

Sprague  
Pamphs

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**NARRATIVE**  
OF THE IMPRISONMENT OF  
**JOHN MARONEY,**  
IN THE  
PRISONS OF NEW-YORK AND AUBURN,  
FROM 1821 UNTIL 1831.  
OR,  
**MARONEY'S MEDITATIONS,**  
WHILE IN THE SCHOOL OF WISDOM.

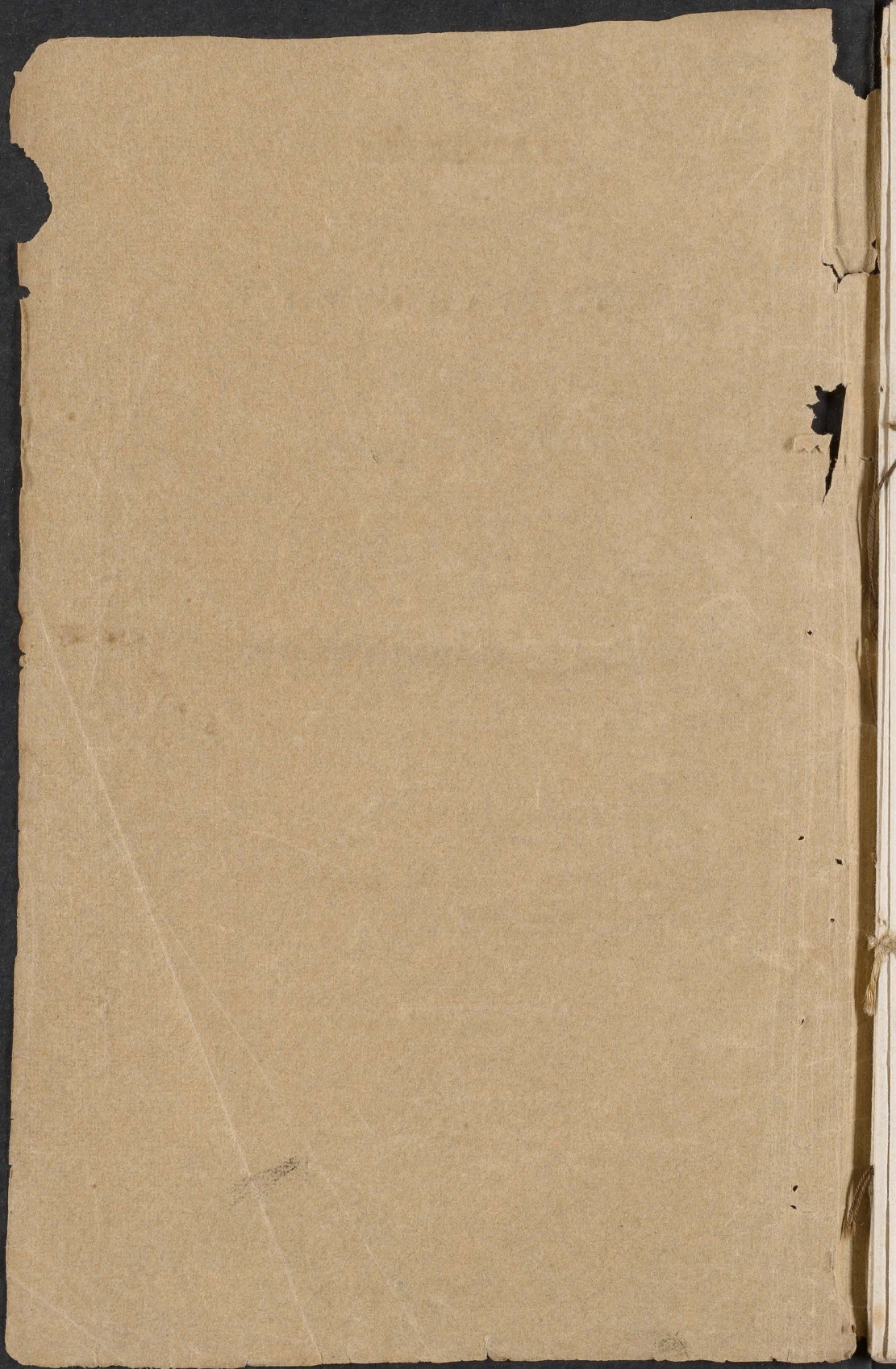
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*WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.*  
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I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul."—SHAKESPEARE.

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**NEWBURGH:**  
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*Southern District of New-York, to wit :*

{L.S.}

**BE IT REMEMBERED**, That on the eleventh day of February, Anno Domini, eighteen hundred and thirty-two, JOHN MARONEY, of said district, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the title of which is in the words following, to wit :

“Narrative of the imprisonment of John Maroney, in the prisons of New-York and Auburn, from 1821, until 1831, or, Maroney’s meditations, while in the school of wisdom. Written by himself.”

“To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul.”—*Shakspeare.*

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FREDERICK J. BETTS,

*Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.*

## NARRATIVE, &c.

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I PRESUME that most of my former acquaintances, who are now living in the county of Orange, have heard, by this time, that I have returned from the prison at Auburn, to re-visit the places where my early days were spent, either in the innocence of childhood, the pleasures and frivolities of youth, the enterprize and bustle of manhood—and the scenes, alas! of private dissipation. Were it not that my conscience dictated to me to confess that I, in the partial delirium of intoxication, (almost unaccountably to myself,) attempted to injure a man who gave me no offence, as well as the hope of being instrumental in effectually warning some young men, under whose eyes this memoir of particular parts of my sins, my follies, and sufferings may fall; I repeat, that were it not for aforesaid considerations, I would have been contented to have passed the remainder of the time, that may be allotted to me by a gracious Providence to spend here on earth, amongst my beloved friends, or occupied, either in the labors of honest industry, or in profitable reflections on the past, and prayerful meditations on God's word, and his gracious providences towards so great a sinner as I have been, and towards one who has proved himself so unworthy in a civil point of view.

JOHN MARONEY, the subject of this tract, was born in the town of Montgomery, county of Orange, and state of New-York, in 1780, and was brought up to farming, which he followed in connexion by times, with other business. Being of active turn of mind, and cheerful temper, and sociable manners, and being much abroad on business, I, like many of my acquaintances, by degrees got drawn into the vortex of unlawful gratifications of different kinds. Some of my acquaintances, for whom in a civil and individual point of view, I always shall have respect and regard, had their enthusiasm for the success of the French revolution, and unhappily I imbibed the speculations of those philosophers of that beautiful, but unfortunate country, who, while they reared the emblem of liberty with one hand, tore from beneath it, its pedestal with the other.

Passing on through life with habits of almost utter neglect of even the perusal of God's word on the Sabbath, which use the curious of the world make of it for a portion of that day, my time was taken up almost incessantly with business, and many of my times of leisure were spent in drinking, or gambling, and profane exclamations, or enlivened by the jest or filthy stories of the company, who, unfortunately for themselves, were pres-

sing headlong on in the same career with myself. At length, though under the partial influence of dissipation of about three days and three nights, I was tempted to commit the crime for which I was indicted on the 1st of December, 1820, and confined in Goshen jail from the 8th of the same month, until the Court of Oyer and Terminer, held at Newburgh, in April, 1821, when I was convicted and sentenced to TEN years hard labor in the state prison. I heard the sentence with an indifference which, no doubt, surprised many—and I have often, while sleepless in my dreary cell, been amazed and shocked since—vainly imagining that my friends and acquaintance would by their joint and repeated importunities with the executive of the state, fatigue him into a compliance with their and my wishes.

In a short time I was handed by the sheriff over to the keeper of the prison at Greenwich, in the city of New-York. Soon after I entered, I had an opportunity to make observations on the extraction, visages, and apparent disposition of many prisoners, who fell more immediately under my personal observation. The prison was crowded so that they were obliged to put as many as fourteen in a room; some of whom were as shameless of their conduct, and appeared to be as reckless of its consequences, as human beings could well be imagined.—The burthens of their conversations not unfrequently turned on their former projects of villiany—of their hair-breadth escapes—and their future intentions; whilst to my mind, although in a manner hardened by my desperate situation, yet the thoughts of the home that I had so wickedly and simply lost, would frequently occur, and call forth those tender feelings which you may well suppose dwell in a son—a husband—and a father's breast. At last my daily employment and time familiarised me to my unfortunate situation, and I entered with less hesitation, into amusements, and listened with increasing intensity to the histories that several gave of themselves, who were inmates of what may not improperly be called an earthly Pandemonium.

Those whose curiosity may induce them to peruse these pages, would, I presume, feel anxious that the writer should select some striking anecdote, and give the portraits of some distinguished convicts. Before doing this, I thought that the description of the prison—its yards—workshops, &c. would be necessary to a right understanding of many of the matters mentioned herein. The main building consisted of fifty-two rooms, with the addition of two blocks of cells, which last were intended as places of punishment for such as were indolent and refractory.

