specially as to them, and generally as to the application of work on the wheel to women suckling infants. On their own behalf, however, they feel it due to them-

selves, and do not hesitate to declare, that the result of their inquiry has perfectly satisfied their own minds, that what has been done in the commitment and punishment of these women has not only been in strict conformity to the directions of the statute, but has violated no feeling of humanity, by which they are sensible it is their duty, as it is their inclination, to regulate their conduct in the execution of that statute; and so fully are they satisfied in this point, that, until an alteration* shall be made in the law to restrict them from so doing, they will continue to execute its provisions in all cases where (as they think of the present cases) nothing in the actual state of health or strength of the offenders would warrant the exercise of their discretion in mitigation of the severity they enjoin.

(Signed)

GEO. WALTON ONSLOW, } Visiting
H. DRUMMOND, } Magistrates.

[The substance of Mr. Jackson's letter, which has already been given, followed this Report. The Report was sent to most of the public papers. J. J.]

Letter, inserted in the Courier, of the 20th of January.

TREAD-MILL.

Tuesday, Jan. 20.

SIR,—I am *fully authorised* to declare, that that part of a statement which appeared in two Morning Papers of yesterday, declaring that the physician who accompanied a Surrey Magistrate to Brixton gaol, on Saturday the 10th instant, did put leading questions to the prisoners, and use expressions in their hearing, calculated to excite insubordination, IS TOTALLY AND

* [The people of England, after such a melancholy exhibition of merciless and obstinate ignorance, will take very good care that an alteration shall be made. Such things are past all mortal endurance.—J. J.]

UNEQUIVOCALLY UNTRUE. No leading questions whatever were put to the prisoners, and not one syllable uttered; no, not one thought conceived, which was at variance with the most rigid ideas of subordination and implicit obedience. *I send you my address.*

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

VERAX.

[This note appeared in the Morning Chronicle and British Press papers of the 21st of January. J. J.]

THE Morning Herald of the 20th of January, evidently alluding to Mr. Briscoe's cases, says, "We have received the communication of B. Y. as well as the cases, but they appeared in one of last Sunday's Papers. Had not that been the case, we would CERTAINLY have inserted A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER in this day's Morning Herald."

Article, copied into the Mirror of the 24th of January, and the Weekly Register of the 1st of February, from the 4th Part of the Percy Histories.

THE TREAD-MILL.

As the theory of prison discipline becomes better understood, the mode of punishing offenders will be less repugnant to feeling, though equally conducive to the great object, reformation. Among other improvements, *it has been discovered*, that to the indolent no punishment is so severe as hard labour; and modern engineers have been employed on the best means of compelling prisoners to work. For this purpose a machine has been invented, called the Tread-mill, which has obtained unprecedented *notoriety*, and been adopted in several prisons in London, and various parts of the country. It resembles the fabled punishment of Sisyphus, who was compelled to the interminable labour of rolling to the top of a hill a large stone, which no sooner reached the summit than it

fell down, and his labour was to be renewed. In the Tread-mill the prisoners ascend an endless flight of stairs, and by their combined weight acting upon a stepping board, produce the same effect that a stream of water does upon a water-wheel. Although the latter might very easily have suggested the Tread-mill, yet it was boasted as a new invention, until it was discovered to be but an adaptation of the Chinese Tread-wheel, which is used for the purpose of raising water.

The Tread-mill is not, however, new even as an instrument of prison discipline; but *has been used in England two centuries and a half ago*, though the circumstance has escaped all who have written on the subject. The Tread-mill of the sixteenth century had, indeed, an advantage over that of the present day; it was a combination of the Tread-mill and the Hand Crank-mill, which has been suggested as a substitute by Sir John Cox Hippisley, as less prejudicial to the health.

In Seymour's "Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster," a work, said to have been written by John Mottley, the son of Colonel Mottley, there is a description of this mill so explicit, that there was no necessity to adopt the idea from the Chinese, when we had it so much nearer home. "In the time of Queen Elizabeth," says the writer, "about the year 1570 and odd, one John Pain, a citizen, invented a mill to grind corn, which he got recommended to the Lord Mayor for the use of Bridewell. This mill had two conveniences; the one was, that it would grind a greater quantity, considerably, than other mills of that sort could do; and the other (which would render it useful to Bridewell) was, that the lame, either in arms or legs, might work at it, if they had but use of either; and, accordingly, these mills were termed hand-mills, or foot-mills.

"This mill he showed to the Lord Mayor, who saw it grind as much corn with the labour of two men, as they did then at Bridewell with ten—that is to say, two men with hands, or two men with feet, two bushels the hour. If they were lame in their arms, then they might earn their livings with their legs; if lame in their legs, then they might earn their livings with their arms.

One mill would grind twenty bushels of wheat in a day; so that by computation, it was reckoned, that one of these would supply a thousand persons."

From this account of the Tread-mill of the sixteenth century it will be seen, that, considering the rude state of the mechanical arts at the period, Mr. Pain must have been a mechanist of more than ordinary ingenuity.

Extracts, from the Medical Adviser of the 24th of January.

TREAD-MILL.

"MR. SUMNER came forward at the Surrey meeting of Magistrates with a violent frothing against the *Medical Adviser*, and concluded his abuse of it by stating that—he *never* read it!!! He called us "*inflammatory*," which brought us to examine our whole seven numbers; but although we searched and searched to see if any goblin had introduced in our pages an idea which is contrary to our principles, yet we found nothing! We however suspect that Mr. Holme Sumner so takes our observation, in which we think that 'if the Tread-mill, as it is used here, was adopted in France or Ireland, both magistrates and mill would share one common ruin.' This we stated from a knowledge of the physical organization of the inhabitants of France and Ireland; and we *repeat our opinion*. If this can be called '*inflammatory*,' we shall continue our blisters in the hope of curing this inveterate malady.

"With regard to the John Bull's report and comment upon that day's proceeding, we *rather think* that Mr. Holme Sumner did not allude to *his case*, but to the cases of *the women giving suck*, which were given in the *Medical Adviser*. But let us not quarrel about *which is to be first*, in a race about general benevolence, lest we might jostle on the way, and both fall short. However, we do not like to have our toes trodden upon.

"The reports of this meeting of the Surrey magistrates have been given very incorrectly. We were at the meeting, and can

therefore confidently state, that the following important omissions have taken place.

“ 1st. A gentleman (we believe Mr. Gray) stood up and said, that Dr. Good should not be again admitted to inspect Brixton Gaol !!!

“ 2d. The important *second circular* of Mr. Peel, calling for another report of the Tread-mills, was read.

“ 3d. Mr. Briscoe declared that Mr. Webbe*, the surgeon of Cold-bath Fields prison, told him ‘ the discipline of the Wheel was *bad for soul and body*.’

“ 4th. The gaoler stated, *that he had power* (this ought to be with the surgeon) to allow an increase of provision to prisoners ; and also stated that persons, after a month, fell off in flesh, and were obliged to have additional allowance (here’s fattening up for feast days!).

“ How these omissions could have taken place we are at a loss to know ; for they are of the very first importance. But there is no knowing to what mean artifices men will stoop, to carry a *party point*.

“ We have thus far dilated upon the Surrey meeting, *because* that meeting was got up, we are convinced, to blot out the effect our medical appeal against the females’ Tread-mill had made. But all those magistrates must go again to school, and become doctors, before they can oppose our medical opinion.”

“ ONSLOW AND DRUMMOND, SURREY MAGISTRATES, AND WOMEN-HATERS.

“ THESE men have signed a report on the Guildford Tread-mill, evidently got up to endeavour to counteract our statement of a *second* woman, *suckling*, being sent to their Tread-mill (for the account appeared in no other paper) : and how have they done it? Let us see, by an extract from that precious document of mere overbearing assertion.

* [See, also, this language SWORN to by Mrs. Hearn, as having been used in her presence by this surgeon. Mr. Peel will take note of this fact!—J. J.]

[This Report is already before the reader, two or three pages back. J. J.]

"1st. They have felt it their duty to restrict Mr. Jackson, *their own surgeon*, from communicating with the press!—Admirable inquisitors! *Let out no secrets!*

"2d. They nevertheless *thought it necessary* to examine Mr. Jackson, upon the effects of '*this most efficient system of corrective punishment*,' and they are ready, forsooth, to exhibit this—*their surgeon's report*—if the court should wish a report of the two cases of women, which we commented upon, and also this *their own surgeon's opinion*, upon the effect of the Tread-mill in general on WOMEN SUCKLING INFANTS!!! Good God—who is this surgeon? and what sort of men must they be, who could thus undertake to defend the practice of putting women SUCKLING INFANTS to the Tread-wheel?

"3d. They conclude, like Goldsmith's schoolmaster, with their own argument—and their only one: that *it is their determination to persist through thick and thin*, and, like Shylock, will have their pound of flesh, as long as the law will suffer them to have it. Can such men *like women*? O! Mr. Onslow and Mr. Drummond, as men we hope for you—but as magistrates we pity you."

Paragraph, from the Statesman of the 27th of January.

THE Tread-mill at Coldbath-fields is still unapplied to any productive labour. How the magistrates of Middlesex can justify such a waste of human strength, which might be applicable to so many useful purposes, we are at a loss to imagine.

Paragraph, from the Star Paper of the 29th of January, copied into most of the Daily and Weekly Papers.

AT Chelmsford Sessions the magistrates discussed the question, whether some respectable females of that town, disciples of Mrs. Fry, should be allowed to visit the prisoners in the gaol occa-

sionally; and on coming to a vote they *rescinded*, by a majority of 25 to 7, the permission which had been given by *three* of the *five* visiting magistrates.

Paragraph, from the Medical Adviser of the 31st of January.

THE *John Bull* of Jan. 25, states, that the pulses of the prisoners, as they descended from the Tread-mill, at Brixton, were examined, and that they ranged from 130 to 140 in a minute, and that one WOMAN'S was at 156! Yet the magistrates of Surrey say it is a fine healthful exercise; but perhaps, they understand the circulation of the blood better than we do, and therefore may be right. The world gives them full credit for knowing something about the *contraction of the heart*, although they may be blind to its effects.

On the 2d inst. a woman who worked at the Tread-mill, at Coldbath-fields, miscarried! O! Mr. Bevill! * * * *!

Article, from the John Bull Paper of the 1st of February.

IN the remarks which we have felt it our duty to make upon THE TREAD-MILL, we have frequently observed upon the unaccountable affection of the magistracy for the system. We have been puzzled at this novel, this almost *un-English pertinacity*; but even we, till now, were unaware of the extent to which they carry their extraordinary predilection.

It is known that the *adjourned meeting of the Surrey magistrates was conducted with all the secrecy of an Inquisition**; that Mr. Briscoe the magistrate was voted out of order for even meddling with the subject; that Dr. Good has been excluded from the prisons; and that even visiting magistrates are allowed only to put questions to prisoners *under the inspection of a turn-*

* [The constables at the doors actually refused the public admission, saying "it was merely a meeting for private business;" and it was only by knowing their right, and insisting upon it, then, that two or three individuals obtained admission. —J. J.]

hey; but it is not perhaps known, that in Middlesex still more important steps have been taken against those who have *dared to differ in opinion with the justices* as to the operation and effect of the Mill!

We leave the Surrey business now with pleasure, because we know that the proceedings of the meetings are where they ought to be, and we have full confidence in the humanity of him, under whose eye they now rest; satisfied as to the ultimate result, we would wish to attract the notice of that person to the following facts, relating to the Middlesex magistrates.

On Thursday, a meeting of the justices, amongst whom were Mr. Serjeant Sellon (who presided), Mr. Williams, Mr. Bevill, and Mr. Ballantine, assembled at Coldbath-fields House of Correction, and made inquiries, as they had been moved to do, respecting the Tread-mill and its effects.

