

HOUSE....No. 86.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 13, 1849.

The Joint Standing Committee on the Militia, to whom was referred an order of the 8th inst., instructing them "to inquire into the expediency of appropriating, to educational and charitable purposes, the moneys now appropriated to militia bounties," have considered the same, and

R E P O R T :

That there is no "moneys" in the treasury of the Commonwealth appropriated to militia bounties. The term, when applied to the militia, is somewhat of a misnomer.

By the laws of the Commonwealth, the members of the volunteer militia, who perform certain prescribed duties, receive from the towns, in which they reside, the yearly sum of six dollars, which sums are reimbursed to the towns from the treasury of the Commonwealth, if allowed by the governor and council.

If the order, however, contemplated the repeal of this law, and the appropriation of a like sum to other branches of popular education, the committee would respectfully state, that there is no branch of popular education so deplorably in want of efficient means, in the Commonwealth, as the military.

Neither do we believe that it would be expedient to divert the money, now paid by law to the volunteer active militia, "to charitable purposes," presuming that the term, as applied in the order, means "purposes" distinct from the militia, for, if it be a correct moral maxim, that "true charity begins at home," then the volunteer militia of the Commonwealth will hardly have to go beyond their own thresholds for objects upon whom to lavish the State "bounties."

In conclusion, your committee are unanimously of the opinion, that it is expedient to keep the militia of the Commonwealth in existence, and not to divert the money they now receive by law to other purposes. An armed force has ever been found to be convenient and useful, both to "repel invasion" and subdue "domestic insurrection." So we shall continue to find it, until the time shall come which was foreshadowed in the sublime vision of the prophet, when our swords shall be beaten into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks, and the nations of the earth shall study war no more.

It is unnecessary to add, that the time here predicted has not yet come.

For the Committee,

WM. SCHOULER.