The writer makes no doubt that the intentions of the Commissioners were good; but I, although not now occupying the advantageous situation I did once in my life, must beg leave to

express my decided disapprobation of some of the personages in whose hands the sceptre of power was entrusted. Many of those that either deserved a wholesome chastisement, or unfortunately incurred the displeasure of some of the prison authorities, were bound neck and heels, in heavy fetters, where they lay from thirty to ninety days, and the only sustenance afforded them was bread and water, merely, (if I am not too uncharitable, which God forbid) not, as it would seem, to render life comfortable, but only to serve to bind together matter and mind, that the modern Nero's might feast their ferocious eyes, and satiate their tiger hearts. I have myself laid, thus hampered, on the false accusation of some of my room-mates, who attempted to break out of prison, for not informing the keeper that four of the company of our room intended to break out. Perhaps it may not be improper to mention the fact. D—— came into the room at evening; when we were locked up he distributed his tobacco amongst the prisoners, and then drew a knife, and called on God to damn him, if he would not put it through the heart of the first man who should notify the keeper or give the least signal of his intentions; as he said he would that night get his liberty. The remainder of the company said nothing, and went to bed. The keepers having suspicion of some such intention, took precaution, and entrapped the conspirators, and lodged them and us in the cells, in irons, for twelve days, although they admitted we had shown no intention to favor D——, and his accomplices.

I beg leave here to observe, that for the first seven years I behaved myself well, for the sake of enabling my friends to obtain a favorable report from the keeper, so that they might avail themselves of any disposition of the executive to extend the sceptre of mercy towards me; and the remainder of my time, in consequence of a change of heart, (I trust.) I did so from a sense of moral duty and Christian resignation.

Having in my description of the cells, digressed into a story of one of my wrongs, I shall now resume my description of the other parts of that establishment. There were nine shops for the employment of the convicts, and only one keeper to a shop, and about fifty to sixty men to each, so that in consequence it was impossible to keep the order that so uninterruptedly prevailed at Auburn. The public will undoubtedly ask, How could disorder prevail in the day time? Did the keepers stand by, and not promptly repress disorders, and frown down the countenance of the most audacious? My reply is, that the keepers had to be out occasionally, and advantage was taken by those that had resentments, to wreak them on some one, or who delighted to fish in troubled waters. Whilst the keepers were out, dice, cards, and chequers were introduced; wrestling, dancing, singing, and fighting, were practised. Bets, of-

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ten of the value of one hundred yards of tobacco, were made, who was the smartest fellow to wrestle, dance, or fight. The reader would ask, How did the prisoners get this tobacco, knowing that the article was not allowed by the regulations? I answer, that it was brought in by the contractors who got the work done; aye, and even rum, by those persons. I have seen men many times go to their rooms in an intoxicated state. On Sundays, in the hall, before going to church, cards, chequers, and dice, were played. Were these immoral practices allowed by the prison authorities on that day which God himself hallowed, by ceasing from his labors, and gave to us, his creatures, as a season of sacred rest; when, in the language of the pious Dr. Watts, we should say,

*"No mortal care shall cross my breast!"*

I answer, that, as I told you, there was only one keeper to take charge of about five hundred men, and four halls to go through, and the prisoners had men on the look out, called in the cant phrase of the prison, "*Piquet Guards*," who, on observing him coming from hall "one" to hall "three" would give the countersign, which was "*SALO*," and which would be repeated from one piquet to the other, as quick as a pigeon would fly; the keeper, when he appeared, would find all in order, and even some of those that were, by common consent, pronounced the worst in the prison, would be observed by him to be picking out passages of scripture, and even asking his assistance in their pretended search. You may ask, Did you not mingle in these diversions, which, according to your report to us, took place when you was an inmate of that prison? I answer, that even once, perhaps, in a month, I would not go into that hall, excepting when some great bet was on the tapis. I can say that I never played on the Sabbath, nor had I a dice, or a chequer in my hand while in that prison. Then how could it hurt your feelings, or offend your sense of propriety, seeing that you have acknowledged in the former part of this work, that you were a dissipated man, long before the commission of the crime for which you then were suffering the penalty? I answer, it would probably be hard to tell. Perhaps it was the effects of the instructions, care, and example of pious parents, together with unextinguished sparks of that laudable pride, which in early days glowed in my breast, that prevented me, although an avowed infidel at that time, from mingling with those who had, by their practices, said "away with him, for we will not have him to reign over us." I wish here to observe, that by reading some of the popular sceptical publications of that day, and listening to the plausible reasonings of many who were respected in the world, (the suggestions, I have no doubt, of that arch deceiver and common ad-



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versary of mankind,) I had succeeded to persuade myself that those parts of the Bible which no man of intelligence has ventured to disparage, had no higher authority than other veracious histories of ancient times, and that Moses availed himself of the ignorance of the people over whom he had control, in the same manner that other legislators, in barbarous ages long past by, did, to establish his authority and perpetuate his institutions. Yes, often have I, with levity, said (with poignant regret do I acknowledge it) that the blessed Redeemer of the world was not even the fruits of legitimate connubial union.

Before I proceed to a description of the hospital, and the schools that were kept every night during the winter season, I shall mention another practice that prevailed generally on the Sabbath, a practice that often caused a great difficulty among the prisoners, and led to a great deal of severe punishment, in consequence of dissatisfaction as to the unfairness (which some either felt or pretended to feel) with which they had been treated. The consequence was, that complaints were made to the keepers by the aggrieved, and the accused were often severely punished. The most adroit among the convicts by passing cloths that were manufactured in the prison, out of the window of the weaving shop to the clerk of *stone-yards*, (being himself a convict) had them passed out of the prison in candle boxes and barrels, also manufactured there. You will ask, who conveyed them out? I answer, generally the contractor's foremen, though I have reason to think that the contractors generally knew of the illicit traffic. How could you pass out goods that were manufactured, without being detected when you gave in your work? I answer, that by the warper laying his piece ten yards longer than required for us to turn in, we were enabled to save ten yards for ourselves, for the purpose of exportation, by which, and other means, we were enabled to procure the articles in which we speculated. The cloths which we sent out by means of these gentry, were of the finest quality; such as from one thousand to one thousand four hundred check, and gingham; the finest of shirting, and the finest quality of jean, and handkerchiefs. We, merchants, did not want to trade in low articles. What articles were brought in, in exchange for what was sent out? They were, tobacco, snuff, cheese, butter, pickles, onions, and not unfrequently, ardent spirits. These articles were brought under different disguises; sometimes in old casks that required to be dressed over again; at other times, in lumber. Many times small articles concealed in their coat pockets, which were screened from observation, by wearing a cloak, or great coat. Yes; I have known thirty yards of jean to be taken from the middle hall, after it was delivered into the hands of the keepers. How was this done? As the convicts handed in their cloths to the keeper in the middle

hall, and received from him their fillings, this cloth was taken off the shelves, and dropped into a barrel, and covered with fillings, and carried into the shop undiscovered. This made a great stir among the keepers, who made diligent search, but without effect, and Mr. Shaw, the overseer of the factory, was very much puzzled to account for its being taken, and said he did not know how to account for the abduction; declaring that he had never known of such a mysterious disappearance since he had been agent, which had been for a number of years. What did those chaps, who were, in the cant phrase of the prison, called "merchants," do with their merchandize, when they received the *foreign* articles. There were a great many men in our yards, who had friends in the city, who would send by the hands of the foremen of the contractors, money to the amount of from \$1 to \$10; and also, in hall five, they were flush of money. In case any of the persons concerned in passing the goods to hall five, out of the yard, were caught, they were severely punished with stripes and chains. The punishments were so severe that many would be turned from the cells to the hospital, where they died in a few days. As the foremen were rather shy of bringing in articles to hall five—as it was considered, generally, too dangerous to smuggle in that place in comparison to the yards—they would scarcely bring to them any thing but money; for which the inmates of that hall received from us, butter, cheese, &c. and when their money failed them, they, by the hands of the boss and clerk of the shoemakers, (being both convicts) transmitted shoes and boots, which they contrived, by cutting the leather, to have a few pairs of shoes and boots, per week, to spare, for the purpose of sending to us, which were transmitted to the city, by the same means as we did the gingham, &c. Our tobacco not unfrequently brought us from three to six shillings per pound. I have had as much as ten pounds of that article at a time.

Perhaps the reader will be surprised at me, when I give it as my opinion, that this robbery of the public was not always committed by those culpable yet unfortunate men; who, if some parts of their lives could not be spoken of but with severest animadversion, yet cooped up in a prison for years, deprived of many of the most common articles which you may often, if not every day, find on poor men's tables; made to work early and late, with the utmost care and industry; in some cases with great skill, and if properly stimulated by suitable encouragements, might have been returned to the world useful operatives, and quiet, peaceable citizens. Many of the keepers would agree with the agent to get a job done by prisoners to the amount of \$10, and, by placing tobacco and other articles so that those working for him might lay their hands on it, to encourage them to work for them to the amount of from

\$100 to \$150, and have it smuggled out of prison. Those men, who ought to have encouraged us by their uniform example of good conduct, whilst they made us begin to think all mankind were rascals, also made us ripe for rebellion, massacre, and plunder, by their villanous and cruel treatment of us. This prison was, instead of a place of reform, where a man, by judicious kindness, and a rational, mild, but firm government, might have been reformed, was, partly by the example of some of the keepers, and the unsuitable construction of the prisons and its appurtenances, made the nurse of vice and the gate of Hell. The respectable and intelligent reader will, perhaps, with a frown of indignation, say, dare you have the effrontery to say the commissioners were so simple and careless as to appoint such men to the stations they held, and such dupes as to be imposed on by them? I answer, they were not in every case, so unfortunate nor we so miserable. I will make mention here, that those keepers and contractors were not sworn as they were in Auburn.

