

J. S. Deerson Esq:
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Dear Sir:

I have yours of July 1st. Allow me to thank you for the suggestion of error in the Congregationalist article.

I think you will find the error to be yours.

Corporal punishment was prohibited by order of the Major General Commanding the District of Virginia in 1865, and this prohibition was continued by the provisions of the Constitution of 1868. It was partially revised in 1874 by making whipping an optional punishment. Up to that time ~~newly~~ most, if not all felonies were punished corporally, embracing all forms of larceny, arson, forgery, manslaughter, and perjury, while murder, rape and some special offenses made necessary by the system of slavery were punished capitally. There ~~may~~ ^{on parole} have been a sort of overflow county-jail, at Richmond which was called a "penitentiary"; ~~I do not think~~ ~~was~~ ~~you~~. There could not have been a "penitentiary or state prison" under the system of laws then in force unless it were of a purely ornamental character. I had some months

experience of prison life in Richmond, three years later, ⁽¹⁸⁷³⁾
myself (as warden a penitentiary) and lived just on the southern
border of the state, in the practice of my profession from
1865 until 1880. I am conversant, therefore, with the
system of punishment in vogue in that state and the
contrivances evoked by its change.

Very respectfully

Albin D. Sawyer

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015