

The Auburn prison was commenced in 1816, but has since undergone various alterations, and has had many additions made to it. It is situated in Cayuga county, New York, and all the criminals convicted in the five upper Senatorial districts of that State, are confined in it. The other three Senatorial districts, send their convicts to the prison at Sing Sing, which is conducted under the same discipline. It occupies a piece of ground, forming a square five hundred feet in length, each way, inclosed with a boundary-wall two thousand feet in extent, thirty feet high, and four feet thick at the base. There is a large building containing a sufficient number of cells, and which are appropriated exclusively to the lodging of the convicts. They are thus kept separate at night, but work in common during the day in workshops under the supervision of guards, some of whom are concealed within secret galleries, extending through each of the apartments, and, from any point, affording a view of the whole interior and of each individual among its occupants. By this means any infraction of the rules is surely detected, and the rule is, that punishment shall immediately follow.

The shops are so provided, that it is unnecessary for the convicts to quit them at any other times than when marching to their meals or the cells, and are so regulated, that in the performance of his work, no convict need leave his particular station, which, on the contrary, he is required constantly to maintain. In marching to their meals, or the cells, and in returning, the lock-step is used, for the purpose of contracting the line of each company of convicts, and facilitating their inspection by the guards. On these occasions, as well as all others, they are strictly watched by keepers, some of whom, as in the shops, are concealed from the view of the convicts. In performing the march, the convicts are all required to fix their heads in the same direction, in order that the lips of each may be observed.

In some of the prisons regulated by the Auburn discipline, the meals are taken in the cells, into which the convicts are marched for that purpose. Such is the case at the State prison, at Charlestown, near Boston. The food is passed through apertures in the wall of the cookery to the convicts, who receive it as they march from labor, in divisions, by single files, to their cells, where they eat their meals in solitude. The same practice prevails at Sing Sing prison on the Hudson river, 32 miles from the city of New York. In others, and at the Auburn prison itself, and also at the Maryland prison, the meals are taken in an apartment provided with the appropriate furniture, and especially with the means of general supervision. On entering the mess-room they face round to their plates, and stand in their places until all are assembled, when a signal being given, they instantly sit down to their meals. The places of the convicts at table are so arranged that if any one is absent, from accident or design, he is instantly missed. The tables are narrow, and the prisoners set on one side only, and are never placed face to face, in order