As I just stated, the keepers were not all of one cast of mind, nor disposition of heart. I shall always remember with respect and gratitude, the names of Mr. John Demarest, Mr. — Wiley, Mr. John Orsborn, Mr. Timothy Dunn, Mr. — Rome, and others. Those gentlemen used all the means in their power to stimulate their charge to emulation in the race of usefulness and amendment: But, as I have already stated, the house, and perhaps the want of sufficient experience at the time, to carry into effect the benevolent intentions of the Legislature, rendered in some degree, in almost every case, their attempts abortive. In order to account, in some measure, why the State fell in debt every year, on account of the prison, I will mention, that tools, which were furnished by the State for the use of the prisoners, were sold by the bosses of the shops, (being convicts) to the foremen of the contractors for articles of a trifling value. I have known an anvil, which must have cost \$10, sold for not to exceed three pounds of tobacco. Bars of steel and iron, and all kinds of tools, during my time at that place, were sold to the foremen, to the amount, I presume, of \$300 or \$400. Some, may ask, how do you know this, and how can you satisfy us that this representation is correct? The answer is, that I have been informed by clerks, who were convicts, and confederates with us, and when we got together on Sundays, all who were privy to the nefarious doings were privileged to have the satisfaction of knowing the tricks of the past week. Was there no other clerk but convicts? I answer, that, the agent had one, (Mr. Ritter,) who was not; but I presume, that by a concert among the whole of the clerks, they squared the accounts, so as to draw the wool over *his* eyes. I will here observe, that I generally managed

to have many articles to sell, and the clerks usually resorted to me for such articles; thus admitting me to their confidence, more especially as I was one of those whose enterprises they had to conceal by false entries. This traffic went on for several years, until exposed by one Coffey, a man of talents, who was one of the convict clerks, and who, on receiving his pardon, published a book which he entitled "*States Prison turned inside out,*" which was read in my room; and we also had newspapers from the contractors and from the middle Hall, which were given to us by the convict clerks, where they had them regularly every week. This book being found on several, brought severe punishment upon them; and was the cause of 30 men being removed to the Auburn Prison. This book, was, I am told, a principal cause of that prison being broken up. Often an arch wag would filch a newspaper out of a keeper's hat, just by his side, to the no small surprise, I dare say, of him, and secret merriment of several. This book, many of my readers will recollect, after a considerable opposition for some days, was allowed to be read in the house of Assembly: after which, about 100 convicts, of whom I was one, were transported to Auburn, and the remainder to the new prison at Sing Sing, in the Spring of 1825.

The three commissioners, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Tibbits, and Mr. Allen, Mayor of the city of New York, were appointed to superintend the building of the new prison, on a better plan under improved regulations, and more suitable men. Some of my readers may think that those confined there, were all of the lowest class. They labor under a mistake: Some of them were men educated to the learned professions; some had been men of business, more or less extensive; others had borne offices from the state authorities or represented the people, and others had lived in respect and affluence in other countries. Such are the temptations that beset us all; and such, alas! is the frailty of vain, confident man, in all estates.

As I am now about to speak of the school of the prison, and the means taken to instruct the prisoners in the things pertaining to their eternal interests, I shall endeavor, though with diffidence, yet with firmness, to give you as correct an account as my memory serves me, and give my opinions thereon. As I am well aware that what I may say will be taken with many grains of allowance by some, and by others, scouted; yet I persuade myself that, at least, some will calmly and candidly listen to me.

Of the schools, I shall be brief, as I presume that they are generally understood to have been instituted for the sake of learning such unlettered persons as might be found there. As they were conducted by convicts, you could not expect more than the bare reading of scriptures, as I doubt if there were

but few, if any, that ever had the least religious impression made on them. The keeper, Mr. Rome, a pious gentleman of the Protestant Episcopal Church, did every thing in his power that respectable abilities and the means he had in his hands could be expected, to effect. But in the latter part of my confinement, I have reason to doubt, and believe, there were few, if any, that ever went out of the old prison with changed hearts; though, several, for what I know, may have obtained a degree of respect since, as citizens, as I had an opportunity of talking with nearly all, if not every one, that belonged to the yard.

The Rev. Mr. Standford, who had been a chaplain for many years, two Sundays in every month, and saw that his place was supplied when absent, but who was there every Wednesday, to converse with the sick in the hospital, at which time he read a chapter, went to prayer, and exhorted those assembled there; although he spoke to me at proper times, yet it made no impression on me, on account of my infidelity; yet I could not but respect his intentions, and admire his manners; and although I often heard him preach, it made no impression on my hard and flinty heart; and I do not remember the text of but one single sermon, which was "Galleo cares for none of these things," which, in the latter part of my confinement, took deep hold on my mind, and gave me many sleepless hours. Not far from the time when the sermon was preached, I was deeply affected by a letter from my wife, informing me of the death of a favorite child. The tender anxiety for my health and treatment, the anguish which she betrayed in her letter, and the despondency under which she evidently labored at the prospects of the difficulties she was encountering and about to meet in bringing up a large and young family, oppressed my mind, and made a visible appearance on my countenance, and in my demeanor. I soon began to be derided by my companions when opportunities offered for us to be together, saying, "Maroney is going to be religious, for Daddy Standford has whispered something in his ear." Had I then been in the Auburn prison, where I would have been confined in my cell alone, it might, for all I know, have had some effect on me, but their company led me off from my reflections, and I became as bad as before. Determined to have satisfaction for my time, I went on in my old schemes of roguery. I often wished, while in the old prison, that I was along with my child, as at that time I thought there was no future punishment, and that all who went out of the world were happy; but in the latter part of my time I had all reason to believe that I should have been (had my wishes been complied with) in endless torment; but still I have reason to hope the child is rejoicing with the Saviour, as he said—"Suffer little children to

come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

While in the Auburn prison, since when I became a believer in the word of God, I recollected with what anxiety those gentlemen who preached to us in the chapel of the prison, and conversed with us in our shops, and the yard, as well as the sadness which overspread my mind at the news of the death of my child, the following text came to my mind as applicable to my state of heart in former times of my imprisonment, Mark iv. 4. "And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it." And so it was that my evil companions put me out of the path of my duty, and the recollections of my increased depravity called to my mind the following verse, 2 Peter, ii. 22. "But it happened to them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

I shall now, after speaking of the hospital of that institution, close what I have to say of the old prison. The hospital was in the north wing, in the second story. It consisted of four rooms of the same size of the other rooms in the building.— This place not being sufficiently elevated to be kept completely ventilated, it was sufficient to make a well person sick, confined along with from six to eight sick persons in a room, laboring under different disorders. The stench, in some cases, was so offensive, as to sicken a well man on entering the room. I, myself, have entered there at different times to obtain medical relief, and have sought and applied for liberty to sleep in my own room at night, as the effluvia arising from the sick was so disgusting to my feelings, that I considered it the only way to escape more bodily affliction. The medical attendants were under the actual charge of young men, who were then in the course of their studies. I doubt not but that the physician of the prison was an able member of the profession, but he was present only once a week. These young men, no doubt, were persons of promise; yet they left the charge of making their prescriptions to one Maxwell, a convict, who was steward of the hospital, a keen, arch fellow, and a favorite of the officers of the prison; he is said to have administered a potion to a sick prisoner, which put an end to him in about fifteen minutes; and it is said that he first tried it on a cat, which died in about five minutes, and then damned his soul if he would not try it on one of the convicts, which it is said he did. It was rumored he had a deadly spite against the unfortunate victim of his hellish malice. Several of those, who, in the language of the prison, were termed "old soldiers," that is, those who were always complaining of some ailments or other, imposing on these inexperienced young men, who had, no doubt, re-

ceived at their innocent hands, drugs, that shortened their earthly career. The reader should not take the saying, that they were imposed upon, as meaning any disrespect to them. It was the old saying, "You could not expect to find an old man's head on young shoulders." Those experienced doctors who visited the prison once a week, gave the best directions, we presumed. But there was a want of confidence in the prisoners, generally; the steward's infidelity to his orders, and a settled conviction that he cared not for human life, when he hated a person.

As I am about to close with what I wished to say about the old prison, my feelings constrain me to make a few remarks on David Board, the principal keeper, and Mr. Gibson, the deputy keeper. Board was a quick-tempered and impetuous man; he hardly ever spoke civil, let alone kindly, to the prisoners. Few men could be called before him without receiving the severest punishments. And going through the yard, he would often fall afoul of them with whoop-poles and staves; and in the shops, with boot-cramps, and beat them in the most severe manner. I presume the reader will begin to think that such a being was unfit for the care of an institution, whose object was to render society safe, and reform the offender.—But it was not so with Mr. Gibson, the deputy keeper; he was a man of judgment, and possessed of humanity. Often has he reasoned the case with those reported to him, and advised the offender to circumspection in his conduct, and diligence in the discharge of his duties. "For," said he, to those called before him, "I wish you well; go to your work and behave yourselves; for we want, when your friends come here, to give you a good character, so that they may be enabled to obtain your pardon." Much more might be said, but I think that it would tire the reader, particularly, as the state no longer confine its prisoners there, and that I may be enabled to describe the prison at Auburn, which I think bids fair to effect, (what I think could be effected but very seldom, if at all) in such a place as the Greenwich prison. But I cannot refrain from saying, not long before I was removed to Auburn, I was put into the hospital. After having laid five days in irons, on a false accusation of taking handkerchiefs, my innocence was established by the confession of the perpetrator—but I got sick in consequence of it. I was about three weeks confined in the hospital, with a high fever, and racking pains, and frightful dreams. I had a dream which made a lively impression on me then, and which I misconstrued at that time, but have reason to think since, in Auburn, was an intimation of what God was going to do for my soul. It was as follows:—Going through a mirey ground, I shortly came to a stream, which I had great difficulty to get into. I found the waters of

