

HOUSE....No. 47.

REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT OF ALIEN PASSENGERS

FOR THE PORT OF BOSTON.

To His Excellency the Governor, and their Honors of the Executive Council:

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honor to present to your board a report of my doings as Superintendent of Alien Passengers for the port of Boston, from the 1st of January, 1851, to the 1st of January, 1852. In it is presented the number of vessels that have arrived with aliens on board, the nations represented by said vessels, number of passengers brought therein, their condition, the port from whence they came, and on what conditions they have been permitted to land.

There are matters not mentioned in the above, which have come under my observation, which will be introduced in their proper places.

I have boarded 1,149 vessels from all parts of the world, in which were brought 29,319 passengers, viz. :

In 67 American vessels from England,	13,787
“ 2 American vessels from Ireland, .	398
“ 44 American vessels from British provinces,	1,069

In 7 American vessels from Fayal,	290	
“ 135 American steamboats from American ports,	707	
“ 73 American vessels from all other ports,	2,050	
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328 total, in which were brought,		18,301
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In 41 English vessels from England,	3,843	
“ 13 English vessels from Ireland,	1,812	
“ 706 English vessels from British provinces,	4,808	
“ 5 Swedish vessels from Europe,	250	
“ 2 Sicilian vessels from Europe,	33	
“ 54 of all nations, from all parts,	272	
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		11,018
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821 total. Total number in all vessels, from all nations,		29,319

And they have been permitted to land, in conformity with the law, as follows :

For those who were Americans, or had been in the State before, and for which no security or commutation could be required,	6,119
Number for which bonds have been taken,	1,718
“ who have been commuted for,	21,382
“ “ died before landing,	100
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Total,	29,319

The following table presents the amount of receipts and expenditures :

RECEIPTS.	
For 21,382 aliens, each at \$2,	\$42,764 00
“ Boston on bonds,	\$5,182 50
“ Roxbury, on bonds,	592 30
“ Lowell, on bonds,	945 00
“ Worcester,	93 58
“ Cambridge,	301 87
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	7,115 25
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	\$49,879 25

Received for West Springfield, on bonds,	\$14 37	
Received for Holyoke, on bonds,	4 00	
“ “ Somerville, on bonds,	23 00	
“ “ Brighton, on bonds,	25 00	
“ “ Gloucester, on bonds,	43 79	
“ “ Concord, on bonds,	189 19	
“ “ Danvers, on bonds,	115 75	
“ “ Andover, on bonds,	20 42	
“ “ Commonwealth, on bonds,	1,225 80	
	<hr/>	\$1,661 32
Total,		51,540 57

The foregoing amount has all been paid over to the parties for which it was collected, and reports made, from time to time, agreeable to law, to the treasurer of the Commonwealth, and vouchers for the same placed on file.

In my last report I estimated the receipts for the year 1851, for commutation fee, some \$6,000 more than what has been realized; the cause of course is the falling off of aliens arriving at this port by water.

The proper reason to be assigned for the decrease, may be found in the inequality of our laws, which do not protect us from the unfortunate aliens, but compels them to land in some other city, and take such modes of conveyance, as best they can, to reach our State, in a much worse condition than if they had come *direct* from Europe.

Arrived by water, in 1850,	30,075
“ “ land, in 1850,	10,786
Total,	40,861
Arrived by water, in 1851,	29,319
“ “ land, in 1851,	16,654
Total,	45,973

By the foregoing, it will be seen that the whole number who came into the State in 1851, was 5,112 more than the number

which arrived in the year 1850, yet 756 less arrived by water in 1851 than came by water in 1850; and the same increase by land and decrease by water may be expected, should our laws remain as they now are. Besides, there are many who land in other states in consequence of the *severity* of our laws, and walk or beg their way to their friends in this State as best they can, after being eased of their little means by a class of persons known as forwarding runners, or runners for boarding house keepers, who make a practice of various kinds of fraud to fleece the stranger.

By reference to the respective laws of New York and Massachusetts, the reasons present themselves too plainly to be mistaken, why people, bound from Europe to Massachusetts, take passage to New York, and other ports, rather than come here direct.

I am warranted in saying, that the operation of our present law has been the cause of sending many cargoes of merchandise to other cities, that would certainly have come here had our laws allowed them to bring passengers, with a certainty that, on their arrival, a certain sum (equal to any anticipated expense,) might be at once paid to the Commonwealth, and thereby release the master from any other anxiety or perplexity.

All must admit that many of the poor and sick among the passengers, are very expensive to the Commonwealth, and none can deny, with fairness, but that the labors of the young and healthy are of much advantage to our country. Whether the evils arising from the first class will balance the benefits derived from the latter, is a question which I have no doubt will be answered in the negative by all rational and reasonable men.

