

Central Prison, the mode of punishment, and other treatment therein practised; the duties of the various officers connected therewith, with power to send for persons and papers, and examine under oath." He contended that the House was bound to make a full, fair, and impartial enquiry into the matters all-ged in reference to the Central Prison. He was not actuated by any feeling of maudlin sentimentality. He believed law breakers should be fully punished, but he believed it to be his duty to make this motion, and if a Committee were granted, thought he could bring some startling evidence before it. He believed he could establish the fact that the punishments inflicted had degenerated into barbarous cruelies and tortures; that the food had been often impure and had hence led to disease and insubordination; that there had been jobbery in regard to the supplies; that among the guards there had been partiality and want of proper discipline; that there had been a want of vigilance in preventing escapes; a refusal to allow friends to see the prisoners when dying; a refusal to send for medical men and clergymen when prisoners were dying, though they begged for them, drunkenness on the part of the Chief Warden; and many other matters. Partiality had been shown by favouritism to some prisoners and extra and illegal punishment to others. Some had been allowed to smoke and others refused, and some to make bone ornaments which were appropriated by the guards, and others forbidden. The chief guard had carried his vengeance so far as to shave the heads of those prisoners who were not his favourites when they were about to leave the prison, so as to stamp them with the brand of Cain when they were re-entering the world. The power of punishment seemed to have been left almost exclusively to the "man Friday"—the chief guard—and that was not surprising seeing the general condition of the Chief Warden. If a prisoner threatened to ventilate his treatment in the prison, this monster in human form, this disciple of Nana Sahib, Stedman, treated him with extraordinary kindness shortly before his discharge. One man's wife had bestowed presents on Stedman, in return for which her husband was allowed the luxury of growing whiskers. He objected to a prison guard running races and dancing with the prisoners, and then beating them with a club if they did not please him. The employment of men as music teachers and painters for the Warden's family was a misappropriation of prison labour. During two years or a little more forty-two guards had been dismissed or had resigned, and thus the guards were unable to gain the necessary experience. According to the information he had received either the physician in attendance had shamefully neglected prisoners, or if the doctor was absent, then some one else was to blame. Furthermore, he understood that after one prisoner named McKilvey, who had been so neglected, had died, the Coroner had been refused admission by the order of the Warden. In other cases patients who were suffering from the incipient stages of typhoid fever had been compelled to work at breaking stones, and had been severely beaten because they found themselves unable to work. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) was inclined to think that the reason the Coroner had been refused admission in the case he had mentioned was because Mr. Stedman's stick had been too freely used among the prisoners. McKilvey in his dying moments had asked that a priest might be sent to him in order that he might receive the sacrament of extreme unction. This had been denied him, and those who knew the meaning of that rite of the Roman Catholic Church to its members would be able to sympathize with his sufferings. A certain newspaper organ had during the last elections urged that members of a certain Church would find it to their interest to support the Reform party because they had a co-religionist in the present Government; but he thought that if McKilvey in his dying hours had been asked his opinion after he had been refused the consolations of religion, he would have said, "If such be our friends, then save me from them." There was abundant evidence that the Warden had been repeatedly drunk while on duty; and the Warden, as a military man, would himself be aware of how seriously that offence was regarded in the army. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) believed that the principal object of prison labour was the reclamation of criminals; but how could they expect prisoners to reform with such examples as they had before them? He understood that on one occasion the Warden attempted to read the Scriptures to the prisoners when

he was so drunk that every one observed his condition. There seemed to be no effort made for the moral elevation of the prisoners. He understood that before Stedman had been appointed it was the custom to furnish the Young Men's Christian Association with a list of the prisoners as they were dismissed, in order that efforts might be made for their moral welfare, but that had been discontinued after Stedman's appointment. A young man named Dillon had been struck over the eye with a large stick and felled to the floor. He had then been confined in a dark cell and had afterwards been made to break stones. Lewis, a lunatic, who had been in the habit of yelling, was struck with a large iron beam so severely that he bore the marks when he was afterwards sent to the Lunatic Asylum. He referred to other alleged cruelties perpetrated upon prisoners named Patterson, Comstock, Finlayson, O'Shaughnessy, and others. It was true that an inquiry had been made into these circumstances, and published, and he wished to say that he did not impugn in any way the integrity of the hon. gentlemen who had presided over that enquiry. But it was not to be expected that an impartial trial could be secured when the persons against whom the charges were made were the judges, jurors, and prisoners. What was needed was a fair committee where evidence might be given without fear, favour, or affection. The report which had been made was perhaps in accordance with the facts elicited; but the circumstances were most unfavourable for a full investigation. Animals were protected by law against cruelty, and surely men ought to be similarly protected. He felt that the erring mortals who were sent to a prison should not be cut off from all hope of reform. This matter was no light one, and deserved the attention of the country.

Mr. WOOD said that some time in 1875 the Prison Inspector, acting under the statute, held an investigation into the affairs of the Central Prison. Subsequent to that certain rumours and statements of discharged guards and prisoners were circulated, and the Government authorized him (Mr. Wood) to make an investigation. That investigation lasted two or three weeks, and generally from the morning to ten or eleven o'clock each night, and was of the most searching kind. He had felt the great responsibility resting upon him, and had assured the guards who might have feared dismissal that the evidence given by them should not affect their position. These two investigations were thorough in regard to the discipline, management, punishment, and dietary of the prison from its commencement to October, 1876 (Hear, hear) The evidence covered 300 pages of foolscap and was in the hands of the printers, and this motion ought fairly to have been postponed till it was in the hands of hon. members.

The hon. gentleman was still on his feet when, it being six o'clock, the Speaker left the chair.

After recess,

#### PRIVATE BILLS.

The following Bills passed through Committee:—

Mr. Widdifield—For the incorporation of the Conference of the Christian Church in Canada.

Mr. Broder—Respecting St. John's Church, Iroquois.

Mr. Patterson (Essex)—Respecting by-law No. 240 of the town of Windsor.

Mr. Long—To legalize a by-law of the county of Simcoe.

Mr. Hardy—Respecting the Presbyterian Church at Orlilla.

Mr. O'Donoghue—To amend the Water-Works Act of the city of Ottawa.

Mr. Wigle—To incorporate the Leamington, Comber, and Lake St. Clair Railway Company.

Mr. Williams—To incorporate the Standard Fire and Marine Insurance Company.

Mr. Paxton—To amend the Acts relating to the Whitby and Port Perry Extension Railway Company.

Mr. McDougall (Middlesex)—To incorporate the Niagara and St. Catharines Railroad and Steamboat Company.

Mr. Cameron—To legalize a by-law and certain debentures of the city of Toronto.

The following Bills were read the second time:—

Mr. Wilson—To incorporate the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.