At about ten o'clock in the morning, Mr. Williams (who has been Sheriff) went into that part of the prison which was under the superintendence of Mrs. Hearn, and made inquiries upon the subject. Mrs. Hearn told him, that “it was so dreadful and indecent, that it was even miserable to stand by and witness the labour of the women—that it caused such dreadful pains in the side, that *most of the women were compelled to hold on, with one hand only, while they pressed the other against their sides above the hips*—that during this season, when the exercise heats the body and causes profuse perspiration, the cold wind blowing against their legs was a cause of universal complaint.”

Several of the women themselves told Mr. Williams that they could get no sleep at nights from the continued pains in their bones, and in short there was but one feeling, one sentiment expressed.

It may be said, as we know it has been said—well, what then? —Prisons were never intended to be pleasant places, and the Tread-mill never was meant to be a relaxation—no, certainly not—but the law never contemplates an undue measure of punishment, and hard labour for women must mean such labour as will fully and actively employ them, painfully ONLY AS FAR AS THE

RESTRAINT GOES, but most decidedly not to injure the health, destroy the constitution, or DEGRADE THE SUBJECT.

Be this as it may, the justices of Middlesex, as well as those of Surrey, not content with having these Wheels, and working the poor unfortunate women from morning till night, fulminate their displeasure, and shower down their anger upon every man, woman, or child, not only who deny that it is a fair punishment—but who presume to question its being extremely salutary, and rather agreeable than otherwise.

At half-past twelve o'clock, about two hours after the interview between Mr. Williams and Mrs. Hearn, the latter was sent for by the justices; when, after some questions had been asked her about the yards'-woman having exchanged some tobacco with a fellow-prisoner for a *piece of bacon*, of which exchange Mrs. Hearn was totally ignorant, she was reprimanded for not searching the prisoners when they first came under her care—in an hour after she was again sent for, and told *that the magistrates had no further need of her services*. She asked why she was dismissed. Mr. Ballantine said, “We shall enter into *no details*, we have discussed that before.”

By two o'clock she was paid her wages, and one week's pay in advance, and turned out of her place at a moment's warning! The salary was 52*l.* per annum.

This individual was recommended to fill a superintending situation in Clerkenwell Prison, by Mrs. Fry; and, only four months ago, she received the highest praises from a magistrate, who spoke for himself and fellows; but since that period *she has spoken the truth about the Tread-mill!*

Mr. Ballantine, who dismissed her, some time ago asked if Miss Steele (a friend of Mrs. Fry's) “made the women dissatisfied with the Wheel?”—whether she “gave them money?” He was answered—no; but when they came off Miss Steele *taught them to read* (a piece of quackery and humbug, which we must take leave to sneer at, *en passant*), and that she had occasionally given the sick women sixpence or a shilling to buy tea with.

Miss Steele's principal object (and a praiseworthy one too) in

visiting the prison, was to procure asylums for the women when discharged; and Mrs. Hearn says, that she reckons about THIRTY females so provided for, SINCE LAST MARCH! Will it be believed, that the exclusion of Miss Steele from the prison was agitated, and that she knew of it, and unwilling to be refused suspended her visits! *An order for her admission is now ready for her.*

It is not only at Coldbath-fields, that the *secret system* is carried on—at Chelmsford, where there is a Tread-mill, two benevolent females have been excluded from the jail—the horrid cruelties of the toil upon women will not bear the light.

One woman, a labourer on the Coldbath-fields Mill, has just *miscarried*.

Another, on the 17th of last month, caught her foot in the Wheel, and hung suspended by it; she has been in the Infirmary ever since.

Is all this to be borne?—is all this to be endured?—here we have a *poor woman of irreproachable character, turned pennyless into the world, for saying exactly what the surgeon of the same prison has said, that the “Tread-mill is bad for body and mind.”* To be sure he has been allowed to unsay it, but she had not even the option afforded her; and, pressed as we are for room to-day, we could not hesitate bringing to light a new instance of the tender affection of the justices for the Mill, and THEIR SAVAGE RAGE AGAINST ALL ITS OPPONENTS!!!

Paragraph, from the Surrey and Sussex County Chronicle.

GUILDFORD.

THE *John Bull* paper, with all its faults, is not always wrong. From whatever motives it speaks out and well upon the conduct of certain magistrates, and *their darling hobby the Tread-mill*. It appears that on Thursday last, Mrs. Hearn, the superintendant of the female Tread-mill at the Coldbath-fields prison, was paid her wages, and one week's pay in advance, and *turned out of her*

place at a moment's warning. Her salary was 52*l.* a year. This woman was recommended by Miss Steele (a friend of Mrs. Fry), and it is said that she has been too busy in circulating her opinion upon the Tread-mill, as a punishment for women. John Bull is manfully indignant at all this, and further says—"It is not only at Coldbath-fields the secret system is carried on—at Chelmsford," &c. [See last page. J. J.]

Extract, from the Fifth Report of the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline, &c. just published.

THE TREAD-WHEEL.

"THE merits of the Tread-wheel, as an instrument of prison-labour, have, during the past year, excited considerable interest. Objections of a very serious nature have been urged against it by a magistrate, whose labours for the improvement of prison discipline, during a long and honourable life, entitle his sentiments to great attention. Highly as the Committee appreciate the motives which animate the benevolent author, they do not concur with the reasoning contained in a recent work on prison labour*; the object of which publication is to show that the ordinary discipline of the Tread-wheel is an unsafe, unhealthy, and *degrading* punishment. The Committee believe that they were the first to recognise the excellence, and advocate the introduction of this description of prison labour; and, after mature consideration, they can discover nothing in the proper use and moderate application of this punishment, that is irreconcilable with the feelings of humanity, and those principles of prison discipline which it is the object of this society to recommend.

"From documents which have been laid before Parliament, the healthiness of the Tread-wheel exercise is satisfactorily proved. The opinions of the medical officers in attendance at the various prisons concur in declaring that the general health of the pri-

* Correspondence on Prison Labour, by Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart.

soners has in no degree suffered injury by the exercise; but that, on the contrary, the labour has in this respect been productive of considerable benefit. Recent inquiries which the Committee have instituted confirm these testimonies; and against evidence so conclusive, a judgment, formed principally from abstract reasoning, and unsupported by that peculiar experience which the daily observations of a prison-surgeon affords, can have but little weight.

“The mischievous consequences of which it is stated that the Tread-wheel is the source attach not so much to the nature of the labour, as to the degree in which it may be enforced. There is nothing painful in the simple position of the body on the wheel; and the machinery may be made to revolve so slowly, as scarcely to form a punishment; while, on the other hand, it cannot be denied, that by excessive application it may be rendered an instrument of an *unjustifiable rigour*. The main question, then, on which the safety and expediency of the Tread-wheel depends, is simply this—can the degree of labour be so regulated as to be ascertained without difficulty, and restrained, at all times, within safe limits? This consideration has occupied the particular attention of the Committee; and they have the pleasure to state that these very desirable objects can be accomplished.

“It occurred to the Committee, on pursuing their inquiries upon this subject, that as the several details in the management of the Tread-wheel are proportionate in their variations, they might conveniently be laid down upon a sliding scale. The idea has been carried into execution in a very ingenious manner by Mr. Bate, mathematical instrument-maker to the Board of Excise, who has constructed an instrument, by the simple inspection of which the rate of labour can at all times be ascertained. The utility of this invention is obvious: it at once enables the magistrate, or the governor of a prison, at which a Tread-wheel is in operation, to secure precision of management, and by affording an accurate measure applicable in all cases, may prevent the inadvertent excess or intentional abuse of this species of punishment.

“It is PERFECTLY TRUE that the labour of the Tread-wheel,

unless it be regulated with GREAT CARE, may, to use *the language of an able and experienced governor of a prison* (in a recent communication with the Committee) “BECOME, IN THE HANDS OF SOME, AN ENGINE OF TERRIBLE OPPRESSION.” In order to show the importance of further attention to this subject, and *the great confusion* that at present prevails in the manner of enforcing the labour, the Committee refer to the table in the Appendix, founded on returns recently received, showing the *great varieties of punishment* inflicted; a bare reference to which will prove the necessity for adopting some uniformity of practice, in order to equalize the administration of prison discipline. The present inequality, it will be perceived, arises not only from the varied degrees of velocity, and the fluctuating proportions of working and resting prisoners at each wheel, but also from the difference in the working hours of summer and winter; a difference which amounts in the daily rate of labour at some prisons to at least *fifty per cent.* By an adherence, however, to the following regulations, and with the aid of the scale to which the Committee have referred, the Tread-mills in various prisons, even those on the most diversified principles of construction, may be conducted upon one uniform and certain system of operation throughout the kingdom.

“1. Every Tread-wheel should be provided with a ‘regulator,’ by which its rate of revolution may at all times be restrained within safe limits.

“2. To the Tread-wheel should also be affixed ‘a dial-register,’ on reference to which the rate of labour may at any time be accurately ascertained.

“3. The daily rate of labour should in no case exceed 12,000 * feet in ascent.

“4. Care should be taken to apportion the diet to the degree of labour enforced.

“The Committee are aware that the observance of these rules

* [A Correspondent in the Old Monthly Magazine for March, in objecting to the Tread-wheel Labour, observes that 12,000 feet of ascent is equal to an ascent of Mont Blanc; the Valley of Chamouni being 3000 feet above the level of the sea.—J. J.]

will not remove the objections which MANY RESPECTABLE PERSONS entertain against the use of the Tread-wheel: they regard the punishment, under any circumstances, as too rigorous. In the opinion, however, of the committee, the primary feature in the character of 'hard labour' should be severity; not equal, indeed, to every description of criminals, not irreconcilable with the feelings of humanity, nor one degree beyond that which the public interests justify and the reformation of the criminal demands; yet a severity that shall make those who have violated justice feel the penalties of law, and the consequences of guilt. The committee believe that for a certain class of offenders the Tread-wheel is, under proper regulation, a punishment of this description, and that no House of Correction should be without it. The great proportion of offenders committed to such places of confinement are sentenced to 'hard labour,' and but for short periods of imprisonment, during which the Tread-wheel is an appropriate punishment. But IN BEARING THIS TESTIMONY IN ITS FAVOUR, THEY FEEL NO HESITATION IN DECLARING THEIR OPINION THAT ITS VALUE MAY BE OVER-RATED, AND ITS DISCIPLINE MISAPPLIED. Notwithstanding the acknowledged excellencies of the Tread-wheel, it ought not to form the *punishment* of those whom the law sentences to imprisonment only. To inflict it on this description of prisoners would be to change the character of their sentence. To SUBJECT, ALSO, CONVICTS COMMITTED FOR LONG PERIODS OF IMPRISONMENT, DAY AFTER DAY, TO THIS DISCIPLINE, IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE VIEWS OF THE BEST WRITERS ON THE PENITENTIARY SYSTEM, and at variance with those principles of prison management which Howard never ceased to inculcate, and to realize which the enlightened exertions of Sir George Paul and other eminent magistrates have been zealously directed.

"The practice of employing females at the Tread-wheel is, in the opinion of many benevolent persons, in no case justifiable. In this sentiment the committee do not concur. Upon hardened offenders committed to Houses of Correction—such as the law has truly designated 'idle and disorderly'—the labour is productive of

excellent effects *, and, if superintended by a careful matron, may be safely administered ; but the general employment of females at the Tread-wheel is liable to serious objections ; and as there are, even in the absence of prison trades, other kinds of labour to be found for women in a gaol that are congenial to the habits of their sex, the practice of thus employing this class of offenders is not justified by necessity.

