

and of the officials naturally, perhaps, differ. We give at present the view of the prisoner, and shall be happy to insert any refutation of it that the authorities have to offer.

"There are three permanent punishments authorized by law in English prisons:—

Hunger,
Insomnia,
Disease."

The food we are told, is just enough to sustain, not life exactly, but existence. Further, "the result of the food—which in most cases consists of weak gruel, badly baked bread, suet and water—is disease in the form of incessant diarrhoea. This becomes with most prisoners a permanent disease. At Wandsworth Prison, for instance—the warders go round twice or three times a day with astringent medicines, which they serve out to the prisoners as a matter of course. If a prisoner fails from physical weakness to complete his required revolutions at the crank or at the mill, he is reported for idleness, and punished with the greatest severity and brutality."

THE sufferings of the prisoners are further aggravated by the fact that he is not allowed to have access to the prison lavatories except during the one hour when he is at exercise. A small tin vessel is supplied to him, and three times a day he is allowed to empty his slops. "After five o'clock in the evening he is not allowed to leave his cell under any pretence, or for any reason. A man suffering from diarrhoea is consequently placed in a position so loathsome that it is unnecessary to dwell on it. It is no uncommon thing for warders, when they come in the morning out of the fresh air, and open and inspect each cell, to be violently sick."

The object of the plank bed is, we are told, to produce insomnia, from which all prisoners who have been subjected to this suffer, even when subsequently allowed a hard mattress.

ANOTHER point which would appear to need investigation is the assertion that "the prison doctors have usually, if not always, a large private practice, and hold appointments in other institutions. The consequence is that the health of the prisoners is entirely neglected, and the sanitary condition of the prison entirely overlooked." The experience of the writer of the letter is that prison doctors—in hospital, and elsewhere—are "brutal in manner, coarse in temperament, and utterly indifferent to the health of the prisoners or their comfort." Such allegations require investigation, and, if proved to be facts, radical reform. Prisons are unhappily a stern and sad necessity. It would not be expedient to make them comfortable quarters where a criminal may lodge free at the expense of upright citizens, but the nation will at least demand that all persons

who are under the care of the State, for whatever reason, shall be treated reasonably, intelligently, and with that humanity upon which, as a nation, we pride ourselves.

Or late, several excellent little brochures on nursing have been written by trained nurses—their identity, however, evades our memory, as they are one and all gobbled up under the silly title of the "Burdett Series." Why? This is a characteristic method of obtaining notoriety upon the part of Sir Henry Burdett, and we recommend to the notice of budding *litterateurs* on nursing questions the following letter, which appeared a few days ago in the *Daily Chronicle*.

"NOT THE 'LAST BURDETT.'

"The Editor of the 'Daily Chronicle.'

"SIR,—We observe in the *Daily Chronicle* of the 14th inst. a review of 'Burdett's Official Intelligence,' 1898, under the heading, 'The Last Burdett,' in the course of which you raise the question whether this important work will be continued after the present year.

"The retirement of the editor will in no way affect the continuance of the publication, which, under the title of 'The Stock Exchange Official Intelligence,' will be published annually as heretofore.

"Trusting that you may find room for this in your next issue, we are, Sir, yours faithfully,

"SPOTTISWOODE & CO., Publishers.

"54, Gracechurch Street, E.C., March 17."

SIR HENRY BURDETT'S custom of dabbling his own name on to this important official publication should never have been permitted by the Committee of the Stock Exchange in the first instance, and we should advise those ladies who write books on nursing, which are published by the Scientific Press, to bargain that they shall not, for the future, be issued, or perhaps we might say, covered by the omnivorous Burdett. It is neither professional nor fair.

THE Day of Rest for the Nurses of the London Hospitals and of the Metropolitan district generally, will be held at Hertingfordbury, on Friday, June 3rd. Canon Burnside offers hospitality, and the Bishop of Thetford has consented to give the addresses. Particulars can be obtained from the Rev. A. G. Locke, St. George's Hospital, S.W.

THE *Toronto Evening Telegram* says:—"If the Countess of Aberdeen succeeds in getting off four of the Victorian Order of Nurses to Klondyke at 1000 dols. each (public contribution), let it be stipulated in the receipt that should the aforesaid Victorian nurses be seized at Dawson City and married by gold-dust miners, they pay back in full to the contributors the 1000 dols. each, with interest added."

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