By a careful examination and calculation, I find the difference in receipts, as the law now is, and what they would have been, (for the last two years,) had the same course been adopted here as in New York, to be \$44,000 against the State.

The mistake is, in having our law perplexing and prohibitory, which is unconstitutional, (see Justice McLean's decision in supreme court at Washington, December, 1848,) rather than clear and protective.

The case of *City of Boston vs. Homer and others*, for the expenses of bonded aliens, has been given in favor of the city; *exceptions taken.*

The case of City of Roxbury *vs.* Goodwin has been settled by counsel, and amount received paid to Roxbury.

The suits of Harnden & Co., E. Train & Co., and James Cunningham *vs.* J. B. Munroe, each in the sum of \$20,000, are still pending, and \$13,500 remains in Merchants Bank under trustee.

The case of City of Boston *vs.* Capen and others, for bonded aliens, under the law of 1837, is still pending. Those cases in which the cities of Boston and Roxbury are interested, are managed by the city solicitor.

The cases of Harnden & Co., Train & Co., and J. Cunningham *vs.* J. B. Munroe, are under the direction of S. D. Parker, Esq., County Attorney.

The city of Boston having a claim for expenses arising on certain persons known as bonded aliens, presented said claims to the *obligors* in New York, and, being denied, a suit has been commenced, under the direction of counsel, in New York.

All the foregoing cases have been pushed as rapid as possible, for trial, by the respective counsels. The *bonds* all having been taken, and expenses arisen since I have had the honor to hold the office of superintendent, it is necessary for me to give considerable time in looking up the proper evidence to sustain our counsel.

Two masters of vessels have been complained of for violation of first section of the alien act of 1850, and the matter settled under the advice of the attorney general and city solicitor.

A number of complaints have been made to me, by persons who had been imposed upon by certain forwarding houses, who sold tickets for the far west, but which tickets were worthless for any distance beyond Albany. These cases have all been settled after some little trouble, much to the satisfaction of the injured party.

Boarding housekeepers here are fast getting in favor of adopting the course practised in some of our sister cities, by holding out inducements for the immigrants to remain in the city while their money lasts, and then turn them into the street pennyless. Such a course oftentimes discourages, disheartens, and frequently breaks down and sends to the poorhouse the *victims* of these wicked *runners* and worthless landlords.

I know of no way in which so much protection can be given

to the Commonwealth, in relation to these matters, as to have a license given to all engaged in either branch of the foregoing business, (from the commissioners,) and *bonds* required for a faithful performance of all duties. It would bring under the control of the commissioners a class of people, (to say the least some few of them,) who want looking after as much as any other respectable class.

Since my last report, a large number of the most unfortunate of Ireland's poor, from the estate of the Marquis of Lansdown, were landed in New York, and by assistance received there, found themselves in Boston. Being much perplexed with the statements made by them, under the best advice, (the committee of Legislature on foreign paupers,) I took measures to have a large number, at five several times, returned to New York, and notified the commissioners of immigration that, inasmuch as they had received the commutation for them, they (not Massachusetts) were bound to look after them.

Eighty-two persons of the most expensive and disagreeable of paupers, have been sent out of the country to their respective homes.

Some 30 of the persons wrecked per ship Unicorn, were sent on here from New York, with a request from the commissioner to forward them to the British provinces, which was done, and all bills paid by said commissioners, which included funeral expenses of two that died in Boston.

During the past year, one firm in this city have stopped payment for a time, who have been engaged in bringing passengers to this State, and for which the Commonwealth hold their bonds to a considerable amount; and although the Commonwealth has good security in other names attached to said bonds, and therefore will not suffer any material loss from any expense arising, (such being the obligation of the bond,) yet, if the Legislature, in their wisdom, believe it necessary to have the bonding system still remain, I submit whether it should not be so far amended, as to limit the number which bonds shall be taken for, from any firm, no matter how responsible they may be.

It would relieve the examining officer of many perplexities in the discharge of his duty, and prevent the unprincipled demagogue and *ignorant* man of BUSINESS from *misrepresenting* the matter by crying out against the immense liabilities of A,

B, or C, when in *fact* their liabilities are of a very trifling amount, and perhaps not one cent will ever be forfeited or called for.

It will (if limited by law,) not injure the merchant in any other branch of business if his bonds are refused, because the refusal is made upon a direct order of law, and not by the opinion or doubts entertained by any one man.

If a course is adopted similar to the one suggested by your Excellency, in your last message, all the evils complained of will be obviated.

More money will be realized, much additional navigation will enter our ports, trade and labor will increase, and we shall receive directly, in good health, with a little money in their pockets, many that will certainly come indirectly pennyless and just ready for the hospital, should the law remain unchanged.

J. B. MUNROE,
Superintendent of Alien Passengers.

January 31st, 1852.