it as clear as chrystal, and pebbles on the bottom as white as marble. I went through to the end of the stream, without any difficulty, where I found three men standing. I asked them what they were going to build there. They said, a mill. Says I, there are three gates. Yes, said they, there are to be three wheels. My business appearing to be with great haste, I turned from them, and saw the most beautiful place ever the eye beheld, and a road through it, as straight as an arrow, lined with trees, with their tops reaching the clouds, with the most beautiful flowers I ever beheld, or could even imagine. I then went with as great speed as a pigeon could fly. It appeared but a few moments before I came to a piece of ground that I thought I was well acquainted with. When coming to the crotch of the roads, there was a large house built, and these three men standing there. I asked them how they got there so soon, but they gave me no reply. I told them I thought that it was a dwelling house. They told me no, that it was a pigeon house. My business being urgent, I left them, and came to an orchard, where I used to resort with my youthful companions. The place being so natural to my feelings, I thought I would go and set under a tree. While sitting there, the sun rose with the most vehement heat, which surprised me; the sky being full of stars. Turning to get out of the heat of the sun, I observed another sun about in the middle of the firmament. The heat being so oppressive, turning to the right, I observed another sun, about two hours high, in the west. Then I awoke with terror, and with a wringing wet shirt. I thought the dream meant that, as I had lost one of my children, the three suns indicated the loss of two more, or one of them, and myself. Before I close this work, I will give the reader what I think was the meaning of this dream. Many will smile at what they may term superstition in me. I will merely quote Dr. Isaac Watts' opinion of dreams. He says, "that they are not altogether to be relied on, or entirely slighted."

At last, on the 1st of April, 1825, it was intimated to us that a large number of the prisoners were to be removed to the Auburn state prison. Expecting myself to be one of what I termed the unhappy class that had to go, I looked on myself as one, in my then state of mind, as about to be removed as it were (as a certain sect of professed Christians believe) from purgatory into hell; (pardon the expression) judging from the reports that we had of Auburn, by rumors that prevailed in the prison. On the 14th, we were put in irons, for removal. On the 15th, we left New-York, under charge of Capt. Linds, the principal keeper, with many other of his officers, and were as well treated as we could expect to be, considering what an unprincipled set of wretches we were under; for there was an almost incessant plying of clubs, from New-York to Auburn;



on the men's heads and shoulders. If a prisoner made the least movement, without permission, his head and shoulders were saluted with clubs; many of which were split or worn out on the passage, by beating the prisoners. David Mills, and some others, were those monsters of cruelty, which I hold up to the surprise and detestation of an indignant community. Even a smile on the countenance of one of the convicts, drew unexampled cruelties. At last, on the 20th of April, we arrived at the Auburn prison, amidst a storm of snow, wind, rain, and hail, with our irons on, where we had to stand in the yard for about two hours, before all the prisoners had their shackles knocked off; and as quick as two had their irons knocked off, they were put under the charge of one soldier, who said, That if there was the least motion made, or a smile seen, that he would drop them to the ground with a club. On entering our cells that night, we had to lay down in our wet clothes, without a blanket to cover us, which gave me the fever and ague, and was followed by the intermittent fever, which confined me to the hospital for several weeks, owing to that cruel treatment.

I shall now proceed to give an account of the prison at Auburn. The main building and the two wings were three stories high, on the outside, except the central parts of each, which were four stories high. The north wing contains five hundred and fifty solitary cells, with an addition of five dungeons. Although this wing is only three stories high on the outside, it is five stories high on the inside; having five tiers of galleries for the convenience of going into the cells. The cells being painted black, as also the doors and gratings, is sufficient to strike terror into the hardest heart, to go through the galleries as a spectator, let alone remaining there as a prisoner. And what makes the galleries appear more doleful, is, that the cells are kept perfectly white with lime, which makes a great contrast to a person going out of them into these gloomy galleries. The central part of the front of the building is occupied as a dwelling, by the principal keeper, and for the agent's office, and for many other purposes. I now proceed to the south wing. Two blocks in that wing, I supposed to be large enough to contain eight men, but I am uncertain as to their dimensions, as I never was in one of them. The other block consists of two stories of cells, amounting in all to fifty-two cells, large enough to contain two men each. The third story of the same block contains the place where the prisoners are assembled by the keepers, to hear a sermon, once every Sunday. The central part of the fourth story of the same building is occupied by the female prisoners. While a patient in the hospital, in the opposite side, the principal keeper, Judge Powers, came in, with some spectators, and while talking, some of the gentlemen said, "Do you keep prisoners

there?" the Judge replied, "We keep the women there."  
 "Do you keep them from talking?" "No," replied the  
 Judge, "that is beyond the power of man."

Now I will give you a slight description of the shops, and shall begin on the outside shop, which is adjoining the wall that runs around the prison. There are shops on the north, west, and south sides of the prison. Walls run from the south wing to the outer wall, as also another from the north wing to the contiguous outer wall, which make what is called the north and south yards. The south yard, formerly occupied as a garden, is now filled with manufactories, and shops of different kinds; turning in iron, brass, and wood, the latter of which is done by water power, as an aqueduct leads the water from \_\_\_\_\_ Lake. The turning is done in the best manner, and at the shortest notice. There is also a satinett factory, that goes by water, in the same yard. The remainder of the yard is occupied as a manufactory of buttons, for clothes; a tailor's shop; and lastly, a shop for making saddle-trees and haims, and other articles of wood. I will now pass on to the north yard. Next to the gate is a comb factory; next is a carpenter's shop; cooper's shop, and other buildings, for various purposes, particularly a stone cutter's shop. I now pass on to the shops in the big yard. The first is, the tool shop; the carpenter's shop; the shoe maker's shop; the bed tick factory; the button factory; (which is carried on on an extensive scale) the blacksmith's shop; a cabinet and chair maker's shop. Now, then the reader will inquire, as I was in a prison where there is such strict discipline, if no one is allowed to wander over the yards, and no one is allowed to speak, except when business renders it indispensably necessary. I answer, as I was getting to be an old man, and a long time confined, and being often at the hospital, (which latter place gave me a great opportunity to know what was going on,) I was the last year and a half made a waiter of, to bring water and run of errands. I was in different parts of the yards and shops, during which time I lost no opportunities of making observations.

I will make mention of the dining hall, wash room, and cooking place, and then I shall speak of the rules and regulations. The dining hall, wash room, and cooking room, was under the front and south part of the two blocks which I have already mentioned. I shall now proceed to the principal rules and regulations of the prison; as they are strictly enforced. The strictest rules are—that there shall be no talking; no making motions or signals of any kind; no laughing; no looking at spectators, when passing the yards or shops. When in a march to the dining hall, shops, or cells, the prisoners are to keep their eyes to the left, at all times. They march in companies, from forty to fifty-eight men, in close order, with their arms folded, and

keep time, as regular as a bass drummer, with the left foot. They are not allowed to write or receive communications from any of their friends, or articles of any kind; not even chalk, pencils, knives, nails, or strings, without permission from the keeper. I often thought that we were in worse bondage than the children of Israel, when under their Egyptian task-master. They cut off all intercourse, and made us solitary beings, in the midst of more than five hundred persons. I have seen men cruelly punished for a neglect of the foregoing regulations. Yes, even for looking out of the window, I saw a man get three dozen lashes at one time, with a raw-hide, that would bring the blood at every stroke, by a fellow named Wood. When we first got to Auburn, our punishments were of the most cruel kind; and not half enough to eat, accompanied with the hardest labor.

Perhaps the reader may get some idea of the treatment of the convicts, by reading the following lines of homely verse. I select the following, which, though it may not be admired for its poetry, may serve to give an idea of our misery.

WHEN first to Auburn we did get,  
But very little they gave us to eat;  
And when we asked for bread,  
That wretched Parks says, "shut up your head."

On the floor we had to lie,  
And if for blankets we would cry—  
With clubs, raw-hides and cats  
He beat our backs, 'till they were black and blue.

On the ladder he would us stretch,  
Straightway the raw-hide would he fetch:  
Three dozen we would take or more,  
'Till blood would run down to the floor.

Major Goodell, a stranger there—  
It often times made him to stare!  
And wretched Parks he turned away,  
And Colonel Camfield came that day.

Colonel Lewis I cannot pass by,  
He treats the men so tenderly;  
For with clubs, raw-hides and cats  
He don't beat our backs, 'till they're all black and blue.

Now we get enough to eat,  
And that that's very good;  
For blankets we no longer cry—  
The Judge gave us our full supply.

Now we can march up to the hall,  
 But not like bullocks to the stall;  
 We eat our victuals as we please,  
 And turn to our shops with greatest ease.

Clubs, raw-hides and cats now took a fall:  
 For wretched Parks did buy them all;  
 With clubs, raw-hides and cats  
 He beat our backs, 'till all was black and blue.

Now wretched Parks I'll bid farewell,  
 That rebel sure will go to hell;  
 Because, with clubs, raw-hides and cats  
 He beat our backs, 'till all was black and blue.

I'll put up my pen and write no more,  
 For wretched Parks they've shown the door;  
 Because, with clubs, raw-hides and cats  
 He beat our backs, 'till all was black and blue.

