

[Extra Session.]

HOUSE No. 8.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
BOSTON, May 18, 1861. }

To the Honorable House of Representatives :—

I herewith transmit, for the information of the General Court, the accompanying communication from the Warden and Inspectors of the State Prison.

JOHN A. ANDREW.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MASS. STATE PRISON, CHARLESTOWN, }
May 13, 1861. }

To His Excellency, JOHN A. ANDREW :

As the general court is to convene on the 14th inst., for "the purpose of deliberating upon the present condition of public affairs," the undersigned, warden and inspectors of this prison, think it expedient to ask the attention of the legislature to this institution, in which the State is so deeply interested, and which is likely to be seriously affected by the existing and prospective state of the times.

In the last report of the prison, under date of September 30, 1860, we were enabled to show that the expenses had been met by the receipts for labor, &c., leaving a small excess in favor of the prison. The condition of the prison on the 30th March last, being the close of one-half of the fiscal year, indicated increased prosperity, when suddenly the anticipation of war, in its most alarming form, has paralyzed business in all departments, and especially that in which the contractors for labor in this prison are engaged.

One of the contracts for the service of one hundred and fifty men, (and under which often two hundred have been employed,) at fifty-one cents per day, with another for fifty men, at fifty-five cents per day, will expire on the first day of July next, and there is little prospect of the renewal of either of them, except at a great reduction from the price now paid. Our other contractors also ask a reduction, not only in price now paying, but in the number of men employed by them.

From a calculation based upon the most liberal offers which we have been able to obtain, we are satisfied that there must be

a deficit in our receipts for the period of the proposed arrangement, of at least three thousand dollars per month, and in view of the uncertainty when an improvement could be anticipated, the undersigned have not felt at liberty to close any contracts involving so certainly the necessity of asking the State for a large appropriation for a deficit, without first presenting to your Excellency and the Legislature the facts. We believe that the entire body of men under our charge, able-bodied, intelligent and willing, capable of performing almost any kind of business, and who have for years past afforded most profitable remuneration to their employers, ought even now to earn for the benefit of the State at least fifty cents per day. In order to do this, however, it may be necessary to change our entire system of operations, and we are confident that with the coöperation and wisdom of the legislature, we shall be able to put the institution into a substantial and compensating condition.

Very respectfully,

GIDEON HAYNES,

Warden.

FRANCIS CHILDS,

STEPHEN N. STOCKWELL,

Inspectors.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

IN SENATE, May, 21, 1861.

The Committee on Prisons, to whom was committed the Message from the Governor relative to the affairs of the State Prison, having considered the same, report the accompanying Bill.

BENJ. BOYNTON, *Chairman.*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-
One.

AN ACT

To give additional authority to the Warden and Inspectors of the State Prison.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 SECT. 1. The warden and inspectors of the state
2 prison are hereby authorized, with the consent of the
3 governor and council, to purchase machinery and
4 to make such alterations in the manner of employing
5 the convicts, as they may consider expedient.

1 SECT. 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