“ But let the punishment of Tread-wheel labour be ever so carefully regulated, there is one consideration which ought not to be forgotten, and to which the committee cannot too earnestly entreat attention. Punishments, however salutary, cannot alone be expected to reclaim ; nor do they, under any form, diminish the necessity for those moral and religious services, without which all plans of prison discipline will prove inefficient, and the formation and recovery of good character become alike utterly hopeless. The committee have been led to offer these remarks, because it has appeared to them that in some prisons BY FAR TOO MUCH DEPENDENCE HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE DETERRING INFLUENCE OF TREAD-WHEEL LABOUR, while but little earnestness has been evinced to take advantage of that subjection of mind † which the punishment has a tendency to produce, and which might be available for the purposes of religious impressions and permanent improvement. There is nothing in the character of Tread-wheel labour that may not be made to strengthen the power of religion and extend the influence of her ministers over the mind and feelings of a prisoner ; and it would be indeed to be deplored, were the introduction of hard labour to be considered as superseding or weakening the necessity for their labours, without which the great objects of prison discipline can never be attained.”

[The *Times* of the 7th, and the *Courier* of the 9th of February, in giving this extract, express a hope, “ THAT IT WILL SERVE TO EXCITE RATHER THAN SATISFY CURIOSITY.” J. J.]

* [This is a total mistake, and is proved to be such in almost every page of every book written on the Tread-wheel.—J. J.]

† [Sad, sad mistake. *Exacerbation* is the sole word that would rectify it.—J. J.]

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN this work was commenced, and till within a very short time, it was the intention of the writer to have given, in this place, a complete summing up and comparative review of the controversial matter contained in the Appendix. The Tread-wheel question has come before Parliament so early in the Session, that to keep pace with it, it has been found indispensable to forego the original intention;—a few hasty remarks are all that there is time to throw together in this place.

Mr. Dent, Mr. Headlam, Mr. Hutchinson, and the Prison Discipline Society, are the chief defenders of the new discipline, who have published, otherwise than in the periodical publications of the day: of these, Mr. Dent's, Mr. Headlam's, and the Society's defences are incorporated in the Appendix. Mr. Hutchinson's tract cannot be obtained, as it was only privately circulated. Sir John Hippisley's and Dr. Good's objections are, in substance, placed by their side.

If, in such a mass of matter, so rapidly put together, there be some trifling incorrectness, it will be pardoned, and rectified, by the reader. The repetition of quotations is avoided as much as possible, though it was found to be impracticable not to introduce a second time, occasional paragraphs, inasmuch as they were sometimes entirely mixed up with the context.

The "description of the Tread-mill," published by the Prison Discipline Society, together with their fourth and fifth reports, have furnished all the data for the calculations, &c. scattered through the volume—changes that affect these data in an incon-

siderable degree, have, probably, already taken place, here and there; but they have not been of a kind or quality to affect the main reasonings they furnish.

The *change* most agreeable to the opponents of the discipline, is the change in the sentiments of the Prison Discipline Society; not that it is a change by which others are to abide, or any ways guide their conduct, but because it shows the doubt on the subject, in the breasts of those who *once did not doubt*. That this Society have *totally changed opinions* on more topics than one, may suggest the propriety of a *very cautious* deference being paid to the opinions they promulgate.

In their fourth report, the Committee state, that "against the principle of allowing convicted prisoners, *under any circumstances*, a share of their earnings, they entertain strong objections. The practice," they remark, "is contended for on two grounds; its moral influence in the encouragement of industry, and the seasonable aid which reserved earnings afford at the trying period of a prisoner's discharge." They allow "*there can be NO DOUBT but that the prospect of pecuniary reward, though distant, will stimulate a criminal to increased exertion, and may consequently assist in the formation of industrious habits*; but it is necessary, in a prison, not only that these habits should be formed, but formed from proper motives * and on right principles."

In their second report, a doctrine *totally the reverse* of the above is inculcated, and "they conceive that ALLOWANCE SHOULD BE MADE TO PRISONERS, SUFFICIENT TO STIMULATE THE EXERTIONS OF THEIR INDUSTRY, YET NOT SO LARGE AS TO COUNTERACT THE DREAD OF IMPRISONMENT."

This society too, in their "Description of the Tread-mill," (page 26) designate Mr. Dent's reply to Sir John Hippisley as *a most satisfactory defence* of the Tread-wheel: so satisfactory, indeed, as to supersede the necessity of any extended remarks of their own. Perhaps a more incomplete reply was never put forth than that which Mr. Dent has given to the world. The non-occur-

* What motives do they leave to perform this reformation?

rence of casualties, &c. at Northallerton, is *the burden of its song*, and this non-occurrence in one place is urged as if it proved a like non-occurrence in every place. The question is not grappled with in a twentieth part of its bearings, and the following tremendous blunders form its conspicuous and characteristic pretensions—"NO GREATER FORCE CAN BE EXERTED THAN IS NECESSARY FOR WALKING." "THE WHOLE LENGTH OF THE FOOT IS AS OFTEN BROUGHT IN CONTACT WITH THE TREADLE AS THE TOES ALONE ARE."

This well-meaning society, in addition to the multitude of contradictions in which they have involved themselves, support the former of these two positions, asserting on page 26 of their tract, that "weight, not *force*, is required of the labourer;" and on page 29 giving a note, which will be found on page 122 of the Introduction, in which the amount of exertion at the Tread-wheel being taken as at 10, the severest labour they compare with it bears to this 10 the relative proportion of only $5\frac{3}{4}$.

In glancing over the controversy, it will be seen that, with the exception of the British Critics, and Eclectic Reviewers, those who have mingled in it have kept within the due bounds of allowable discussion. They have not been disrespectful to the distinguished Baronet who opposes the Tread-wheel, because it is impossible for any one, without injustice, and doing injury to his own character, to treat such a man with disrespect. The Eclectic reviewers have been already noticed. The British Critics, who have proved so simple as to call the matter, collected by Sir John Hippisley, at great sacrifice of time, comfort, and property, "STUFF;" and so woefully out of reckoning, as to state that Dr. Good had *never* been in a House of Correction above twice in his life*, when the Doctor is the very person who drew up the dietary table of the Coldbath-fields prison; and has written on the diseases of gaols; &c. &c., these flippant critics, who seem well disposed to dismiss whatever good reputation they may possess, will very appro-

* "Having, in an early period of my life, been appointed the Medical Superintendent of the Middlesex House of Correction, &c."—*Good's Supplementary Note.*

priately be reminded of their language respecting Sir John Hippisley, in May, 1816, when reviewing his speech in the House of Commons, on the Catholic Question :

“ If any additional argument were wanting to persuade us of the utter hopelessness of any attempt to conciliate the Irish hierarchy, and their numerous supporters, it would be the marked ingratitude which they have evinced towards a man, who has dedicated his time, his abilities, and his influence to their service. The labours of many years have been exerted in their cause, nor is there any man, not even Mr. Grattan excepted, to whom the Catholics of Ireland owe a larger debt of gratitude and respect than to Sir J. C. Hippisley ! There is no man who has so effectually smoothed the way to the reception of their cause, or who has brought so clear and extended a knowledge of the subject to its support. The only return that he has met with for the anxious exertions of a whole life, is obloquy and abuse. ‘ *Illa est agricolæ messis iniqua suæ.*’ If this is their mode of treating their friends, what mercy are their opponents to expect ?” Again,

“ As the Honourable Baronet is, at this very time, on the point of renewing his motion, this speech before us deserves our most earnest attention. It deserves our attention, as it comes from a man who is now perhaps the only Member of the British Parliament who is thoroughly acquainted with all the bearings of this important question, and with all its numerous and intricate details. He has always brought to its discussion A FUND OF DEEP AND ACCURATE INFORMATION, which forms a striking contrast with the frothy and unsubstantial verbiage of ignorant politicians or declamatory sciolists.—‘ *Talis cum sit, utinam noster esset.*’ ” Again,

“ For the respect to which he is justly entitled at their hands, he has met with obloquy : for eulogy, abuse : and for gratitude the most virulent and personal hostility. This is not the treatment he would have met from the Church of England, or her Ministers : they, though disagreeing with him in his ulterior views, are ever willing to treat HIS LEARNING with respect ; HIS CONSISTENCY with esteem ; and to view every effort which he may

make to throw light upon the subject before us with the candour which it deserves."

The lesson read these gentlemen will be sufficiently severe to expiate the additional impertinence of which they were guilty, in *affecting* not to know who Dr. Good is:—"a certain Dr. Good" certainly would sound magnificently in any Reviewer's mouth; but in the mouth of critics, who in a former volume (xxvi. p. 489.) reviewed in terms of extreme eulogy his "translation from the original Hebrew of the Song of Songs," it sounds contradictory and absurd. It is a mark of more than ordinary indiscretion to speak slightly, *in one breath*, of two persons of whom, at another time, we have spoken with the highest admiration and respect.

Feb. 28.

March 2d.

THE following "Copy of Correspondence," &c. ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, the 20th February, 1824, has this moment been put into the hands of the writer of these pages:

Copy of a Letter, addressed by Mr. Secretary Peel's directions, to the Visiting Magistrates of the several Gaols and Houses of Correction where Tread-wheels have been established, dated Whitehall, Dec. 24, 1823.

Whitehall, Dec. 24, 1823.

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Peel to request that, after consulting with the surgeon of the prison, you will inform him, in the week of the next Quarter Sessions, whether any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill, in * * * *
at * * * * I have, &c.

(Signed) H. HOBHOUSE.

The Visiting Magistrates.

Communications have been received from

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| (1.)—Bedford. | (13.)—Middlesex. |
| (2.)—Berks. | (14.)—Norfolk. |
| (3.)—Bucks. | (15.)—Pembroke. |
| (4.)—Cambridge. | (16.)—Somerset. |
| (5.)—Devon. | (17.)—Suffolk. |
| (6.)—Dorset. | (18.)—Surrey. |
| (7.)—Durham. | (19.)—Sussex. |
| (8.)—Essex. | (20.)—Yorkshire,— |
| (9.)—Gloucestershire. | 1. North Riding. |
| (10.)—Herts. | 2. West Riding. |
| (11.)—Lancaster. | (21.)—Appendix ; Surrey. |
| (12.)—Leicester. | |

Copy of Correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Visiting Magistrates of Prisons in which the Tread-wheel has been introduced.

(1.)—BEDFORD.

Hitchin, 17 January, 1824.

SIR,—In answer to the application contained in Mr. Hobhouse's letter of the 26th of December, addressed to the visiting magistrates of Bedfordshire, for information, whether any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill, in the house of correction at Bedford, I have the honour to transmit the report of the surgeon, and to inform you, that the visiting magistrates have, throughout the last year, sedulously attended to the effect of the Tread-mill on the prisoners, and that most of the other magistrates have occasionally, and some of them frequently, visited the House of Correction with the same view, and that as well the visiting magistrates as all the other magistrates who attended the last quarter sessions, judging as well from THE REPORTS OF THE CHAPLAIN, the surgeon and the keeper, as from their own inspection and observation, are unanimously of opinion, that no prisoner has experienced any bodily mischief by working on this Tread-mill, nor

ANY OTHER INCONVENIENCE THAN SUCH AS IS THE NECESSARY CONSEQUENCE OF ANY HARD LABOUR. On the contrary, it is our opinion, that THE HEALTH OF THE PRISONERS HAS BEEN BETTER THAN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF THEY HAD CONTINUED IN A STATE of *idleness*, and that this employment has tended very much to produce order and regularity amongst them.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) W. WILSHERE, Chairman.

The Right Hon. Robert Peel.

Bedfordshire New House of Correction, Jan. 14, 1824.

GENTLEMEN,—Having paid particular attention to the operation of the Tread-mill during the preceding year upon the health of the prisoners employed, I am fully satisfied that no prisoner has sustained any bodily mischief; on the contrary, I am of opinion, that the general health of the prisoners has been QUITE AS GOOD AS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WITHOUT ANY EMPLOYMENT WHATEVER.

(Signed) C. SHORT, Surgeon.

