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ABSTRACT

OF THE

RETURNS OF THE OVERSEERS OF THE POOR

IN

MASSACHUSETTS,

FOR 1839:

PREPARED BY THE

SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

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RETURNS OF THE POOR

of these returns and the return of Holland for 1837, included in the Abstract, which accordingly appears in the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Feb. 22, 1840.

*To the Honorable Senate, and
Honorable House of Representatives :*

In compliance with the provisions of the act of the 18th of April, 1837, I have the honor to submit an Abstract of the Returns from the Overseers of the Poor from 297 cities and towns, and from the Directors of the House of Industry in Boston, for 1839.

The questions proposed by the Act, refer to many important points connected with the pauper system, and are generally answered with fulness and precision. One of them, however, (viz : that concerning the cost of the Poor *out* of the Almshouse,) is so evidently misunderstood by many of the overseers, and the answers are based upon such different impressions of its meaning, that (as was likewise the case last year), I have not attempted to reduce them to an average. Under all the other heads, aggregates are presented both for the Counties and the whole Commonwealth.

No returns have been received from Ashby, Buckland, Chilmark, Clarksburg, Dana, Lincoln, Rowe, Wenham and Holland. These towns, however, with the exception of the last, made returns the previous year, and in order to present as complete a view as possible of the important subject to which they relate, the particulars

of those returns, and the return of Holland for 1837, are included in this Abstract, which accordingly embraces the most recent information concerning the state of the Poor in every city and town in the State.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN P. BIGELOW,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.