You see by the above, that the servitude of convicts at one time at the Auburn prison, was intolerable and unexpected—and even not provoked by a single individual of those culpable, though unfortunate men. I will say, that generally, all admitted the justness of their sentences, and appeared willing to conform to the regulations. But it must be expected that the human soul is active, and that those who have once tasted the sweets of society and liberty, will, in some moments of self-enjoyment, even in that dreary place, forget themselves, and commit some inadvertent breach of what I admit are wholesome regulations. Appeal to an intelligent, candid, and humane public to say, whether the benevolent objects of the Legislature were likely to be attained by those demons in human form, watchful as the hawk for its prey, and as unsatiable as the tiger when he had pounced upon it? The reader will understand that the deputy keeper has the whole administration of the discipline of the prison on his hands, as the principal keeper, being also agent, is almost entirely taken up with other matters. The deputy keeper, who, if you believe me, you can term no other than a modern Nero, was called Parks, now a resident of Auburn village. He was dismissed from his charge soon after Major Goodell came to be principal keeper. His walking stick was the top of a flour cask, whoop-pole, or the butt end of a keg pole, and he was constantly through the shops, and seldom entered a shop but several were cruelly punished with his walking stick, or by a turnkey, by his order. His walking stick was often well broomed. He seemed to have no regard for the improvement of the morals of the men. For

how could a man, who used his culpable, but unfortunate fellow-beings, in such an inhuman manner, have the least care for them? This man could neither have any regard for the interest of the state, or the welfare of society, by such conduct. It would seem that with demoniac fury he was determined to root out every good feeling that might have remained in their breasts. The plea of insanity could not be urged for him.—The bloody backs—the bruised limbs—the piercing cries and heart-rending groans of his victims, were music to his ears.—In fact, he went about, like a raging bear robbed of its whelps, his keen eye flashing with hell-born rage, with impunity for a length of time, made him think with Nebuchadnezzar—“who in all the earth is like unto me;”—but heaven, in pity to heinous offenders, heard their cries. Major Goodell, that gallant soldier—that unostentatious gentleman—that charitable Christian—was assigned to the charge of the prison. Surprised and indignant at his senseless as well as barbarous conduct, he wrote on his commission, *Mene Tekel Uphrasin*.

The reader may say, perhaps you feel irritated at him for just punishments which you received at his hands, and wish to injure him, if possible; but we wait till we see who are the witnesses you appeal to, to substantiate your charges. I answer, I appeal not to convicts, but to gentlemen, who were keepers, of different grades, in the prison, viz:—Col. Powers, (who was at that time a turnkey, but now deputy keeper of the prison,) Mr. Cobb, Mr. Horner, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Foote, who were then, and at the time I left prison, turnkeys, and I presume are now.

I cannot help stating one piece of conduct towards me, which was his clubbing me on the third day, for taking up the kid that contained my supper, with the wrong hand, even when I did not know the regulations entirely. He struck me on the right cheek bone, and made a scar that I will carry with me to my grave. On asking him what I had done, he said that I had taken up the kid with my wrong hand, and if that “*slight caution* did not do, he would try what *virtue* there was in a rawhide.” I shall here, for a while, leave this character, in my narrative, and pass on to the other subjects of this publication, merely remarking, that, at the time I experienced the piece of treatment last mentioned, I thought that if there was any hell, it was surely to be found within the range of his daily walks in the yards and workshops of our prison; and that his Infernal Majesty had been wronged when he was called *Satan*, instead of *Parks*. On the same day that this brute in human form was cashiered, Colonel Camfield (some time in 1825) entered on the duties of the vacant deputy keeper’s place. This gentleman was vigilant, intelligent, discreet, and kind—but firm. His appeal, in his peculiar manner, to considerations which

men will generally entertain when they see that compliance with what all knew would result to their own convenience, comfort and health, and perhaps the abridgement of their confinement, enlivened every heart, and animated us generally to a more punctilious regard to our duty, and at the same time, relaxation of whatever could safely be adopted consistent with doing our work with accuracy, neatness and despatch, as well as the health and gradual improvement of the dispositions of the convicts, and of consequence facilitate the arduous labors of those pious ministers of the gospel, who labored faithfully to pour the balm of consolation into our souls, and make us fit to pass the mystical Jordan, by whose gloomy stream

“No chilly winds nor poisonous breath  
Can reach that happy shore;  
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,  
Are felt and fear'd no more.”

Before I speak any more of this worthy gentleman and inestimable citizen, and soldier of the last war, I beg liberty to turn to our paternal keeper, the gallant Major Goodell. He came there some time in May, 1825, and died in January, 1826.—Among the first acts of his administration was the putting away of our wooden shoes. He also made and allowed us sufficient food; he began the construction of frames with a sacken bottom, almost equal to a bed; he allowed an additional blanket; he relaxed the severity of our punishment; but Death, who “knocks equally at the palaces of kings as at the door of the cottage,” levelled his unerring dart, and bore his virtuous spirit, we trust, “to the bosom of his Father and his God.” His brother soldiers of all ranks, his friends and neighbors, and even many of different political opinions, bore a tribute of respect to this “good citizen—this enterprising soldier—this prudent legislator—this consistent politician—and this humane master.” And while memory lasts, I, with other unfortunates, will remember him with gratitude and respect. His death was lamented by us all. In the midst of uncertainties who should be appointed to succeed him, our apprehensions were allayed, and our fears quieted, by the announcement of the appointment of Judge Powers; and Colonel Lewis, deputy keeper, who now is the keeper of the prison. (Colonel Camfield thought proper to resign, and carried with him the good wishes of us all.) Judge Powers, on the first Sunday after service, addressed us. He spoke with great effect on the minds of the inmates of the prison, generally. He told them that he was not a stranger to the rules of the prison; that he would render us comfortable, and keep up a wholesome police; that his object would be to render us a permanent benefit by endeavoring to reform our minds; and that corporal punish-

ments should only be resorted to when judicious measures and mild persuasions failed of their effects. In a short time after the house was organized, no man ever received more than a half dozen lashes, which many times were the reverse of what *Nebuchadnezzar Parks* called "slight cautions." Attempting to escape, or talking in their cells, were termed "capital offences;" and these deservedly brought down on the audacious, condign punishment.

I shall, for the present, turn to Colonel Lewis. I was about five years under him, and never knew him to raise his cane but to one man, "whom no authority could tame." He would talk to the men as an affectionate father would to his erring child; but if they were regardless of his well-intended advice, he was compelled to turn them over to a turn-key, I presume, thinking it beneath the dignity of his office, and abhorrent to his tender feelings to chastise them. I will speak of the turn-key of the shop where I was working, Malcom, who was the overseer of the factory. At the beginning of each and every week, I have known a man receive from him seventy-six lashes for a deficiency of one yard of cloth through the week—one-half of them were given with the butt end of a raw-hide. A man, (James Wallace) is now in prison, and much disabled in his back by the treatment of this barbarian. I knew him to punish twenty-five men in one day; some for deficiency in the work, and some for inferior workmanship.—This took place under Parks' administration, whose nefarious example was humbly copied by this sycophantic lick-spittle. His example blunted the feelings of all the other keepers in that shop, during the time he was in this prison; and rendered them almost as cruel as himself, except Mr. Richardson and Mr. Bevier.

I was informed by the steward of the hospital that this Malcom was a professor of religion, which served to render me more hostile to the religion of the Redeemer; and I listened with indifference to the exhortations of the clergy and viewed the Christian world with contempt and indignation, considering the great body dupes or designing rascals. If my memory serves me right, I think he was discharged in 1828. He relaxed his severity under the reign of Colonel Lewis, who, as I said before, followed up the reform began by Major Goodell. He was not turned away for his cruelty, but the reader may judge the reason from the following verses :

A convict for the judge did send,  
The secret to disclose;  
A convict's word I cannot take,  
Against such men as those.

Well, other proof you then shall have,  
 If to the shop you'll go ;  
 Yarn there sufficient you will find  
 For blankets—more than two.

Straight to the shop they then did go—  
 They searched it all around ;  
 Yarn enough they quickly saw,  
 And cotton balls so neatly wound.

Now Satan is cast out,  
 No more will he return ;  
 The judge the sentence on him pass'd,  
 For stealing of the yarn.

The reader must not think strange that, being confined to my workshop, until I became a waiter, I should know these things. I explain, that the workshop was the scene of his villiany. He made us wind spools of cotton so that it might be wound into balls, which he carried in his pockets, and also, cover-lid yarn. He threatened Thompson, a printer, and a man of ability, who will come out in September, who is now there, in the occupation of a cover-lid weaver, that if he gave the least intimation he should suffer for it. Fear compelled us to keep the secret, until one, bolder than the rest, sent for the principal and deputy keeper, who immediately came, when he told them of the nefarious conduct of Malcom; and search being made in the shops, enough was found to satisfy them.—Malcom received his walking papers; and I presume, that although he could advance to the attack like a certain animal with his tail curled over his back, retreated from us with it between his legs.

I will here make mention, that a young man, who was pardoned from that prison, obtained, some time after, admittance into the prison, as a spectator, and was shown all around the establishment with as much respect as if he had never been guilty of a single impropriety through life. He came back dressed as a gentleman; and the steward of the hospital told me, when I was confined there, that the doctor, though briefly, made the same obeisance to him as he did to other strangers of respectability. I was informed by a man, whom I had reason to believe, was told by a gentleman belonging to the establishment, that the treatment this young man received, had for its object to encourage him to perseverance, and to intimate to the prisoners, that the road to respectability was yet open to all.