To the Visiting Magistrates for the
County of Bedford.

(2.)—BERKS.

Reading, 12 January, 1824.

SIR,—In reply to your inquiry communicated to us in Mr. Hobhouse's letter of the 26th ult. we have no hesitation whatever in reporting (*after consulting with the surgeon attending the gaol and House of Correction*) that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill here, but that, on the contrary, we consider the labour beneficial to the general health of the prisoners.

We have, &c.

(Signed) ROBT. HARRIS,
W. MORENT,

Visiting Magistrates of the gaol and House
of Correction at Reading.

To the Right Hon. Robert Peel.

(3.)—BUCKS.

Aylesbury, 17 January, 1824.

SIR,—I am directed by the visiting justices, in reply to your letter of the 26th ult. to state, that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working in the Tread-mill, in the House of Correction here; and I am further directed by them to subjoin a copy of the report of the surgeon of the prison, made to them immediately previous to the present quarter sessions. The magistrates ordered such alterations as were necessary immediately to be made, and which have effectually guarded against any repetition of THE ACCIDENTS therein alluded to.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. TINDAL, Clerk of the Peace for Bucks.
Henry Hobhouse, Esq.

January 10, 1824.

*To the Visiting Magistrates of the Gaol and House of Correction
at Aylesbury, in the County of Buckingham.*

HAVING received your commands for a certificate of the health of the prisoners, I hereby certify, that I have examined 157 prisoners, and find them *in general* healthy, except six in the infirmary, who are in a state of convalescence, and that they are free from any epidemical disease, which I attribute to the cleanliness, and to a just application of exercise on the Tread-mill, as directed by myself and the gaoler. I have invariably found the employment on the Wheel to be beneficial, inasmuch as it has appeared to me that the health of the prisoners has been materially increased by it.

I hereby certify, That I have examined every prisoner on his entrance into the prison; also examined the whole throughout the gaol and House of Correction, regularly twice in every week, as required by the late Act of Parliament, as well as being called once, twice, or three times in the day, for the examination of prisoners before they are admitted into the gaol; and that I have prescribed and sent medicines for 196 PRISONERS since the commencement of the late Act.

(Signed) WILL. HAYWARD, surgeon.

Since I presented the foregoing report, a letter has been put into my hands from the Secretary of State, which I beg leave to answer, by stating, that the prisoners have not experienced any bodily inconvenience by working at the Tread-mill; and that what FEW ACCIDENTS have arisen have been from their own neglect.

(Signed) WILL. HAYWARD, surgeon.

(4.)—CAMBRIDGE.

Cambridge, January 22, 1824.

SIR,—In compliance with the directions of the visiting magistrates of the county gaol of Cambridge, I have the honour to reply to your letter of the 26th ultimo, for the information of Mr. Secretary Peel, that the Tread-mill in this prison has not been productive of the slightest bodily mischief, or inconvenience to the prisoners; but on the contrary, its use has been followed by the most beneficial results as a healthful exercise.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) JOHN OKES, Surgeon to the County Gaol.
Henry Hobhouse, Esq.

(5.)—DEVON.

Castle of Exeter, Jan. 17, 1824.

SIR,—I beg leave, as chairman of the Epiphany quarter Sessions for Devon, which commenced on the 13th instant, to transmit to you the enclosed documents in answer to your letter of the 26th ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ED. P. LYON.
H. Hobhouse, Esq.

SIR,—I beg leave to state that not any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill in the House of Correction of the county of Devon.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SAMUEL LUSCOMBE, surgeon.
E.P. Lyon, Esq. Chairman, Quarter Sessions.

Exeter, 17 January, 1824.

I do hereby certify, that I have diligently attended to the operation of the Tread-mill in the House of Correction for the county of Devon, ever since its erection in July 1822, and that I have never known any bodily mischief or inconvenience to have been experienced by any of the prisoners from their labour on the Tread-wheels.

(Signed) WM. COLE,

Keeper, Devon County Gaol and House of Correction.

E. P. Lyon, Esq. Chairmau of the Devon Quarter
Sessions, and Visiting Magistrate.

(6.)—DORSET.

SIR,—As the senior visiting justice, I am deputed by my colleagues to *answer the honour* of your letter of Dec. 26th last, and “to inform you whether the surgeon of the prison at Dorchester conceives any bodily mischief or inconvenience to have occurred by the prisoners working on the Tread Mill.” I shall copy the letter to the chairman of our sessions, from Mr. Arden, our gaol surgeon.

Dorchester, 12th January, 1824.

SIR,—I HAVE to inform you, that none of the prisoners in the gaol and House of Correction at Dorchester, sentenced to work at the Tread-mill, and *whose state of health has been such as to enable them to work at the Tread-mill*, have suffered any inconvenience or received any bodily mischief from that labour.

H. C. ARDEN, Surgeon to the gaol.

C. B. Wollaston, Esq. &c. &c. &c.

SINCE the sessions I have had a conversation with the surgeon, and find that the proportion of Tread-mill work applied to the females, is much *less* than that which is applied to the male prisoners, and that whenever he has observed a tendency to injury, he takes such females wholly off the Wheel, till in a more perfect

state of health. Thus no inconvenience whatsoever has been experienced, THOUGH OBTAINED BY RENDERING THE PUNISHMENT VERY TRIFLING.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. M. PITT.

H. Hobhouse, Esq.

(7.)—DURHAM.

Durham, 10 January, 1824.

SIR,—THE visiting magistrates of the gaol at Durham transmit the inclosed certificate as the opinion of a highly respectable surgeon, regularly appointed to that establishment. The same is in perfect union with their sentiments.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

EDW. DAVISON,

W. N. DARNELL.

Durham, January 7, 1824.

I CERTIFY that I have attended the prisoners employed upon the Tread-mill, Durham, since its erection, during which period not the slightest injury or mischief has been experienced from its employment.

(Signed)

WM. GREEN, surgeon.

(8.)—ESSEX.

Chelmsford, 15 January, 1824.

THE Visitors of the gaol and House of Correction at Chelmsford beg leave to inform Mr. Secretary Peel, in answer to Mr. Hobhouse's letter of the 26th of December last, that, *after consulting with the surgeon* of the prison, they *are not aware* that any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill in the House of Correction at Chelmsford.

The Right Hon. Robert Peel.

(9.)—GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Gloucester Penitentiary House,

January 13, 1824.

SIR,—So far from any bodily mischief or inconvenience having arisen to the prisoners, in the Penitentiary House at Gloucester, from working on the Tread-mill, our prison has never at any time been so free from illness of every sort as since its erection, and we have every reason to consider the exercise as most eminently conducive to health.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

WM. GOODRICH, } Visiting
D. J. NIBLETT, } Magistrates.

The Right Hon. Robert Peel.

House of Correction, Horsley, January 23, 1824.

SIR,—In answer to a letter received from Mr. Hobhouse respecting the Tread-mill at Horsley gaol, we, the visiting magistrates, beg leave to say, that we have consulted with our *medical gentleman* who attends the gaol, and that the labour has been invariably attended with salutary effects, nor has any instance of injury to the bodies or legs of the men arisen from their employment.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

PETER HAWKER, Clk. } Visiting
ROBERT KINGSCOTE, } Magistrates.

I do hereby certify, that the prisoners in the House of Correction at Horsley, in the county of Gloucester, are in general healthy and free from ANY EPIDEMICAL DISEASE, which I attribute to the employment on the Tread-mill, affording much exercise, and conducive to their general health, without any inconvenience to the bodies or limbs of the prisoners.

(Signed)

RICHD. FILKIN, surgeon.

Right Hon. Robert Peel.

(10.)—HERTS.

WE, the undersigned visiting magistrates of the House of Correction for the county of Hertford, *have consulted with the surgeon* of the prison, and do hereby certify, that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill in the said House of Correction.

(Signed)	H. RIDLEY,	EDWD. BOURCHIER,
	THOS. LLOYD,	CULLING SMITH,
	THOS. DANIELL,	THOMAS BYRON,
	ABEL SMITH,	W. BAKER.

Hertford, January 12, 1824.

(11.)—LANCASTER.

Lancaster, 13th January, 1824.

SIR,—In reply to the letter addressed by Mr. Hobhouse, 26th of December last, to the visiting magistrates of the county gaol of Lancaster, we beg leave to say, that *after consulting with the surgeon* of the prison, we do not find that any mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working at the Tread-mill.

The surgeon further states, that since the application of a regulator fan to the wheel, the labour has been so much reduced, and the rate so regulated, that *he* has not found it necessary, even to exempt PERSONS WHO WERE SLIGHTLY RUPTURED, AND WEARING TRUSSES, from the labour of the Tread-wheel.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

EDMUND HORNBY,	RICHD. ATKINSON,
WM. WILSON CARUS WILSON,	JOSA. HINDE.
JOHN BRADSHAW,	

The Right Hon. Robert Peel,
Secretary of State, &c. &c. &c. Home Department.

(12.)—LEICESTER.

Leicester, 7th February, 1824.

SIR,—We have had the honour of receiving a letter from Mr. Hobhouse of the 27th of January, and are sorry that an omission in delivering to us his former letter of the 26th of December should have caused so much delay in replying to it.

In answer to the inquiry respecting the effect of the Tread-wheel in our House of Correction upon the prisoners employed thereat, we have to communicate, that it has been in constant work more than four years; and that no person employed upon it, who is in tolerable health, appears to sustain any injurious effects whatever from the proper application of the labour.

The Wheel was originally one of 20 feet diameter, and the parties were *principally* worked in the inside of it.

At that time, two fatal accidents occurred from the perverseness and wilful misconduct of the men. JOSEPH SUMNER WAS KILLED IN 1821, and THOMAS SAUNDERS IN JULY 1823, and THREE OTHER PERSONS WERE SLIGHTLY BRUISED. The Wheel has been recently altered to one of five feet diameter, and of the usual construction, and we *trust*, that all chance of future accidents is removed.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

W. HEYRICK,

M. BABINGTON,

J. D. BURNABY,

} Visiting
Magistrates.

I beg leave to add my concurring testimony to the above statement.

(Signed)

JOHN NEDHAM, surgeon.

(13.)—MIDDLESEX.

Sessions House, Clerkenwell, 29th of January, 1824.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the 26th of December last, requesting, that after consulting with the surgeon of the prison,

we should inform Mr. Secretary Peel whether any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill in the House of Correction in Coldbath-fields, we have the honour to state, that we have consulted with the surgeon, who reports, that he knows of no mischief or inconvenience having been experienced by such prisoners, *except in one instance*, eighteen months since, when, from *the breaking of a part of the machinery*, two or three boys slightly *sprained their ankles*; and that A FEW NIGHTS SINCE A WOMAN MISCARRIED, who HAD WORKED UPON THE MILL DURING THE PREVIOUS DAY. She had made no complaint, nor was it known that she was pregnant, otherwise she would not have been put to that sort of labour.

I am, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS STERLING,

Clerk to the Visiting Justices.

To H. Hobhouse, Esq. &c. &c. &c.

January 8, 1824.

GENTLEMEN,—In answer to your inquiry, whether any bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill in the House of Correction, Cold-bath Fields, I have to state, that I know of no mischief or inconvenience having been experienced by such prisoners, except in one instance, eighteen months since, when, from *the breaking of a part of the machinery*, two or three boys slightly *sprained their ankles*; a few nights since, *a woman miscarried who had worked upon the Mill during the previous day*; she made no complaint, nor was it known that she was pregnant, otherwise she would not have been put to that sort of labour.

(Signed) THOMAS WEBBE, Surgeon.

To the Gentlemen of the Committee,
House of Correction, Cold-bath Fields.

(14.)—NORFOLK.

