

ment. There are, however, cases—and this all can well understand—where, from incorrigibility, extraordinary restraints are necessary, and where punishment for misdemeanors *in the house* is rigidly administered. But in this there is nothing peculiarly distinctive from what necessarily exists under similar circumstances in all well ordered home governments. All that it is desired to press upon the the attention is, that the Institution itself, by design or in fact, is not a penitentiary—a place of punishment for offences committed previous to the entrance of the inmate, who at the very first is carefully informed to the contrary. It is thought proper to say this much for the reason that even in one of our city papers a communication recently appeared in which the whole character of reform schools or houses of refuge is most strangely misunderstood by the writer, and under circumstances that manifest most singular ignorance. It is very desirable to correct any such misapprehension wherever it may exist. Upon this point the Board are not a little sensitive, and feel it due, not only to the Institution but to the inmates themselves, to remove a misconception that is calculated to fix upon these children an unjust stigma from which it is a chief and humane object of the Refuge to save them. To preserve them from a course that would have inevitably led them to earn the ineradicable stamp of the prison-convict is the very aim of our organization, and this we strive to attain by a system through which they are snatched from evil influences and example, and then taught, under a government regulated by the law of kindness, methodic discipline, healthful and useful labor, a good common school education and religious instruction. As a consequence of this training, the Board may be permitted to add, that all this has not been without its present blessing, and from the good seed sown, they have many reasons to trust that the future will develop even happier returns. For some of the grounds of these hopes we may safely refer to the letters in relation to former inmates appended to this report.

From recent examination it has been found that of the whole number (581) who have been admitted to the Refuge since its opening, but four are to be found in the Penitentiary, all of whom were over fourteen years of age when committed to our care and were already confirmed vagrants in disposition, and practical thieves.* Of some few others who have been indentured or discharged to parents our information leads to but little hope, but at the same time these cases

NOTE.—Among abstracts of the reports of various public institutions in Massachusetts, we find the following in a late Boston paper, which we extract as giving valuable statistical information in regard to the moral results of American reformatories. The article has reference to the State Reform School at Westboro', an insti-