I will make a remark or two relative to Fanning, one of the turn-keys. He came there in the month of September, 1825, under the administration of Parks. He would go round the



shops with a club in one hand, a raw-hide in the other, and punish for the slightest neglect of the regulations. He ranged about seeking for opportunities of displaying the barbarity of his disposition; and I believe that had he no other chance of exercising it he would have diverted himself like the cruel Domitian by sticking pins in flies and sporting in their misery. I believe that many men's days were shortened by the cruel usage they received from such men as the last mentioned. Hubbard, a very young man, urged on by Parks, Malcom and Fanning, was guilty of excesses in the use of his authority, and I have reason to think he has since regretted his treatment of several, for I have been told by the men of the shop over which he superintends, that he was respected and esteemed by all the men of his charge. Two of us were called before him once for breaking the strictest rule, while he punished the other severely for lying to him, I thought to myself that of two evils I would choose the least, and tell the truth. I said we were talking about the great change in his conduct towards the prisoners; he replied with a smile, 'I don't know what you spoke of, but this I know, that you were talking, and said, 'Maroney I have ever marked your conduct; it has been good'—and then counselled me like a son, advising me to be on my guard so as not to incur the penalties of violated regulations. As I am about to close my remarks on this young man, I cannot help expressing my conviction that had it been his fortune to have entered on the discharge of the duties of his office under a judicious, benevolent, vigilant and firm Keeper, he would not have had much, if any cause to regret his treatment of the prisoners.—But I do not suspect, since his change in the treatment of the men, that any one remembers him with hatred or a desire of revenge. But if some of the Egyptian task-masters felt as David did when he recollected the murder of Uriah, they would cry like him, "I have sinned against the Lord," or in other words, "deliver me from blood, guiltless, O God, thou God of my salvation," as I have reason to believe that Brown, Holmes and M'Niel's days were shortened by their cruel treatment of them. I will remark that there was formerly more punishments inflicted within one week than there was during the last two and a half years that I was there. Those gentlemen who evinced a humane disposition towards the prisoners, while they ensured the grateful recollections of the convicts under their charge, furthered the interest of the state, promoted the cause of moral reform, and can lie down on the bed of death without being disquieted by a single thorn that they have planted there by inhuman treatment of the meanest or vilest of their fellow creatures. I think it my duty to mention the names of those gentlemen who had compassion on the afflicted. They are as follows—viz: Mr. Horner, Mr. Barker,

Mr. Culliver and Mr. Foote. The latter gentleman punished me the worst that I ever was punished in my life, though he never struck me a blow, or put me in the cells. He says that "if you knew the feelings I have for you, as you are separated from your wife and children, and all that is near and dear to you, and deprived of all the comforts of life, you would not violate the rules, and I should not be under the necessity of punishing you for a violation of the rules, or even of calling you to an account in any manner." Had he given me two dozen with a raw-hide, I would not have felt it half as much, for the sound of those words are not out of my ears yet. I am now going to pass on to a statement of the means adopted to improve the morals and convey religious instruction.

It was in the latter part of the year 1825 when the Rev. Mr. Curtis, a Missionary from the state of Massachusetts arrived at Auburn and commenced his christian labours among the prisoners at that place. He had been there but a short time before he commenced a Sunday School. It was not taught by convicts, as was the case in the New-York Prison,) where I presume the sub-teachers considered it a drudgery, and perhaps *were not much mortified at failing in endeavoring to instruct,*) but by young gentlemen from the Theological Seminary in the village. They entered on their labours with all the advantage of being acquainted with the most improved methods of conveying instruction, and of exciting the attention of most of the indifferent, and recalling those feelings so creditable to human nature (that is speaking comparatively) which once glowed in their bosoms, and made them the hope of their parents and friends. These young gentlemen, enjoying the advantages of, I may say, the most extended education received by civilians in North America, possessed of a character which was a passport to the hospitalities of the mansion as well as the cottage—made themselves like their great prototype, "all things to all men, that grace might abound," and they had the happiness to succeed in learning those pupils who were not unlettered, to read and write well, among whom there were some who had been under a course of instruction in the New-York prison for three years, and had hardly advanced further than the first elements of our language. Mr. Curtis made it a rule to attend every day in the week, at dinner, to crave a blessing, in which he took occasion to introduce passages of Scripture applicable to our situation, and in such a manner as to arrest the attention of many, if not all, and make an impression more or less powerful on their minds and touching to their feelings.

He made it a rule every night in the week to make a prayer on the ground gallery, and by taking a different stand every night, we could hear at least two nights in a week, very dis-

tinctly, his prayers and the chapter he read in the bible, from the lowest to the highest gallery. When he first came many of us were prejudiced against him and thought that he would prompt the keepers to more watchfulness of our conduct, and unrelenting punishment of us; but some time before he left us we found that he was our friend, both for spiritual and temporal good. He also made it his duty every Sunday to visit a portion of the prisons, which took him ten weeks to get round—and such as he found enquiring their way to Zion he would assist on the way, give them his blessing and take an affectionate leave of them. During many of his visits to me I plainly told him my opinions did not correspond with his, as I did not believe that the Scriptures were the word of God. He reasoned with me on the subject in a candid and ingenious manner, and offered up his prayers with other servants of God for my conversion. His solicitude and affectionate manner commanded my respect and won my earnest attention to what he said, and I began to think that nothing but an earnest desire for my welfare could have induced him to labour with so much earnestness to convince me of my mistake, and his brotherly sympathy for my forlorn condition of soul assured me that he verily believed in what he preached. The last time he visited my cell I felt more grieved than when I received my sentence, and told him that I was going to lose my best friend. He told me that we were to have a fine man for his successor. After his departure the Rev. John Smith came to fill his place, who continued in the duties as above mentioned, until I left the prison. This gentleman displayed great zeal and tenderness for us, and introduced tracts and sermons for us to read on Sundays, in our cells, conversing with us, and advising us for our spiritual good, and I have reason to think that he will have many souls as crowns of rejoicing, from that prison, in the great day of accounts.

I will now pass on to the Hospital, in the fourth story, in the north wing. When we first came there it was under the care of Dr. Tuthill, of that village. It lay over the whole of that one block of buildings, with three windows on each side, which made the place airy and salubrious. He had a medicine room and kitchen attached to it. The Doctor was an able, attentive and kind physician. He was succeeded in November, 1825, by Dr. Morgan, and during the time of the latter gentleman, whom I left then still attending at the Hospital, I had an opportunity to become well acquainted with the regulations of the Hospital, as I had been there three or four weeks, sometimes a week at a time, for medicine, which I was allowed, and which I could not possibly do without. Among a number confined there as hospital patients, on the 22d October 1827, I was admitted, and underwent a surgical operation,

and every attention was paid, all was allowed that I asked for, or was necessary for my recovery ; and at all other times when admitted, I was as well taken care of as I could have been in my own house, when I was in my best estate. On the 24th of the same month a man by the name of Phillips was brought, taken with bleeding at the lungs. Dr. Morgan was immediately sent for, and after bleeding and giving such medicine as he thought proper, the bleeding at the lungs in a measure stopped, and the Doctor left the Hospital. A short time after he was gone the bleeding started more rapidly than at first ; he was immediately sent for again, but before he came the principal Keeper and Mr. Curtis, the chaplain of the prison came in, and I could not help but admire the tenderness that was shown by Judge Powers. He sat down on the bed and supported Phillips with one hand and held the bowl with the other. He could not have done more for one of his own family or friends.

My feelings overpowered me when I saw a gentleman of his rank in society setting down by the side of a convict, and view the victim of crime, misfortune and disease, with tender solicitude, while the tear of pity glistened in his eye. The recollection of the imperious Board and the tyrannic Parks rushed into my mind, and formed a disgusting contrast. Mr. Curtis endeavored with all his ability and in the tenderest manner to point him to the Saviour of mankind as his only refuge in his critical situation, and if the crowded state of the Hospital had not prevented, he would have made an audible prayer, and said, that as long as life remained he would pray incessantly for the salvation of his soul. As soon as could be expected Dr. Morgan arrived, who bled him again and laid a bladder of cold water on his stomach, gave some medicine, and told Mr. Curtis that was the last remedy. The blood being collected together, it was estimated that there was about seven quarts, besides some that was spilt. The 2 keepers, Mr. Curtis, and Judge Powers went away, leaving two keepers on duty. The Doctor remained, and did not think it beneath him to take up with a convict's bed, so as to be ready when occasion might require, saying that he was very weary. He gave directions that he should be waked up instantly whenever they might perceive the least symptoms of bleeding show itself again. I will remark that although he had generally from two to five students with him, he never allowed them to prescribe on their own judgment to patients, but would ask them what they would do in such and such cases, and when they answered incorrectly, he gave them his opinion, and would often tell how to proceed in a case so as to prevent the setting in of other complaints. The students had blank books, which they kept in their pockets, in which they appeared to make memorandums

of what had been administered to the patients, and the reason for so doing. Phillips recovered as soon as could be expected, and went to his shop, but no labour was required of him but what he had a mind to do, and as soon as he was able to travel, being a great distance from home, he was restored to liberty, I presume in consequence of his situation, Judge Powers thinking that the man had suffered enough.

I will here remark that any sick person need not ask for any thing a second time; the Doctor would go to their bed-side and ask them how they felt, how their appetite was—and I have often heard him say when they could not eat, "Try to think of something that you can eat, and it shall be got immediately." In fact the Doctor was a man eminent in his profession, faithful in the discharge of his arduous duties to the convicts, and treated those who needed his attention with decency and tenderness, and endeavored by his questions and answers to his students to rear up many to be active in removing the afflictions of the human family. I believe him to be an honest and humane man. And even when he turned away those arant lazy rogues, whom we termed "old soldiers," he treated them with civility, and told them when they needed medical assistance to come without hesitation, but they need not expect to impose upon him. I will relate an anecdote of him, and proceed to other subjects. A fellow came to him and stated his case. He felt his pulse, looked at his tongue, and replied good naturedly, "a soft pulse, a clean tongue, and a bright eye; sit down."