Swaffham, January 12, 1824.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the 26th of December, 1823, on the subject of the Tread-mill, we, the visiting magistrates of the Swaffham Bridewell, beg leave to state, that *we have consulted with the surgeon* of the prison (who has attended in that capacity for many years), and he says, that so far from any inconvenience having been experienced by the prisoners working at the Tread-mill, he thinks the exercise most salutary.

In this opinion we also perfectly coincide; and the fact is, there has not been so little sickness in the prison for many years as since the Tread-mill has been in use.

With regard to bodily mischief, it is necessary to state, that **ONE MAN HAS LOST HIS LIFE BY THE TREAD-MILL**; and we think we cannot explain that accident better than by copying a paragraph which was inserted by the visiting magistrates in the Norwich newspapers, and which contains a faithful account:—

“A most unfortunate accident happened in the Swaffham Gaol on Saturday last. As William Burton Peeling, who had been working at the Tread-wheel, was resting himself in the usual routine off the Wheel, he very incautiously kneeled down by the partition which separates one working class from another, for the purpose of conversing with the persons in the next division, (which is contrary to the orders of the prison) and it is supposed, that in drawing himself back he lifted his head within the Wheel, which drew him in, and *crushed him to death in an instant*. It appears by the evidence upon the coroner's inquest, that he had been holding a conversation two or three times before on that morning, in the same manner, with persons of the adjoining class. The coroner's inquest was taken the next day, and the unanimous verdict of the jury was as follows—William Burton Peeling came to his death by inadvertently and incautiously kneeling down, and was caught by the Tread-wheel. We understand that the *possibility* of such an accident in future is now prevented, by

closing up that small aperture by which Peeling attempted to hold a conversation with the next class."

No other bodily mischief has occurred. We have, &c.

(Signed)

W. YOUNGE,

R. CALDWELL,

SAM. TYSEN,

J. MARCON,

W. HAGGARD.

(15.)—PEMBROKE.

Haverfordwest, January 5, 1824.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the 26th of December, I beg leave to assure you, that there has never been any inconvenience felt by the prisoners from working in the Wheel. I AM, perhaps, BETTER QUALIFIED to determine this question than any other person, having been CHAPLAIN of the Gaol and House of Correction for the last thirty years. I am, sir, &c.

(Signed)

JAMES THOMAS,

Visiting Magistrate for the Town and County of Haverfordwest.

N.B. The gaols and houses of correction of Haverfordwest and the county of Pembroke are united.

(16.)—SOMERSET.

Hartree Court, Old Down, Jan. 25, 1824.

SIR,—I am desired by the visiting magistrates of the House of Correction at Shepton Mallet, in the county of Somerset, to say, in reply to your letter of the 26th of December last, that the Tread-mill commenced working on the first of last January; that it employs sixty men; THAT THE MACHINERY HAS BROKE, IN TWO OR THREE INSTANCES, WITHOUT ACCIDENT, PRECAUTION HAVING BEEN TAKEN. *Having consulted the surgeon, we are of*

opinion, AT PRESENT, that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners. I have, &c.

(Signed) Wm. WALDEGRAVE,
A Visiting Magistrate of the House of Correction at Shepton.

Taunton, January 31, 1824.

SIR,—By the desire of the visiting justices of the House of Correction at Wilton, I have to enclose a copy of the surgeon's report made at the last sessions, with reference to the working of prisoners on the Tread-wheel, and I remain, &c.

(Signed) E. COLES.

Taunton, January 9, 1824.

ON November the 11th, 1823, prior to the prisoners commencing their work on the Tread-mill, at the Wilton House of Correction, I examined every individual in the gaol who was sentenced to hard labour, *allowing only those to be employed who I considered IN EVERY RESPECT competent to the task.* Since that period the Mill has been continually at work, and I have carefully watched the prisoners so occupied, and I have great pleasure in stating no "bodily mischief or inconvenience" has been experienced by any of them. The first few days the prisoners COMPLAINED OF BEING MUCH FATIGUED, but nothing more.

(Signed) J. LIDDON.

To the Visiting Justices of the
Wilton House of Correction.

(17.)—SUFFOLK.

Ipswich, January 15, 1824.

SIR,—In conformity with your letter, we, the undersigned visiting magistrates, have consulted with the surgeon, who is decidedly of opinion (with ourselves) that no bodily injury or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill.

In confirmation of this opinion, and that the prisoners themselves entertain the same, we beg leave to state, that, on inspecting the gaol this morning, we actually found three prisoners

VOLUNTEERING THE WORK, and were given to understand from the gaoler that *many untried prisoners would be glad to be so employed, if allowed.* We have, &c.

(Signed)

C. BERNERS,

H. D. BERNERS,

GEO. CAPPER.

P. S. NO FEMALES IN THIS PRISON ARE EVER PUT UPON THE TREAD-MILL.

Bury St. Edmunds, January 26, 1824.

SIR,—In compliance with the directions communicated by Mr. Hobhouse, I have the satisfaction of acquainting you that the visiting magistrates of the House of Correction at Bury, *after having consulted with the surgeon*, are fully convinced that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has arisen to the prisoners working on the Tread-mill, from that employment. I have, &c.

CALTHORPE.

To the Right Hon. Robert Peel,
&c. &c. &c.

(18.)—SURREY.

House of Correction, Brixton, January 7, 1824.

SIR,—In compliance with the request of Mr. Secretary Peel, conveyed in your letter of the 26th ultimo, we *have consulted the surgeon* of this prison, and now beg leave to state, that he is of opinion with us, that no injurious effects have been experienced that CAN BE ATTRIBUTED to the labour on the Tread-mill.

(Signed)

THOMAS HARRISON,

ROBT. HEDGER,

JAMES LAING,

THOMAS PAGE,

THOS. EDWARDS,

J. D. KINE,

H. J. BARCHARD,

} Visiting Magistrates.

H. Hobhouse, Esq:

Guildford, January 10, 1824.

SIR,—We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo. *After consulting the surgeon of the prison, we are of opinion, that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill, in the House of Correction at Guildford. We have, &c.*

(Signed)

G. W. ONSLOW,
HENRY DRUMMOND,
ARTHUR ONSLOW,
LAURENCE WM. ELIOT.

H. Hobhouse, Esq.

(19.)—SUSSEX.

Lewes, January 29, 1824.

SIR,—We must request, in the name of ourselves and the other visiting magistrates of the House of Correction at Lewes, to apologize for having omitted, in the hurry of business during the Sessions week, to return the information called for by your letter of the 26th ult. We have, however, frequently, both before and since that time, directed the attention of the surgeon to the subject, and the result of his reports, and of every other inquiry and observation which we could make, afford us the fullest confirmation of what was stated in a report made last year, that the labour of the Tread-wheel is not attended with any consequences prejudicial to the health of the prisoners so employed, but that, on the contrary, it operates beneficially in that respect; impressed with this conviction, we recommended at the last Sessions (and the recommendation was adopted) the erection of an additional Tread-wheel, in order to keep a larger portion of the prisoners employed. It may be proper to add, that *it has not been our practice to employ women on this labour*, so that we have had no opportunity of estimating its effects upon the female constitution.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

G. SHIFFNER, } Visiting
T. PARTINGTON, } Magistrates.

H. Hobhouse, Esq.

(20.)—YORKSHIRE.

1. *North Riding.*

Wycliffe, January 30, 1824.

SIR,—In pursuance of a resolution of the bench of magistrates of the last Quarter Sessions for the North Riding of the county of York, I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of the report of the visiting justices of the House of Correction at Northallerton, having reference chiefly to the question of the labour of the Tread-wheel; also a copy of a letter from the surgeon of the prison to the chairman of the committee of visiting justices on the same subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN HEADLAM, Chairman.

The Right Hon. Robert Peel.

North Riding } At a meeting of the Justices of the Peace ap-
of Yorkshire. } pointed as visiting justices of the House of Cor-
rection at Northallerton, the 12th day of Ja-
nuary, 1824.

Present :

WILLIAM DENT, clerk, (Chairman).

RIGHT HON. EARL OF TYRCONNEL.

HON. THOMAS MONSON.

RICHARD W. C. PEIRSE, ESQ.

RICHARD BLANSHARD, ESQ.

JAMES WILSON, ESQ.

The following report was unanimously agreed to:—

In pursuance of the order of Court of Michaelmas sessions, 1823, the Rev. J. Bowness has been licensed by the Archbishop of York to officiate as chaplain in the House of Correction, prayers have been regularly read by him in the chapel every morning; divine service, both morning and evening, has been duly performed by

him on every Sunday, and on Christmas-day, and such other duties regularly attended to by him in the gaol as are required by statute 4th Geo. IV. c. 64.

And the committee are glad to learn from him, and the officers of the prison, that a due regard has been paid by the prisoners to the important objects of his appointment.

The committee have at different times, both individually and collectively, visited and inspected every department of the gaol ; they have uniformly found it clean and well ventilated.

They have given their best attention to introduce, as far as is practicable, all those regulations which the late statute has laid down as the code of prison discipline.

The insufficiency of the present buildings to afford classification is well known to the court ; but in every instance in the arrangement of the prisoners (so far as the present accommodation will admit of) the visiting justices have never lost sight of the great principle of classification, in the separation of persons charged with serious crimes from those of a less heinous character, and in preventing that exposure to contamination which would arise if the juvenile and unexperienced were indiscriminately to be associated with old and notorious offenders.

It is satisfactory to the visiting justices to report, that notwithstanding the comparative smallness of the number of persons committed this quarter, the Tread-mill has been kept constantly at work.

Much as this valuable invention has been assailed and condemned, the committee are more strengthened in their opinion that it is neither prejudicial to the health, nor injurious to the limbs of the prisoners, and that the specious objection of ITS DISGRACE SO PLAUSIBLE WITH MEN IN THE HIGHER RANKS OF SOCIETY, does not in reality attach to it.

From the introduction of this as employment, the visiting justices, in common with every attendant and officer of the gaol, have witnessed the most beneficial results, and cannot but consider it as essentially contributing to the good order of the prison.

The visiting justices have paid minute attention to the effect

of this employment upon females, and give it as their decided opinion, that there is *nothing* in the employment (under the regulations adopted at Northallerton) either repugnant to common *delicacy*, or injurious to the health of females.

The visiting justices have had frequent conversation with those so employed, all of whom have readily admitted that the labour of washing in particular, and many other avocations which females in the lower situations in life are obliged daily to follow, are much more severe.

The visiting justices are not ignorant that the compartment of the Tread-wheel appropriated to women would be productive of greater pecuniary profit, if worked by the men; indeed it frequently occurs (from the comparative smallness of the number of females committed) that a power of not more than two or three women can be made available; but as the first object of a House of Correction must be to ensure an equal certainty of correction to all who are consigned to it, the justices have directed that the Wheel graduated purposely for females should uniformly be worked by them only.

The visiting justices have also had another object in view, viz. to counteract, as far as possible, that unfounded prejudice which at present exists against this as an employment for females, by opposing to it the result of three years observation, that consistent with every principle of *humanity*, *DELICACY*, and *sound legislation*, the Tread-mill is applicable for the employment of both sexes.

The court will perceive with satisfaction, by the returns now laid upon the table, that the number of prisoners in the last quarter has been materially less than in the corresponding quarter of the three preceding years.

In obedience to a letter from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Home Department, addressed to the visiting justices, they have made diligent inquiry as to the information required, and have to report, that during the three years that the Tread-mill has been in operation at the House of Correction at Northallerton, they have been unable to find that any accident has oc-

curred either to prisoners working thereat, or any other person, except the case of John Hopper, confined on a charge of felony, who, on the 9th of April, 1822, being at work in the compartment No. 1, incautiously, and in defiance of repeated remonstrances from the other prisoners, attempted, while the wheel was revolving, to put his hand through an aperture, that had been *mischievously made* by some of the prisoners, between two of the steps of the treadle, to give something to a person in the adjoining compartment No. 2. Whilst in the act of doing this, his coat sleeve became entangled between the steps of the wheel and the division wall; HE WAS INSTANTLY THROWN DOWN, AND CARRIED UNDER THE WHEEL; HIS ARM WAS SO MUCH SHATTERED, AS TO RENDER AMPUTATION NECESSARY. Immediately upon his being so entangled, the rest of the prisoners jumped off the wheel, and by thus stopping the power, a more serious accident was prevented.

