

the citizens of Maryland, to an equal, if not a greater, extent than that which composes the principal labor of the inmates of the Penitentiary. Even power-loom manufactures, if they could be rendered profitable, are also carried on in Maryland to some extent."— (*Vide* Testimony, p. 29.)

To the 34th interrogatory, they say: "The Directors abandoned other branches of manufacture, and put the larger portion of the convicts to weaving, because that business had become more profitable; gave useful employment to the aged, the infirm and decrepid, in winding, spooling, &c., who could do little or nothing else; and because weaving requires little previous apprenticeship. It requires commonly about six months for a learner to do the ordinary task. If the convicts were put to weaving the same goods as are made by power looms, there is no question in our minds that the labor of the convicts could not be made to support the institution; and we know of no other species of labor in which the prisoners could be employed, and thereby sustain the institution."

To the 61st interrogatory, they answer: "In regard to the general subject of the complaints against the labor of the Penitentiary, we beg leave to offer some remarks, which seem to us to be invited by this general inquiry.

"The late excitement against Penitentiary labor was raised chiefly, it is understood, by the weavers of this city, whose number, we are assured, does not exceed one hundred and fifty. They allege that the labor of the Penitentiary comes into an injurious competition with theirs, and therefore ought to be prohibited by act of Assembly. They require a change in the settled policy of the State, sustained through all changes of party, adopted as a means of punishment and reformation of the criminal, and to render his service useful in the defrayment of the expenses of his maintenance, which must otherwise fall upon the people throughout the State. They complain of a partial evil, and require it to be removed, at the sacrifice of the public good.

"We consider all such complaints of partial evil, and the remedy required, as unreasonable, even if the evil did exist. But such, in our opinion, is not the fact; we believe the complaint to be unfounded. Let us inquire how the 110 or 120 looms in operation at the Penitentiary come into an injurious competition with the weavers of Baltimore? They allege that it is occasioned by the *cheap labor* of the criminal *undervaluing* that of the honest citizen. It has been stated that the expense of our convict labor is only about 11 or 12 cents per day; whereas the fact is, that, making allowance for the number of sick, infirm and decrepid, and those necessarily employed in the hospital, in cooking, baking, washing, &c., whose labors directly contribute nothing to the support of the institution, the *available* labor of the prisoners must be made to yield at least 68 cents per day, in order to cover the actual expense of their maintenance, which the