

**REMARKS ON THE FORM  
AND CONSTRUCTION  
OF PRISONS: WITH  
APPROPRIATE DESIGNS**

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Remarks on the Form and Construction of Prisons: With Appropriate Designs by Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline

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**SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRISON DISCIPLINE**

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REMARKS *S.H. 1827.*  
ON THE  
FORM AND CONSTRUCTION  
OF  
PRISONS:  
WITH  
APPROPRIATE DESIGNS

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ILLUSTRATED BY ENGRAVINGS.

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PUBLISHED BY  
THE COMMITTEE  
OF  
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P R E F A C E.

Few Acts of the Legislature, during the present reign, reflect upon it more real lustre than the Laws which have been framed for the consolidation of the Prison Statutes, and the improved government of Gaols. These Laws are founded upon principles of Criminal Jurisprudence, the truth of which reason sanctions and experience has confirmed. They provide, not only for the safe custody of the prisoner, but also for the preservation of his health, the correction of his guilt, and the reform of his morals: and they distinctly recognise those plans of discipline, by which alone these desirable objects can be attained;—viz. Inspection, Classification, Hard labour, and Religious instruction.

There is, however, one point connected with the right management of Gaols, the neglect of which often renders the wisest enactments of the Legislature, and the most beneficial plans of the Magistracy, partial and unavailing. The Committee refer to the proper *Construction* of Prisons. This is a subject on which very erroneous opinions exist, and there is none on which it is more important that correct notions should prevail. An architect when employed to furnish the

plan of a gaol, from his own want of information on the subject of prison discipline, usually has recourse to some other gaol as a model:—but he has no general principles to guide his selection; and the number of prisons worthy of imitation is small indeed.

Of the prisons in this country, several were not built for the confinement of criminals; while others, designed for penal imprisonment, were erected at a period when the safe custody of the offender was regarded as the only object worthy of attention. It is painful to add that this observation applies to more than one prison erected in modern times, and which are not less remarkable for the inefficiency of their plans than for inattention to economy. From the entire absence of the power of *Inspection* in these buildings, it would seem as if it had been expressly designed to exclude the prisoner from observation, and thus to afford indulgence to idleness and insubordination; while their imperfect means of *Classification* give full scope to corrupt intercourse and mutual debasement. Other defects furnish proofs but too decisive that much information is still required to be diffused in this hitherto neglected department of civil architecture.

To present the Public with a series of examples that shall at once illustrate the evils of defective, and the advantages of well-arranged designs for Gaols, &c. is the object of this Tract; which is submitted to the Magistracy, and to those



professional gentlemen whose services may be engaged in this branch of architecture, in the hope that it will facilitate their labours, and contribute to the general adoption of an improved system of prison construction.

It is an act no less of pleasure than of gratitude, on the part of the Committee, to record their obligations to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department, for the liberty of access which he has kindly afforded them to the collection of prison plans deposited in his office; a privilege, to which the Committee have been indebted for some useful materials in preparing this publication.

London, November 1, 1828.

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