The visiting justices have ascertained that no blame attached to any one except the individual alluded to; and it is most evident, that the accident is in no other way connected with the operation of the Tread-wheel, except so far as this, that ALL MACHINERY, IF INCAUTIOUSLY MEDDLED WITH, MAY BE THE OCCASION OF ACCIDENTS.

The misfortune here, however, did not arise from the ordinary use of the Tread-wheel, but from the abuse of it, and can neither in fairness, or in fact, be adduced as an argument against the general principle of its operation.

The annexed sketch will tend to illustrate and explain those observations, with which the visiting justices have thought it right to accompany the simple narrative of the accident.

W. DENT, Chairman.

(Copy.)

Northallerton, January 12, 1824.

SIR,—I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, that upon a reference to my journal, I do not perceive any casualty occasioned by the Tread-mill in this prison of SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE TO

BE REPORTED, except the case of John Hopper, who, from his own very wilful and improper conduct upon the 9th day of April, 1822, suffered *so severe an injury of the arm, as to render immediate amputation necessary.*

I avail myself of this opportunity to inform you, that after an experience of three years and upwards, I have no reason to alter the opinion I before gave you, that the health of the prisoners is benefited, and in no instance has it been injured by this mode of employment, and that so long as *the regulations* adopted in this gaol* are attended to, I see no reason to apprehend that even the female prisoners are exposed to injury, or greater inconvenience than they would be by *any other* description of employment.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

W. B. DIGHTON.

The Rev. Wm. Dent,
Chairman of the Visiting Justices.

Crosby Cote, January 22, 1824.

SIR,—In obedience to Mr. Hobhouse's letter of the 26th ult. I am directed by the visiting justices of the House of Correction at Northallerton to transmit, for your information, the annexed report, which, *after consulting with the surgeon* of the gaol, was unanimously agreed to. I am also requested by the visiting justices to lay before you a letter, addressed to them by the surgeon, containing his opinion on the subject under investigation.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

WM. DENT.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State,
&c. &c. &c.

P. S. The letter of the surgeon is given above.

* The regulations in this prison are, to exempt from the operation of the Tread-mill all prisoners afflicted with fits, with hernia, and those having ulcerated legs, pregnant women, and women under any of the circumstances peculiar to their sex.

North Riding } At a Meeting of the Justices of the Peace, ap-
 of Yorkshire. } pointed as Visiting Justices of the House of
 Correction at Northallerton, holden at the
 Sessions-House, at Northallerton, the 12th day
 of January, 1824.

Present :

William Dent, clerk (Chairman).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Tyrconnel.

The Hon. Thomas Monson, clerk.

Richard W. C. Peirse, Esq.

Richard Blanshard, Esq.

James Wilson, Esq.

Resolved unanimously :

In obedience to an inquiry by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, “ whether any bodily mischief or inconvenience has
 “ been experienced by the prisoners working on the Tread-mill
 “ in the House of Correction at Northallerton,” addressed to the
 said Visiting Justices, they have given their most diligent attention
 to the subject, and have to report, that during the three years
 that the Tread-mill has been in operation in the House of Cor-
 rection at Northallerton, they have been unable to learn that any
 accident or inconvenience has occurred, either to the prisoners
 working thereon, or to any other person, except in the case of
 John Hopper, a prisoner confined on the charge of felony, who,
 on the 9th day of April, 1822, being at work in the compartment
 No. 1, incautiously, and in defiance of repeated remonstrances
 from the other prisoners, attempted, whilst the Wheel was re-
 volving, to put his hand through an aperture that had been mis-
 chievously made by some of the prisoners between two of the
 steps of the treadle, to give something to a prisoner in the ad-
 joining compartment, No. 2. Whilst in the act of doing this,
 his coat sleeve became entangled between the steps of the treadle
 and the partition wall; he was instantly thrown down, and car-
 ried under the Wheel; *his arm was so much shattered as to render*
amputation necessary. Immediately upon his being so entangled,
 the rest of the prisoners jumped off the Wheel; and by thus

stopping the power a more serious accident was prevented. The Visiting Justices have ascertained that no blame attached to any one, except the individual alluded to; and it is most evident that the accident is no other way connected with the operation of the Tread-mill, except so far as this, that *all machinery of a certain power may be the occasion of accidents*, if incautiously meddled with. The misfortune here, however, did not arise from the ordinary use of the Tread-mill, but from the abuse of it; and can neither in fairness nor in fact be adduced as an argument against the general principle of its operation.

WM. DENT, Chairman.

For the Right Honourable the Secretary of State.

2.—*West Riding.*

Wakefield, January 19, 1824.

SIR,—In pursuance of your letter, dated the 26th December, 1823, I herewith send you the report of the surgeon and governor of the House of Correction at this place, whereby it appears that no bodily mischief or inconvenience has been experienced by the prisoners working at the Tread-mill. On the contrary, they think that the general health of the prisoners is improved by its adoption; and, from my experience as a Visiting Magistrate, I concur in their opinion. The Tread-mill here is confined to male prisoners: NO WOMEN HAVE WORKED ON IT.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HEYWOOD, Chairman of Wakefield Sessions.
H. Hobhouse, Esq. &c. &c. &c.

This is to certify, that no injurious effects have arisen from the use of the Tread-mill in Wakefield House of Correction; but we conceive that the general health of the prisoners is improved by its adoption.

(Signed)

WM. WALKER, Surgeon,

JAMES SHEPHERD, Keeper of the said House of Correction.

January 14, 1824.

(21.)—APPENDIX—SURREY.

Copy of a Letter, addressed, by the direction of Mr. Secretary Peel, to the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Surrey.

Whitehall, January 20, 1824.

SIR,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Peel to desire that you will transmit for his information copies of the report of the Visiting Magistrates of the House of Correction at Guildford (together with the supplement thereto), presented to the General Quarter Sessions, held at Newington, on the 13th January, 1824; also the report of the Visiting Magistrates of the House of Correction at Brixton to the same; and also of the resolution agreed to thereon by the whole Bench of Magistrates.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

H. HOBHOUSE.

The Clerk of the Peace for the County of Surrey.

Clerk of the Peace's Office, North-street, Lambeth,
January 22, 1824.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit to you copies of the reports of the Visiting Magistrates of the Houses of Correction at Brixton and Guildford, and of the resolution of the last session on the subject of the Tread-mill.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

CHARLES JOHN LAWSON.

The Right Honourable Robert Peel,
&c. &c. &c.

SURREY.—At the General Quarter Session of the Peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, holden at Saint Mary, Newington, in and for the County of Surrey, on Tuesday, in the week next after the feast of the Epiphany of our Lord, to wit, the thirteenth day of January, in the fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Fourth, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, before Thomas Harrison, Esquire, Sir Thomas Turton,

Baronet, Thomas Sampson, Doctor in Divinity, Thomas Edwards, Doctor of Laws, Jeffreys Thomas Allen, Lancelot Baugh Allen, Edward Bilke, Henry James Barchard, John Ivatt Briscoe, William Ballantine, William Crawford, Thomas Coles, Ebenezer John Collett, Henry Drummond, William Joseph Denison, Solomon Davies, Charles Elliot, Thomas Gaitskell, Charles David Gordon, Robert Hudson, Robert Hedger, William Holmer, Randle Jackson, William Jones, David King, Thomas Lett, James Laing, William Nottige, John Acworth Ommaney, Charles Nicholas Pallmer, Thomas Page, John Plummer, Thomas Price, John Rogers, Frederick Reeves, Robert Rich, George Holme Sumner, John Scriven, William Holme Sumner, William Speer, Benjamin Shaw, John Spicer, James Sparks, Samuel Thornton, James Trotter, William Thornton, Francis Wightwick, John Woolley, Robert Welbank, John Whitmore, Florance Young, Esquires; John Courtney, Charles Jerram, George Walton Onslow, Arthur Cyril Onslow, Thomas Snell, Henry Williams, Clerks; Justices of our said Lord the King, assigned to keep the peace in the county aforesaid, and also to hear and determine divers felonies, trespasses, and other misdeeds committed in the said county.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Court, the Tread-mill has, in an eminent degree, answered the purposes of its institution, both moral and judicial, and that the reports this day made by the Visiting Magistrates of the respective Houses of Correction are highly satisfactory, as well as the reports of the surgeons attached to those establishments, in whose opinions no effects injurious to the health of the prisoners have yet occurred.

By the Court.

Copy of the Report relative to the Cases of the women, Loder and Hall, *nourishing infants at the breast*, and *having been subjected to work on the Wheel*, will be found on pp. 286 and 287 of the Appendix.

(Copy.)

*To his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Surrey,
in General Quarter Session assembled.*

WE, whose names are hereunto subscribed, five of the Visiting Magistrates of the House of Correction at Brixton, do report, That since the last session we have held frequent meetings there, and minutely examined into the condition and treatment of the prisoners therein; and also into the conduct of the governor and other officers to whom the management of the establishment has been intrusted, with which we are well satisfied. And we further report, that the Mill and machinery are in excellent order; and that in pursuance of the authority given to us, at the last General Quarter Session, we have caused glazed sashes to be fixed in the apertures of the front walls of the day-rooms, belonging to the several classes of prisoners; and we beg to recommend that authority be given to the succeeding visitors to construct a screen, or back, to each of the benches on which the prisoners rest, during the intervals of their labour, to prevent any ill effects which might possibly be produced by CURRENTS OF COLD AIR at such periods. And we further report, that the health of the prisoners, since the last report, has been generally very good, and their behaviour for the most part orderly; with the exception, however, of serious insubordination, and a strong disposition to violence exhibited in one of the classes in the month of November last, immediately subsequent to, and as we have ample reason to believe, OCCASIONED BY THE VISIT OF A MAGISTRATE OF THE COUNTY, and by HIS INDISCREET* CONVERSATION WITH THE PRISONERS, and HIS

* The whole of this is totally untrue. The writer of these remarks was assured by the governor and partner of the surgeon of Brixton House of Correction, that Mr. Briscoe's examination was conducted with candour and propriety; and that, when he interrupted the turnkey, he did perfectly right, as his remarks were obtrusive and impertinent. What will the Public think, when they learn that this Report was set forth, without allowing Mr. Briscoe an opportunity of explanation?

REFUSAL TO HEAR SUCH EXPLANATIONS AS THE TURNKEY in attendance upon him requested to be allowed to give, with respect to the answers made by some of the prisoners to questions put to them by such magistrate. And we further report, that we are particularly gratified by being enabled to state that the number of prisoners has of late considerably decreased; the present numbers are as follows: males, 113; females, 29; making a total of 142; of which 27 are soldiers, or marines, committed under the sentences of courts' martial; and 6 are persons committed by the aldermen of London, as justices of the peace for the borough of Southwark only, neither of which descriptions of prisoners was contemplated as necessary to be provided for when the House of Correction at Brixton was erected. Owing to the diminished number of prisoners, the earnings of the Mill during the last have been somewhat less than those of the preceding year. Plenty of grist has, however, been sent to the Mill, and there is every reason to expect the continuance of an ample supply.

THOMAS HARRISON.

ROBERT HEDGER.

JAMES LAING.

THOMAS EDWARDS.

HENRY J. BARCHARD.

Dated the 7th day of January, 1824.

Copy of the Report of the Visiting Justices of Guildford House of Correction, will be found on pp. cclxxxviii, cclxxxix, and ccxc, of the Appendix.

