

HOUSE.....No. 8.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

THE committee on the library, to whom was referred the message of His Excellency, the Governor, communicating the report of Benj. Perley Poore, the agent appointed under a resolve passed January 23d, 1845, to procure copies of documents in the public offices of Great Britain and France, relating to the colonial and provincial history of this Commonwealth, with other papers relating to the same, ask leave to report:—That they have taken the message of His Excellency, with the accompanying papers, into their consideration; as well in regard to the testimony which he bears to the ability and fidelity of Mr. Poore in the execution of his agency, as the recommendation which he adds that such further remuneration shall be made to the agent as his services require. They have also given their attention to the accompanying communications from Mr. Secretary Palfrey, and Professor Sparks, which fully corroborate the favorable opinion expressed by His Excellency, in regard to the importance of this collection and the beautiful style in which the documents have been copied.

The committee have also given a careful examination to the volumes themselves, and they have found their high expectations in regard to them, caused by such praise from such sources, fully answered, and they feel constrained to add the expression of their gratification with the manner in which this work has

been done. With regard to the value of the materials which have been collected, their favorable judgment can add little authority to the testimony already adduced.

With regard to the propriety of further remuneration to Mr. Poore, the committee have learned from him, that at a time previous to his engagement in the service of the Commonwealth, he had been employed as a subordinate by Mr. Brodhead, the agent for the State of New York in a commission of the same nature; and that, while so employed, he received three dollars for each day's work of six hours, the period during which access could be had to the public offices; and that, on the same calculation, the time expended in examining, selecting, transcribing and copying these documents, including what will be necessary to complete the copying of all which are transcribed, (which he holds himself bound satisfactorily to perform,) will be not less than three years. The whole number of pages in manuscript, is stated to be thirty-five hundred in folio, and the most casual inspection will show that they must have been carefully and slowly elaborated, to say nothing of numerous fac-similes of signatures, and, many times, of whole documents, which have been laboriously, as they are very beautifully executed. The expenses of his subsistence at Paris, while engaged in this work, Mr. Poore states to have been one hundred dollars per month, and that this agency left him no time for other modes of gaining a support excepting to make some slight literary communications to a public journal, for which he received a small remuneration.

Several of the documents, and all the maps and illustrations, were purchased by him, and, together with the stationery necessary for the work, cost him, as he states, the sum of four hundred and sixty dollars. The collecting these maps and illustrations did not come within the scope of his agency, and they might fairly be considered his private property, bearing a high money value, as they form, probably, the most complete collection of early maps relating to New England, and the various surrounding districts then belonging to France, any where to be found; some of them, indeed, of the greatest rarity, not to be found in the French royal collection, and perhaps uniques. Mr. Poore, however, feels a pride in making this work, entrusted

to him, as complete as possible, and is desirous of leaving this collection, of about one hundred and twenty maps, in the archives of the Commonwealth, serving, as they do, as the illustration and the complement of the documents which they accompany.

Looking, then, at the question of what should be considered "a further remuneration, such as the services of the agent require," the committee are of opinion, that the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars, which he named, in his interview with the committee, as a satisfactory compensation for all past and future labors on this collection, in addition to the sum of four hundred and sixty dollars, actually expended by him in and upon the same, is not more than a reasonable remuneration to him; and that it will still leave the Commonwealth under obligations to him for the judgment, perseverance, and faithfulness with which he has performed his trust, and for which, they feel assured, his own feelings of satisfaction, and the approbation of his employers, will be considered by him an adequate return.

The committee therefore recommend the passage of the accompanying resolve.

All which is respectfully submitted.

For the committee,

WILLIAM T. ANDREWS.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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

R E S O L V E

To pay for procuring Copies of Documents from the public offices of France.

Resolved, That, in addition to previous appropriations for procuring copies of documents from the public offices of France, illustrative of the colonial and provincial history of this Commonwealth, there be appropriated an additional sum of fourteen hundred and sixty dollars for this purpose; and that the governor be authorized and requested, upon the satisfactory completion of the work, to draw his warrant upon the treasurer, in favor of Benjamin Perley Poore, the agent employed for this purpose, under the resolve passed January 23d, 1845, for the above sum of fourteen hundred and sixty dollars, which shall be in full satisfaction of all moneys expended by him, and all labor performed by him, in the execution of that agency, to its final completion.