The reader will recollect that I have already informed him that I was for a great part of my life previous to my imprisonment, and until the last four years of my imprisonment an avowed unbeliever in the doctrines of the cross of Christ—but as I have observed, that after being guilty of a number of petty pieces of deception and imposition on the keepers of the prison at New-York, which, though they were inexcusable, strictly speaking, yet they were induced by a desire to procure what was my common fare at home, thinking that I ought to have something for my work, and stimulated by the applause of those for whom I was one of the means of getting articles of necessity into the prison, as well as a desire of revenge for bad treatment from some of the prison authorities, I had went on from bad to worse, until it pleased God to send a Minister of the Society of Friends to me and others. Before his coming I had been much concerned about my way of living, to which thoughts the reading of the bible undoubtedly, in a great part lead, which book I now and then read to kill time, as I was allowed no other at that time. The Rev. Mr. Coulter got up and told us that it was his turn to preach that day, but as the friends had applied to him, and another had applied to sup-

ply his turn, he had given place to the applicant, and wished us to pay attention to what would be said. My mind was already made up, for I was taken with the appearance of the preacher, and wished if possible to have my doubts resolved and my mind at ease that day. He got up, and stood as if amazed to behold such a number of ungodly men assembled together, and stood in a deep study for some time; his first words were, "I have not come to reproach you, but rather to sympathise with you."

He alluded to the laws of Moses in a pertinent manner, and then adverted to the sermons and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to such parts of the writings of the Apostles as were most applicable to our peculiar case, and then closed with remarks which awakened conviction in me of my sins, but did not leave me in despair. I was so overcome that I could not read any in the bible that day. It appeared that the heart within me was melting, and my eyes were filled with tears.—I was visited by Mr. Curtis a few days before he left the prison, and told him that I was a lost man. He said, "no—I would rather hear you say that than to hear you say that you was safe, when you was in the greatest danger. He gave me such council as he thought expedient for my case.

The next week I was visited by a travelling minister by the name of Ellsworth, being a remarkable tall and portly man. I said to him, "You look more like a soldier, or a boatswain on board of a man of war than you do like a preacher." In course of his discourse I thought that I was not mistaken as to his fitness for a soldier, (I mean a spiritual soldier,) for he seemed to have the whole christian armour in his possession, and well adjusted to him. He read to us the 26th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and took his text, 1st Peter, v. 6. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." "I was so affected when I went to my cell that I felt as though there was no more spirit in me—and amidst much agitation of mind and conflicting feelings, the words of the Psalmist occurred to me: Psalms, ix. 17, "The wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God." Yet I found consolation from the words of the prophet Isaiah, i. 18, "Come now let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow—though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Thus passed the afterpart of that day in alternate doubts, fears, terrors and hope. My state of mind was such that I had but little sleep for several nights.

Soon afterwards Mr. Curtis preached to us from Exodus, xx. 12, 18, "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou

shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." As I considered the divine laws nothing more than human institution, the result of necessity, and adopted by the generality of mankind for mutual convenience, I now became convinced that they were dictated again to mankind by God to Moses, and that he sanctioned their observance by the most awful penalties which he has given governments to the power to relax the temporal punishment in some points, under a more full manifestation of his glorious designs towards fallen man; but still I was left impressed with their awful heinousness in a moral point of view, and am fully persuaded that he views them as he always has done, and will punish as he always has done, with equal severity in the next world, and more or less by the dispensations of his providence in this. Then as I found myself a condemned sinner in the sight of God, I had to cry out in the language of Job, (not that I attempt to compare myself to any godly person mentioned in the scriptures, or even to any truly christian person that has lived since the volume of inspiration was closed,) "What then shall I do when God rises up, and when he visits what shall I answer him." I felt at many times that there was yet hope in my case in the following passages, which I will quote from the words of our Saviour: Mat. xi. 28, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

I took it that the word "all" in the foregoing quotation embraced my case, and it gave me great encouragement to apply to God in prayer, to search the scriptures and meditate thereon, and made me anxious to hear my minister preach, and improve the opportunities whenever they offered themselves in conversing with him in my solitary cell. A short time after this sermon was preached, while thinking on my past life, and how I had been led off by the devil into so many bad practices, a voice of a peculiar tone and commanding manner seemed to call me expressly by name, (and as we frequently had strange keepers, I took it that one of them had spoken to me: but it was not so,) a first and a second time; and the third time I covered up my head, and thought that night and for several months after that I should never hear that voice again till I stood before the bar of Christ. A short time after this I composed the following verses while lying on my bed at night:

Satan has a thousand charms,  
Says come to me and fear no harm;

Throws out his bait, the hook is hid—  
Taste and try, I know it's good.

Often he would come to me,  
An angel I took him to be ;  
He had new things always to tell,  
You need not fear, there is no hell.

When to the horse-race I would go,  
There Satan stood at my elbow—  
At night at the gambling-house I'd call,  
Satan was there amongst us all.

For council there I never lack'd.  
For Satan was always by my back ;  
The best of our citizens think this no crime,  
They will damn their souls, " I have made four times."

We cheat, and lye, and curse and swear,  
For Satan he stood always there,  
And when I'd want to turn a Jack,  
Satan would slip him out of the pack.

O ! now I do begin to see  
The plans that Satan laid for me,  
For often it was you did me tell,  
I need not fear, there is no hell.

Forty years you had me bound,  
No good in you I ever found—  
Go Satan—I'll serve you no more ;  
Oh God ! Expel him from my door.

Forty years you led me on,  
With lying lips and flattering tongue,  
But at last I did your hook perceive,  
Before you did me wholly have.

When I lay in my cell alone,  
A voice to me three times did come,  
Which made me tremble and to stare,  
Such voice I never heard before.

O Lord ! What is it I have done,  
That such a voice to me should come ?  
O God—come lead me to thy Son,  
That I this gaping hell may shun.



I shall now proceed on to the 8th day of June, 1828, which was the day on which the Rev. John Smith, the successor of the worthy Mr. Curtis, preached his first sermon, from those words of Luke, chap. xix. 42,—saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” Then I cried out to God, I am a lost man, and is my day of grace past? Then I prayed to God that the words of the prophet Jeremiah might not be fulfilled on me,—“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”—Then this passage I accidentally opened to that day: Jeremiah xxx. 12, 13, 14, verses; 12, “For thus saith the Lord, the bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous.” 13, “There is none to plead thy cause; thou mayest be bound up; thou hast no healing medicines.” 14, “All thy lovers have forgotten thee, they seek thee not: for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy; with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, because thy sins have increased.” “Why cryest thou for thine afflictions? thy sorrow is incurable, for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.” Then my sins arose in judgment against me; and even what the world call small faults seemed enough to drive to endless ruin my agitated soul.

About this time, in the course of my reading I came across this passage, in Job xxxiii. 27, 28, 29, 30: 27, “He looketh upon men; and if any say I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not.” 28, “He will deliver his soul from going to the pit, and his life shall see the light.” 29, “Lo, all these *things* worketh God oftentimes with man to bring back his soul from the pit to be enlightened with the light of the living.”

At this time I was in doubt whether the exercises of my mind and the consequent feelings were the result of the delusions of the devil, my own disordered imaginations or the mysterious workings of the holy Spirit, which, as our Saviour saith, “The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit.”—John iii. 7. Then another passage occurred from the Revelations, xiv. 9, 10, 11. 9, “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand,” 10, “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation! and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb.” 11, “And the smoke of their torment ascend-

eth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

Although I was not altogether without some instruction before I was cut off from the society of my fellow-citizens, and besides having read much in the Scriptures since my confinement, especially at Auburn, and had my understanding gradually enlightened by the conversation of the chaplain of the Prison and other ambassadors of Christ who occasionally visited us, I was perplexed to a very great degree, and at one time I doubted or was almost convinced: at another time I was beginning to hope and almost to rejoice, when again all these cheering prospects were dimmed by clouds of terrors that enveloped my soul in almost mortal despair, until at last he was pleased to begin to lift upon me the light of his light-giving countenance.

I will observe that with the exception of a few checks of conscience and gloomy feelings which I experienced now and then when in the prison at New-York, I spent the great part of my leisure time in utter thoughtlessness of my moral responsibility to God, or in sin and sorrow's ways, until between three or four years before I was discharged from the Auburn prison; and as in the latter Prison no paper was allowed, I could not make notes or memorandums of my thoughts and feelings, let alone the keeping of a journal of my experience, and therefore I may not have observed the order of time exactly—and if my readers should observe any discrepancy I hope they will attribute it to the above cause. I will endeavour to close my quotations from the holy Scriptures with the following, which occurred to me in the course of my meditations on the recollections of my past life. The following gave me much encouragement to apply myself to God in prayer, and devote myself more uninterruptedly to the reading of the Scriptures: Isaiah, xlv. 21, "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel, for thou art my servant; I have formed thee; thou art my servant, O Israel; thou shalt not be forgotten of me."— This passage gave me grounds to hope that God had the eye of a Father on me, and that although he smote me with one hand for transgressions, he was sustaining me with the other by forbearance and tender invitations in his word and its weekly ministration, to turn and live.

Shortly after this it appeared as though my transgressions were pardoned and my sins washed away by the blood of Christ. Feeling rejoiced at what I then thought and still think, a change of heart and freedom from the slavery of sin and Satan, I composed at several different times, some verses, two of which I here insert:

In my cell where I did lie,  
 With fetters and with chains,  
 A messenger to me did come,  
 With a pardon in his hand.

Surrounded with bolts and bars,  
 Where I was made secure,  
 The master workman soon appears  
 And opened me the door.