Official Letter, inserted in the Morning Herald of the 3d of March, but not included in the preceding Copy of Correspondence.

(Copy.)

London, 23d February, 1824.

SIR,—We have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated

the 9th instant, in which Mr. Secretary Peel has done us the honour of asking our opinion “ Whether the labour of the Tread-wheel has any injurious effects on the female constitution ; and if so, whether those effects are greater than result from the ordinary occupations of women in the lower classes of society ? ”

To enable us to answer this question, we visited the House of Correction in Coldbath-fields, saw the Tread-wheel in operation, examined the female prisoners who were working at it relative to their health, and likewise made inquiries of *the matron*, and of *the surgeon*.

In Coldbath-fields prison, at the present time, the labour of the Wheel is regulated in the following way :—the prisoners *work nine minutes*, and *rest nine minutes*, and so on for *two hours* in the morning and *three hours* in the afternoon. ABOUT ONE WEEK IN EVERY MONTH EACH FEMALE PRISONER IS EXCUSED THE LABOUR OF THE WHEEL. Thus the time spent by each prisoner on the Wheel is *two hours and a half* out of *every day*, and *three weeks* out of *every month*. No pregnant woman, if she is known to be so, is put on the Wheel.

The nature of the subject on which we are consulted, will excuse us from entering into particulars ; but the result of our inquiry is a decided opinion that the labour of the Tread-wheel may be performed by women without any injurious effects on the female constitution, provided only that certain exceptions be made.

These exceptions are, women in a state of pregnancy ; women affected with some of the complaints peculiar to their sex ; and *all invalids*.

These cases may be discriminated by a competent medical officer, just as an army surgeon excuses the soldier from such military duties as the state of his health unfits him for.

Seeing also that the generality of female prisoners are young and robust women, we are further of opinion that the Tread-wheel, if prudently regulated, may be employed, not only without injury, but even with benefit to their health.

We give this opinion as the result of our best judgment, after

a due consideration of the peculiarities of the female constitution, as distinguished from that of the male.

We have, &c. &c.

(Signed)

JOHN SIMS.

ROBERT GOOCH.

CHAS. M. CLARKE.

Henry Hobhouse, Esq. &c. &c. &c.

The first point to be noticed in this letter is, that *the matron has not held her office above two or three months*. Mrs. Kilby, who is under her, says that *she was not questioned*, or *she* would have repeated the accounts of the general effects of the labour, which she has given for publication in this book, and which she asserts are, “if any thing, short of the truth.” Of the surgeon, notice has just been taken.—Then, were any inquiries made of the prisoners themselves? and if so, what answers were returned?

Another point, viz. the daily and monthly quantity of labour must be strictly examined. For the discovery of the truth it was particularly unfortunate that the original daily quantity of labour should have been *reduced one-half* (as is explained in the foregoing pages) just BEFORE these physicians paid their visit to the prison. If the reader will take the pains to calculate, he will find, that forty-five hours of treading is ALL that is now required of the women a month!

But, will not any reflecting man insist that a female labour, which is of that nature that it cannot be pursued with any safety or *decency* for one week or so in every month, is not a natural labour. *From what other ordinary labour do women in the lower ranks of life abstain for A WEEK or even A COUPLE OF DAYS, monthly?* That labour, which will prove so dreadfully pernicious at a certain time, to the female constitution, must be of a nature to prove more or less pernicious to it at any time.

But how is this week to be *properly* fixed—by the appearance of the illness? But exposure to sudden chill will check this illness; and the known irregularities in the female consti-

tution will render it necessary, in many instances, to wait till the Wheel does mischief, before it can be possibly known it has done mischief. In fact, the habits of life which most women sent to the Wheel have contracted, will send them to it either diseased, or in that most dangerous of all states for miscarrying—a state of very early pregnancy; or perhaps with a prolapsus uteri, uteri, from excessive venery and other causes. When it is asserted, that the generality of the women are young and robust, the fact is much exaggerated; it should have been said, *SOME* of them are young, and apparently robust, but these very subjects are generally infected, more or less, with disease.

It is much to be regretted that these physicians, instead of drawing conclusions respecting the labour from the narrowest premises—from it, in fact, when reduced to so small a daily quantity as to make it not worth while to build any more Wheels for women to be so little worked—did not get, and give a faithful account of all that has occurred, *most of which in this book is verified on oath*, since women were put to this worse than GALLEY-SLAVE DRUDGERY and DEGRADATION. TWO MISCARRIAGES; frequently excessive, or accelerated, or checked, or uneven menstruation; faintings off the Wheel, &c. &c. &c. &c. would then have figured in their report.

But, as has been repeatedly asked, is the question of health, alone concerned in this *novel punishment of terror*? Is its ignominy nothing? Is its danger nothing? And above all is it settled **WHAT SORT OF PUNISHMENT IT IS? TO WHAT CLASS OF PRISONERS IT SHOULD BE APPLIED?**

Mr. Peel will observe, that the experience, on OATH, of a female who has had to administer the punishment for nearly twelve months, is in direct opposition to the opinion (very conscientiously, no doubt) formed by the reporting physicians; formed, it must be remembered, from insufficient data, and without any experience on the subject. To the question, “whether the effects on the female constitution are greater than result from the ordinary occupations of women in the lower classes of life?” these physicians most improperly forget to return a direct answer. The statement, however, which they make of the exemptions

from it, which they approve, and which have no example in the ordinary labour of womankind, answer the question most distinctly in the affirmative! What then will Mr. Peel do, now that he is informed by three physicians of his own selection, that “the effects on the female constitution are greater than result from the ordinary occupations of women in the lower classes of life.” Again, let it be pressed on Parliament to PAUSE, and thus avoid the

“Haste that mars all decency of act.”

As these sheets were on the point of being printed off, JUDGE BAILEY’S CHARGE TO THE GRAND JURY AT THE DURHAM SPRING ASSIZES came to hand; in which the following passage is conspicuous. “He had always thought that THE EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS OUGHT TO BE, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, SO REGULATED, THAT THEY COULD AFTERWARDS OBTAIN A LIVELIHOOD BY IT.” This sound doctrine is wholly incompatible with the doctrine on which the new punishment of the Tread-wheel is defended.

According to the “Table of Tread-mills,” in the Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society, Tread-wheels are in *actual use* at above forty prisons; but the foregoing * returns are from no more than half that number—from *twenty prisons*. When it shall be considered that the returns from but one-half of the Tread-wheel prisons report, that THREE MEN HAVE MET WITH VIOLENT DEATHS from the machinery of the Wheel;—that a FOURTH HAS HAD HIS ARM AMPUTATED;—that THREE OTHERS WERE BRUISED in the same prison where two men were killed;—that TWO OR THREE BOYS HAVE SPRAINED THEIR ANCLES from the breaking of

* The reader will do well to compare the return from each prison, of the late date, with the former return from the same prison, both to Government and the Prison Discipline Society.

a Wheel ;—that “ A FEW ACCIDENTS” (which it was disrespectful both to the Public and the Secretary of State not to detail) have occurred at the Aylesbury Wheel ;—that “ the MACHINERY AT SHEPTON MALLET HAS BROKEN TWO OR THREE TIMES ;”—that many of the Returns make a parade of the fact, that “ NO WOMEN HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED AT THE WHEEL ;”—that one Return states, that “ lately A WOMAN WHO HAD WORKED AT THE WHEEL THE PREVIOUS DAY, MISCARRIED :” When we see all this ; and consider all this ; and reflect that all this is the fruit not of a labour, but a PENAL LABOUR ; a PUNISHMENT ; and a *punishment, which over and above* the liabilities thus proved to attach to it, and proved to attach to it by a view of only half of its operation, possesses AN IGNOMINY ALL ITS OWN, what are we to think of such a dangerous, destroying, unconstitutional, illegalised innovation ? Whatever Mr. Peel may suppose, the country is unequivocally awakening from its apathy on the subject ; and awakening, too, in alarm and indignation. Does Mr. Peel intend to found any proceeding favourable to the Discipline on Returns which, in the first place, are incomplete *by one-half* ; and, in the second place, in this their incomplete state most powerfully condemn it ? What PUNISHMENT during the last three centuries, which was not intended to injure the health of the punished, has not merely (as there is incontestible evidence this has) impaired the health of numbers, but has gone the appalling length of VIOLENTLY DEPRIVING THREE MEN OF LIFE ;—A FOURTH OF A LIMB ;—of causing TWO * FEMALES TO MISCARRY ;—of PRODUCING PREMATURE OR EXCESSIVE MENSTRUATION in a multitude of cases ;—and of entailing sprains and bruises, and all manner of minor mischiefs ? But, to ripen this full crop of evils, the punishment is some fifty or a hundred years old. No such a

* The female mentioned in these pages as having a flooding brought on, miscarried in the yard, while the prisoners were at Chapel ; and, as she herself states, “ threw the fœtus down the * * * * .”

thing! It is not, except in a single prison or so, four years old, and in the generality only one or two!!!

It has been said that the new Returns are *incomplete by one-half*; this merely means IN NUMBER. IN QUALITY, in what they individually *do contain*, they are incomplete, in comparison with what they *should contain*, as a whole, by ninety-nine parts in a hundred. The moral effects of the Wheel have been boasted of! Why did not Mr. Peel call for an account of the many mutinies it has caused?—the whippings* with which some of them were subdued?—the deceptions, as to pregnancy and ill-health, it has begotten?—the increase of colds† and rheumatism which its exposure to violent changes of heat and cold has fostered? Why did Mr. Peel leave it to the discretion of interested parties “to tell or not to tell” how such and such a Wheel has broken; or from recoils—or even, as at Brixton, from only suddenly and fearfully increased velocity, has thrown off the Treaders?

Why is no account of prisoners' weights, which Mr. Peel so pointedly alluded to a few nights previous to the returns being printed; why, let it be asked, and let it be answered, was no account of weight to be found in the New Reports?—To what did Mr. Peel allude when he spoke of weighing‡ at the end of three weeks, and boasted of the prison averages of gain of flesh?

The writer of these pages was present at the debate on the second reading of the Gaol Act Amendment Bill; and he must say, in the face of the country, that more egregious blunders were never made, than some that were made on the subject of the Tread-wheel. Indeed it was a sorry sight to see A MINISTER OF ENGLAND crying “Hear, hear!” to the speech of an Honourable Member, who really, though of course unintentionally, argued on wrong premises throughout. But Mr. Peel himself was the antipode of correct views on the subject. It proved (probably

* The reader is earnestly requested to look at Ryan's Deposition; and also page 24 of the Appendix.

† Sir T. Baring's speech, on the second reading of the Gaol Bill.

‡ This weighing human beings, time after time, is very disgusting. Under the new system, they seem to be on a par with so many “head of cattle.”

from his not yet having fully entered into it) utterly intractable in his hands.

The Hon. Secretary stated, that "in ONE prison untried prisoners" had been put to the Tread-wheel; alluding of course to that of Northallerton, where alone the practice caused an appropriate remonstrance. The Honourable Secretary must be informed, that at Guildford untried prisoners have been put to the Tread-wheel! that at Brixton* untried prisoners have been put to the Tread-wheel! and very probably in other prisons, though these two are the only ones, besides Northallerton, of which the writer can speak with certainty.

Mr. Peel allowed "it might be true, that the miller had the power to relax or augment the labour of the prisoners; that the mechanist might have the power to regulate the labour; and if it were true, it was evident, from all these circumstances, that it would be very difficult to provide a remedy for the inequality of which the Hon. Member complained." Because the miller and mechanist have such and such a power; *ergo*, it would be difficult to control that power. Will Mr. Peel himself, on reviewing his words, not feel most anxious to retract them? Can he call *such argument*, argument? But were it logic to perfection, what does it prove? That apportioning the punishment of the Tread-wheel, in a great degree, lies with millers and mechanists!! Because it lies with such persons, why is it difficult (as Mr. Peel asserts) to forbid its lying with them any longer? But were it DIFFICULT, why, in the name of common sense, should it be JUST? England would say, Face the difficulty!

