

## REPORT.

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The Undersigned, a member of the Select Committee, to whom was referred the memorial of sundry citizens of the city of Baltimore, complaining of inequitable operation of the manufactures of the Penitentiary on the mechanics, particularly the weavers of that city, and asking for some change in the system heretofore established and now in force, begs leave to present to the House his views of the subject.

The memorialists allege that the manufactures of the Penitentiary, particularly the making of checks, plaids and linseys, come into ruinous conflict with the operations of the weavers—that the cost of convict labor is much cheaper than that of the out-door operation, by reason of which the Penitentiary is enabled to bring into market a better article at a less price—and that the credit and wealth of the State being brought into requisition to supply the demands of that institution, the directors make their purchases on more favorable terms, and which gives an additional advantage over the private manufacturer.

The undersigned is decidedly of opinion that the operations of that institution do not come into injurious conflict with the out-door weaver. That the business of the loom manufacturer has within a few years greatly diminished is certainly true; but that diminution has not been accelerated by the manufactures of that institution—nor is the diminution confined to the city of Baltimore; it extends over the whole Union, in fact over the world. There is not now a tythe of the hand loom work brought into market, that there formerly was. The improvements in machinery, and the introduction of the power loom into general use, have produced fabrics of a different kind at a cheaper rate, which have supplanted in a great measure the checks and plaids of hand loom manufacture. Time was when almost every family manufactured a great proportion of the fabrics for its own consumption. This is not now the case; private looms have nearly disappeared, and casting about for the reason of their departure, we at once perceive that the fabrics of power loom construction, which are produced at less cost to the consumer, have been substituted for the former made on them. This cause has produced all the depression to the hand loom weaver which is attributed to the Penitentiary