

MARYLAND PENITENTIARY.

This reformatory institution of the State, was the first visited and is under the very efficient wardenship of Mark W. C. Thompson, Esq., assisted by a corps of faithful officers. From a careful and thorough examination of the building, its arrangements, workings and accommodations, your committee must express its astonishment that the Board of Visitors, are enabled to present such a very gratifying exhibit of its prosperity, freedom from debt, surplus in hand, security, and excellent sanitary condition. When erected, (over fifty years since,) the building was only designed to confine about 350 prisoners, and for this number the arrangements were sufficient, but now, when 636 human beings are incarcerated within its walls, it must be observed that proper prison discipline, sanitary rules and regulations, (absolutely indispensable to health,) cannot be enforced, and consequently contributes to breaking down the objects and aims of the institution in so far as some of the convicts are concerned, and of introducing among them a spirit of idleness, notwithstanding the untiring efforts of the warden and his assistants to prevent it. But little more than one-half of the convicts are employed under the contract system inaugurated by the visitors, and this on account of want of room in which to work them all, or space on which to erect suitable buildings for workshops.

Of those at present employed there are engaged as follows :

In Manufacturing Brooms and Wooden Ware,	116
Manufacturing Chairs and Cabinet Ware,	90
Manufacturing Tin Ware, &c.,	70
Manufacturing Boots and Shoes,	35
	311

And of Females employed in Binding and

Lining Shoes	30
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This leaves 295 convicts not contracted for, namely :

242 males and 53 females.

The ground occupied by the penitentiary and enclosed by the walls, is about four acres in extent. So much of it is covered by buildings that the room required for the storage of stock belonging to the institution and to contractors, is insufficient for the purpose.

Not a single shop or room is now vacant, in which any kind of business can be pursued. The prospect, therefore,