

HOUSE....No. 31.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 13th, 1849.

The Joint Standing Committee on Prisons, to whom was referred the Memorial of Walter Channing, and others, for an increased appropriation in furtherance of the objects of the "Boston Society for aiding Discharged Convicts," have considered the same, and

REPORT:

That this Society has been in existence for several years, and has rendered important aid to many discharged prisoners, both by the immediate relief of their necessities, and by preventing their return to crime, and, consequently, to imprisonment. Their means to effect these objects have been furnished, in part, by the annual grant of six hundred dollars from the State treasury, and partly by the private contributions of charitable individuals, among the most liberal of whom have been some of the officers of the Society.

Under existing provisions of the law, the Warden of the State Prison is authorized to supply every convict, at the time of his departure therefrom, in addition to a substantial suit of clothing, a sum of money not exceeding five dollars to each. The whole amount paid in this way during the past year, from the funds of this Prison, was something over five hundred dol-

lars; and, as the number of prisoners discharged was one hundred and twenty-seven, this sum might have been considerably increased, if it had been thought advisable.

But much of the money thus furnished to the convicts to be spent at their discretion, will frequently, to say the least, be expended *indiscreetly*, and they will fail to reap the advantages which might be ensured to them if its expenditure were entrusted to some friendly agency, like that of this Society.

The Committee are of the opinion, that if the sum now annually distributed by the Warden,—which is about the amount of the assistance prayed for in the memorial, viz., six hundred dollars,—were placed at the disposal of the Society's agent, who is also, by appointment of his excellency the Governor, the *agent of the State*, the object of the memorialists will be attained, the best interests of the convicts promoted, and the Commonwealth's duty to them discharged, without the necessity of any additional appropriation. The passage of the accompanying Bill is therefore recommended.

HENRY G. CLARK,

For the Committee.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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

AN ACT

Relating to Discharged Convicts.

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 of the State Prison is here-
2 by directed to pay over to the agent of the State for
3 aiding discharged convicts, to be expended by him for
4 their benefit, such sums of money as he is now au-
5 thorized, by section fifty-third chapter one hundred
6 and forty-fourth of the Revised Statutes, to pay to
7 the convicts themselves; and the said agent shall ac-
8 count therefor to the inspectors of the State Prison.

1 SECT. 2. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent
2 herewith are hereby repealed.