The chains of darkness seemed to drop from off my soul, and it walked forth in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free all that endeavour by his grace to obey his precepts and rely on his merits.

I shall now close this narrative in as few words as possible, after I make mention of the fire that consumed a work shop near that part of the prison where my cell was. It took fire in the silent hour of the night, when the keepers were all gone out of the galleries, except a few that were on duty. At the first alarm all were aroused from their slumbers; the glare of the flames and stifling smoke, the screeches of despair and the horrid oaths, together with the roar of the flame would have astounded the most collected mind and driven to despair the most resolute. As the keepers were not there until the flames almost began to pour their destructive fires upon us, I took hold of the grates and exhorted my fellow prisoners to flee to the throne of mercy, and to lay hold of the only anchor of hope which then seemed to be left us, the unmeritted compassion of our blessed Lord. As quick as it was possible we were all unlocked, and we all got into the main yard, when by the exertion of the keepers and the assistance of the citizens, the fire was subdued about four o'clock in the morning. We went to work as usual, and when I returned to my cell my mind was, I hope profitably, though severely exercised. I had for about three months given myself up to the will of my heavenly father, and I trust was resigned to his dispensations towards me, though I wished and prayed that he would have compassion on me and restore me once more to liberty and the sight of my children; that I might be able, with his blessing, to be of use to them, if not in matters of this world, yet in things pertaining to their eternal welfare.

I will here observe that when I returned to my cell in the evening I felt worse, if possible, than when I was let out that morning. That cell whose dreary appearance would have appalled the stoutest heart, even clad in the armour of innocence, seemed, with its window burnt out, an emblem of my desolate state. In the midst of my ruminations this passage occurred to me, and made an indellible impression on my

mind. It is as follows: Gen. xviii. 32, "And he said Oh, let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once more: peradventure ten shall be found there, and he said I will not destroy it (*them*) for ten's sake." I thought that probably there might have at least been ten keepers and prisoners, the number that Abraham prayed and that their prayers were heard,—and the first time that I opened my bible I found the following verses, Psalms cvii. 14, 15, "He brought them out of darkness and the shadows of death, and break their bands asunder. Oh that men might praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

This passage served to introduce to my mind a series of reflections, in the course of which a number of passages of Scripture occurred as I thought quite appropriate to my forlorn, yet not desperate state. The scenes of that night of conflagration and impending death lead me by a natural transition to those scenes that "Holy writ" predict when the assemblage of Adam's numerous posterity shall stand before the throne of their righteous judge, when the volume of remembrance shall be unrolled and, self convicted, they either shall fly from his presence in remidless despair—or triumphing with their victorious Redeemer, they shall make their triumphant entry into the gates of the New-Jerusalem, there to dwell forever with their Saviour and their God.

The next morning I went to my work. The beauty of the morning, the mild radiance of the rising sun had its effect on my feelings; and from contemplating the beauties of the visible heavens I was led to anticipate the glorious scenes that those who keep his commandments and trust in his promises, may truly expect to witness with unalloyed joy and transports evermore, and join in the song of the elders and the lamb, saying, thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. That night I composed the following verses, which I cannot forbear inserting in this place:

October, on the twenty-third,  
Was a doleful night to me;  
In my cell where I was locked  
The flames of fire to see.

Some of the men did curse and swear  
And some began to cry,  
"God have mercy on our souls,  
For we shall shortly die."

Then to the Lord I did pray

To have mercy on our souls,  
 For in the flames we shall be consumed,  
 Mortal man to see no more.

The smoke did us begin to choke,  
 Before the keepers come—  
 But shortly they did us unlock,  
 And to the yard we run.

Soon as we got into the yard,  
 For the engine we did run,  
 And by the help of God alone,  
 The flames were overcome.

Unto the Lord I will give praise,  
 For the wondrous works he did;  
 Come bow your hard and sinful hearts,  
 And mercy he will give.

For God is nothing else but love,  
 And that we well do know;  
 He'll give us time for to repent,  
 If to his Son we'll go.

O, Jesus is our friend—  
 Why will you longer fear;  
 Come unite your hearts with me,  
 And on this journey steer.

For the day will shortly come,  
 When we must all appear,  
 To give a true and strict account  
 Of all we have done here.

How will a sinner then appear,  
 Before a righteous God,  
 When they shall stand at his left hand,  
 To receive their just reward.

The roaring lion will stand there,  
 Ready to receive his prey;  
 Soon as the sentence is pass'd,  
 Their souls will take away.

The righteous they will all be there  
 In garments white and clean,  
 To take their stand at God's right hand,  
 Where all his saints shall be.

The following passage occurred to me while composing the foregoing verses: Rev. vii. 13, 17, with many other passages of a similar import. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

I shall now close this narrative, and beg leave to make a few remarks on one principal cause, (to wit, the use of ARDENT SPIRITS,) that gradually undermined my standing in the world, and lead to a dreary and disgraceful captivity for ten years. Besides using it for my own purposes and to treat my friends and workmen, in compliance with the customs of the times, I also kept it for sale at my bar and in my house for a number of years. I did not then think that a discreet use of it was likely to do any harm to a person who would use common resolution, and I thought the fellow a fool who would expose himself to be pillaged by gamblers, cheated by jockeys, derided by the vilest, and perhaps laid up for life by some "untoward" battle or accident. As this part of moral economy has of late elicited the talents of some of the ablest and best of the citizens of these states, in endeavouring by their writings and addresses to the public at different times, as well as the example which they have set and prevailed on others to copy, I shall be brief. If I had had my mind enlightened by the productions of able and popular writers, and had the benefit of the private cautions of discreet and exemplary advisers, it is possible that I should have not now had cause, (while endeavouring to arrest possibly some in their mad career) to publish my own shame and dishonour. The article of ardent spirits was then generally used by even the discreet drinker and is even now to a great extent, yet I have reason to think that although many have foregone that enchanting beverage, their numbers are as to those who indulge in it as a drop in the bucket and the dust in the balance. It would be ridiculous for me, even if I were capable, to descant in the most glowing language on the effects it has on the body and mind. It is perceptible to all, from the clown to the experienced physician, the result of the indulgence is invariably a deterioration of mind, and loss of standing in every class of society; that the unhappy victim of a licentious indulgence moves and reduces him to a simpleton or transforms him into a brute.

I have in my time of confinement seen at least fifteen hundred men consigned to the walls of a criminal prison—and but very few of them that I had acquaintance with while confined at New-York, where they allowed us to talk, but almost invulnerable traced their miserable condition, at least to an improper

indulgence in the use of ardent sprits. I have been now, (in consequence of the regulations of the prisons in which I have been,) nearly eleven years since I have tasted ardent spirits, a part of which time I have suffered by sickness and rigid treatment, and I now enjoy good health, although I am not perhaps so vigorous as some men of my age are.

I address myself to all, and especially to the youth of the land. I recommend them (as one who knows by sad experience,) to pause and well weigh the matter in all its bearings before they proceed further in a practice that has made many insignificant, and covered them with rags or disgrace, and brought families to desolation and mourning parents down to the grave.

I now shall in a few words state that at last the term of my imprisonment drew nigh, and for a few days very little was required of me, as I was beginning to be an old man and had served so long; some of the keepers knew of my having a family left behind, and condescended kindly to converse with me, and on the morning of the 13th April, 1831, after breakfast I was accompanied out by Mr. Brown, one of the keepers, and the Rev. John Smith, chaplain of the prison—I was once more at liberty to return to my children and friends. The two last gentlemen gave me the best advice they possibly could, and I left them with the blessings of our pious clergyman, and the good wishes of the keeper, and proceeded towards my native county.

I stopped at my brothers; and many of my friends and old neighbours, on hearing of my arrival, assembled around me, and told me that if I had come in the state of mind I left them they said that they would never have wished to see my face again—and the second night after I got among them I composed the following lines:

When from the prison I returned,  
I never received a frown;  
My brother took me by the hand,  
And bid me welcome home.

The neighbours they do all rejoice,  
That such wondrous works was done;  
The wandering rebel has returned  
And made his peace with God.

The children they did all flock round,  
Their uncle for to see,  
Who by the help of Christ alone,  
Has gained the victory.

They that me did once despise,  
 And on the other side did pass me by,  
 Now they take me by the hand,  
 And praise the wondrous works of God.

When I do look around  
 And see what I have done,  
 It makes me for to rejoice,  
 That God has not cut me down.

My Saviour I used to despise—  
 I treated him with shame ;  
 But now my soul is filled with love  
 That Christ is not ashamed of me.

After a few days' stay with them I quitted them for home, accompanied by the good wishes of all, and the pious exhortations of some—and arrived among my children May 5th 1831, after better than ten years absence, where I was received kindly by my children and surviving friends.

A few words to the public, under whose eye this narrative is now placed.—I am well aware that many of you may think that I am a canting hypocrite, meditating new schemes of villainy—and that this publication is designed to lull the apprehensive to fatal repose. But those who know me I dare say are persuaded that I have no motive to commence any unlawful enterprises—and that my age, my long and wearisome imprisonment, and the kind treatment of my children invite me to spend the remainder of my life in the bosom of their families. Perhaps some criticising eye may discover some discrepancies in the narrative. If there should be any to be found I am not aware of it. And it should be remembered that this was written down in haste from my own recollection, and committed to press without a revision. One of the reasons why I publish this is that I wish to state that I foolishly volunteered, in a state of intoxication, to testify to what I knew nothing about—for which I have severely and justly suffered; and also that I thought that the perusal of these pages might possibly arrest some, if not many.