Again, Mr. Peel "could not believe this lifting the body was equal to lifting it up perpendicularly, as in going up stairs. He denied that this labour was at all equal to dragging the weight of the body up a perpendicular ascent." Is Mr. Peel prepared to show that an ascent up stairs is a perpendicular ascent? An ascent in a line at right angles with the horizon?

Again, Mr. Peel must very speedily learn, or he will impair

* The surgeon's partner distinctly allowed the fact.

the confidence that may be put in him, that an ascent on the Tread-wheel is infinitely more trying, than even *a perpendicular* ascent of any kind would be where the steps are stationary! The ascent at the Tread-wheel (or the motion, which, without progression, is at the same time in the nature of ascent) is *an ascent not quite perpendicular*. Before the foot quits the treadle, the treadle has somewhat retreated from a right line with the horizon. The fore part of the foot has been lifted upwards, causing the leg and foot to describe, inwards, an angle a little contracted from a right angle. The ascent is, as the ascent of a ladder placed very nearly upright. It is an ascent that no hill could be climbed by, without steps cut in it. This assertion is not to be supported by theory only: it is capable of demonstrative proof. The slightest acquaintance with mechanics will point it out beyond dispute. That the effects produced, in a few minutes, of *sweating, excited pulse, &c. &c.* should not have reflected, backwards, *light* upon the cause that produces them is really unaccountable. According to Mr. Peel's view of the labour, such effects are not the effects of an adequate cause, but of *a miracle*, for they come without cause!

Again, with what propriety could Mr. Peel call on the House to discredit* "the other calculations" of Mr. Grey Bennet, *because* one of them, not was proved to be incorrect, but *appeared so large as to seem to be incorrect*. How could Mr. Peel rationally make his own *doubt* the basis of a supposition that Mr. Bennet *must be wrong*; and how could he justify the appeal to the House to believe him so, because he (Mr. Peel) could not believe it was possible Mr. Bennet's calculation was right? Many people, when told that the stars are so many leagues distant from the earth, have exclaimed, "I am positive you are wrong—it is so monstrous—how can you tell!" The inference of the Hon. Secretary had for its support precisely the same foundation. The correctness or incorrectness of Mr. Bennet's calculation has nothing to do

* Mr. Peel did not say it was erroneous, as reported in the Chronicle, but only that he thought it must be erroneous.

with this argument. Really Mr. Peel should be infinitely more cautious, for MR. PEEL IS A MINISTER OF THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. Had Mr. Peel had time to look into *the unfinished portion of this work, which the writer had the honour to transmit to him*, and from one of the tables in which Mr. Grey Bennet read some figures, showing to how many ascents of the monument so many feet of Tread-wheel labour were equal, Mr. Peel could not have called upon the House to suppose *all the calculations* brought forward by Mr. Bennet erroneous. *This tabular calculation*, read, in part, by the Hon. Member for Shrewsbury, *is perfectly correct*; the data on which it is formed are so simple, that its correctness may be ascertained in ten minutes! It is no perplexed or intricate arithmetical problem, but a simple number of quotients, given by a divisor, representing the height of ascent of the monument, operating on a certain number of dividends.

Again, Mr. Peel asked whether the weak man and the strong *need be* put to an equal quantity of labour?—His question involves a concession—Let the country mark this—A CONCESSION BY THE HEAD OF THE MAGISTRACY, AND A MINISTER OF THE CROWN, THAT THE WEAK AND THE STRONG MAN SHOULD NOT BE EQUALLY WORKED AT THE TREAD-WHEEL. But how does this comport with what Mr. Peel asserted a few nights ago, “that weight, not strength,” was required at the Wheel? And how is it that the difficulties which start up with this concession, like giants from their slumber, did not present themselves to the eyes of the honourable arguer? The weak man is not *necessarily* the sick man, or the invalid; he is not *necessarily* emaciated or pale. Who then, is to discriminate with *real justice*, between the weak and the strong? and what will be the consequence of a *just discrimination*?—A *just discrimination* would *apparently*, and to an ordinary observer, appear the *most unjust*. Subjects *apparently* strong or healthy would be exempted—murmurs and mutinies would be the consequence—impositions would “multiply and replenish the earth,” and ill-blood and quarrelling be excited among the prisoners. There is no doubt that, in a degree, *all labour operates*

unequally; that the weak and the strong are often set to the same work: but no labour that was ever invented operated one tenth part so *unequally* as this. At manual labour there is a great power of relieving oneself by being sparing of exertion; the only view in which the equality * of the labour may be predicated is this: it equally exacts the same exertion from all; while scarcely any two persons who are subjected to it are of *equal* capabilities to bear it—all, at such a Wheel, ascend 10,000 feet; all, at another, 13,000 feet, and so on, more or less. But what number of men, small or great, shall be thrown together by chance, or even selection, who can *equally* endure the uniform task of walking up the Monument, fifty or sixty times a day, with only the same power of halting to take breath?

Again, by a strange confusion of opposite ideas, the *fixing of a maximum* was resisted by Mr. Peel, on grounds which were only applicable to the case of the *fixing of a minimum*. Mr. Bennet called upon the House to say, “beyond such an amount of labour let no one be tasked.” Mr. Peel argued to this effect: “If you forbid any one to be tasked beyond such an amount, the necessary course of things will cause every one to be tasked up to that amount.” That means, *your maximum* will of necessity become *the Justices’ minimum*. There is as little *likelihood* of such a result as there is that Mr. Peel will neglect to exercise more caution for the future. As to *necessity*, there is none! And if there were a necessity for such a result, it might at once be done away with by a specific clause.

When Mr. Peel replied to Mr. Bennet’s objection as to the

* If the pigmy—Man in his progress up a mountain, assisted the revolution of the mighty globe; if he were the first moving force of this terrestrial ball; and as each step of the stupendous rotundity retreated from under his impulsive powers, he climbed its never-ending circumference, then, but not till then, might Mr. Dent exclaim, with common propriety—“What labourer is there whose day’s toil does not exceed a walk of two miles and a half up hill?” As the case is, the different toils are about as equal as an elephant is to a mite; or as some who have meddled with the controversy, to the task of grappling with the momentous and, hitherto, little understood punishment of terror—the Tread-wheel.

varying amount of labour exacted—" *It might happen* that he who took only 8000 steps, if he were working in a mill which was kept well supplied, performed more work than he who took 12,000, or he who took 16,000"—did he meet, did he *obviate*, or did he evade it? Are "may be's," and things within the range of that "chartered libertine," that unconscionable latitudinarian, POSSIBILITY, to make us congratulate ourselves on their *possible presence* in the working of plans, which, without their *positive and unalienable presence*, must be fluctuating, and unjust, and cruel in their prosecution. This is equivalent to refusing a reversal of judgment on no other ground but that "the culprit *may be* rescued (which God in his mercy grant) on his way to execution." The mode of this argument being dismissed, let us turn to its matter. The proposition means, that the resistance offered in the case of the 8000 steps *may be* so much greater than that offered in the case of the 16,000, as to reduce the exertion in either case to an equality. This is, perhaps, *impossible*. The extremes of resistance offered by wheels FIT TO BE WORKED, are very far from making such a difference in exertion as is here contemplated. There must be a certain resistance to allow of treading at all; and a resistance beyond a certain amount would hold the wheel motionless, in spite of all the treaders. Were the 8000 steps taken at one prison, each of them twice as far apart as the 16,000 at another, *then*, though a greater, and therefore *more* fatiguing, stride were enforced in one case, the *quantum* of ascent might be in both cases the same! The ascent, therefore, at the Tread-wheel is an ascent, or lifting of the weight of the body up a nearly perpendicular ladder; the quantum of ascent, which includes a great portion of the exertion, is determined by the number of revolutions and the circumference of the Wheel; and, in aggravation, it is performed by the assistance alone of retreating steps, which, according to the resistance they present, more or less affect the exertion required.

When the Prison Discipline Society, in page 9 of their "Description," &c. state, that "half an inch more or less in the height of the step makes a difference of nearly 1000 feet ascent in

a day of ten hours general labour," they entirely forget that it is not the relative height of the steps, but the circumference of the Wheels, that decides the amount of ascent. Two Wheels of the same circumference, though their steps be not of the same height, can in an equal number of revolutions only give the same amount of ascent. Because, from the circumference of the one being more studded with steps than the other, a different stride is taken at each, a greater amount of ascent is not made. The Prison Discipline Society will perhaps learn from this not first nor second incorrectness, that great care becomes even those whom the world willingly allows to be animated by the best intentions.

MR. PEEL, IN A FEW HOURS, WILL HAVE THESE ARGUMENTS BROUGHT UNDER HIS NOTICE; he will see, from the inaccuracies into which HE has been led, that the subjectr equires very grave and attentive consideration.

Mr. Holme Sumner's confession that "the Magistrates had been groping in the dark" concerning the Wheel ever since it was invented, will be fresh in his memory.

The light* that was proposed by the Hon. Member as a beacon to rescue himself and his fellows from the shoals, Mr. Peel will observe to have proved in many instances, nothing better than an erring guide.

Sir T. Baring's concession, that HE ONCE WAS A STRENUOUS ADVOCATE OF THE WHEEL, but that since he found, that at the best constructed Wheel in the kingdom, ten minutes labour produced *profuse perspiration*, &c. &c. he could not but begin to be jealous of the toil, will ring in his ears.

The call upon the House in the course of the debate to exempt women from this drudgery and degradation, will find ample justification in his own chosen physicians' reports.

The assertion of an Hon. Baronet, that the punishment was of a secondary† nature, opposed to the assertion of a Worthy Alder-

* The Fifth Report of the Prison Discipline Society.

† Whether the Edinburgh Reviewers consider the Tread-wheel fit penalty for minor offences, or as a secondary punishment, may be elucidated from the following sentences in their Review of Mr. Headlam:—

man, that it is of wonderful efficacy in cases of minor delinquency, will force him into the conclusion that it would be taking a leap in the dark to legalize a punishment, when, actually, nobody knows what rank as a punishment it should hold.

And, over and above all, the incomplete, yet calamitous, returns to his office : these multifarious and most important considerations, respectfully pressed on his attention by an individual, whose political leaning is most decidedly and conscientiously directed towards the principles of the administration of which the Honourable Secretary forms a part, assuredly must, and assuredly will, cause him to advocate, out of respect to the doubts of enlightened men ; out of respect to *his own doubts* ; and out of respect to the prayers of thousands ; AN IMPARTIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE on the vitally momentous question of THE NEW AND NOT YET LEGALISED PUNISHMENT OF TERROR INFLICTED BY THE MECHANICAL AGENCY OF THE TREAD-WHEEL.

“ Walking up hill, like a turnspit dog, in an infamous machine.”

“ The . . . month of lifting the leg, and striving against the law of gravity.”

“ Punishments are not merely to be estimated by pains to the limbs, but by the feelings of the mind.”

“ The labour of the Tread-mill is disgusting to the last degree.”

“ He is turned, at once, into a *primum mobile*, and put upon a level with a rush of water, or a puff of steam.”

“ The new Magistrates’ plaything.”

“ Tost into the middle of an infernal machine.”

“ A lucubration of Justices ; a new theory of Prison Discipline ; a valuable county experiment, going on at the expense of arms, legs, back, feelings,” &c.

“ Hot and reeking from the Tread-mill.”

“ The Rack and Wheel of Cubitt.”

“ As if any rational man could ever expect to *gain* a farthing by an *expensive* mill, where felons are the moving power, and justices the superintendents ; or as if such a trade must not necessarily be carried on at a great loss.”

THE END.

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