

The failure on the part of several members of the Board to perform the duties of the Monthly Committees, cuts them off in a great degree from all knowledge of the affairs of the Institution, its officers and discipline, and in the testimony is recorded a lamentable instance of the bad effects of this abandonment of duty by the Monthly Committees—where one of the Directors, after holding that office for three months impliedly admits, in reply to an inquiry, “that he did not then know what was the discipline enforced by the Institution, nor whether there were standing regulations of the Board of Directors on the subject.”

The duties of the Executive Committee are strictly commercial—this was the purpose for which they were originally appointed, as is testified by Thomas Sheppard, (See page 84.) Mr. S. was appointed one of the Executive Committee on the creation of that office by the act of 1826, having previously been a Director since 1819. At that time the Institution had a store, and sold its own goods by an Agent. “To facilitate the sale of goods, and to assist the Agent,” says Mr. Sheppard, “the Executive committee was appointed.” They have never since, so far as we have been enabled to discover, been invested by the Board of Directors, and they had none by law, with any authority over the Police of the Prison, and being themselves, when acting as a Committee, ministerial officers, the Directors for many years excluded them from the Monthly Committees. In this we think they were right. The failure then of the Monthly Committees to perform their appropriate duties, necessarily left the whole administration of the Prison Discipline to the Warden or principal keeper, and the Directors are thus left without any participation in the government of the Institution either in its commercial or prison departments. The former is given to the Executive Committee and the latter is confided to the Warden, leaving the Directors, as one of them testifies, (on p. 38,) no alternative, but to confine their action chiefly “to suggestions made to them either by the Warden or the Executive Committee.” Such never could have been the design of the Legislature; if so, the Board of Directors might well have been dispensed with.

This defect in the organization of the Board of Directors must be amended. The law which provided for an arrangement by which every member would become familiar in all its affairs and the details of every department, should be faithfully observed, that every member may have a personal knowledge on the subject, and take a lively interest in all that relates to it. A proper accountability of the Executive Committee can only be secured by making these officers the commercial Agents of the Institution, and taking from them the powers of Directors. The members of this body are the appropriate supervisors of all the subordinate officers, and who should act independently and above control, when they decide upon the manner in which said officers have fulfilled their special duties. In accordance with these views we have provided, in the bill herewith submitted, for the appoint-