

of space, decidedly make a central gaol ; but I hold it is much more a question of active inspection, of punishment, and good officers. *Mr. Rolleston.*

1307. But there are two questions. We have overwhelming evidence now from everywhere that the gaols are overcrowded. That is different from the question of improvement. With the necessity for this I quite agree ; but what I want to understand is, whether an increase of the local gaol buildings ought to be the first consideration, or the construction of a central gaol for drafting the long-sentence men to ?—Well, my own opinion is that the majority of the cases in our prisons are not cases of a professional criminal character, and that therefore an improvement of the local gaols would be the first step towards a thorough improvement. 20th Sept., 1878.

1308. That is not an answer ?—Well, classification and improvement of the local gaols.

1309. Then, your answer is that you think the local gaols should be added to before a central gaol is built ?—Yes ; that is my answer.

*The Chairman :* The point really is, whether classification should be made in the local gaols, or whether by drafting out the long-sentence men. I understand that Mr. Rolleston advises that it should be locally done.

1310. *Mr. Swanson.* Can you tell the Committee of any plan by which the gaol system can be made deterrent with regard to prisoners who go in for the first time ?—I have no doubt that classification is wanted for that purpose, and that first offenders should be sharply dealt with. The sentence should be short and sharp.

1311. Do you think it is desirable that a man in gaol should get an opportunity, by working extra, to earn a few shillings for himself, to be given to him when he comes out ?—I am strongly in favour of prisoners having money given to them, with proper precautions, when they come out. It would give them a chance to start in the world.

1312. Would it not be advisable to encourage them to exert themselves ?—I think the amount might be in proportion to the good character of the prisoner, but I do not see how you can interfere with the mark-system as at present laid down. That is framed to meet the cases generally.

1313. Now, a man that does the Government stroke may be very good and very quiet, and there may be no fear of his running away or giving the warder any trouble, and he will get his marks, whereas another man that does double the work and is equally as quiet—should he not be encouraged ?—I think he ought.