

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE,
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OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1841.

Augusta:
SEVERANCE AND DORR, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1841.

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

NO. 21.

SENATE.

R E P O R T

OF THE

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE

ON THE

INSANE HOSPITAL.

SEVERANCE & DORR,.....Printers to the State.

R E P O R T .

The Joint Standing Committee on the Insane Hospital, to which was referred the Report of the Directors and Principal of that Institution, also so much of the Governor's Message as relates to that subject, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to

R E P O R T :

The recent Report of the Directors and Superintendent of this Institution, which has been published by order of the Legislature, renders it unnecessary for the Committee to go into a detailed history of its affairs.

The short period which has elapsed since this Institution has been in operation, furnishes ample proof of the wisdom and benevolence of its design.

By reference to the Report of the Directors, it will be seen that the estimate of the necessary expenses of the establishment for the next year, after deducting the amount of the last appropriation remaining in the Treasury, and the amount due for board of patients, from individuals and from towns, is

	\$4,533 21
For ornamental trees,	200 00
Vat for making soap,	80 00
Ice house,	150 00
Finishing Chapel,	600 00
Stock for the farm,	330 00
Additional furniture,	150 00

Scientific books,	50 00
Miscellaneous books,	100 00
Farming tools and wagon,	200 00
Barn to be built,	456 79
Seed for the farm,	50 00
Reservoir for receiving slops, &c.	50 00
Making roads and grading grounds,	500 00
Fencing farm,	300 00

Making in all \$7,750 00

as the necessary appropriation to be made this year to meet the actual wants of the Institution.

Much remains to be done upon the lands connected with the Asylum, and the amount asked is the least sum that their improvement and cultivation will require. The Committee highly recommend the purchase of a small and well selected Library for the use of the patients, and would, at the same time suggest the propriety of permitting loans of books from the State Library. They are induced to make this latter recommendation from the fact that the State Library is comparatively of little use for all that portion of the year when the Legislature is not in session. They are convinced that it cannot better subserve the purposes for which it was established, than by being thrown open to the wants of the insane, under the supervision of the Superintendent and assisting Physician.

Besides a Library selected with special reference to the wants of the insane, books of a scientific character are necessary for the attending physicians. The treatment of the insane, by methods which commend themselves for their humanity, is yet in its infancy. Its investigation is a subject which may fully exercise the mind of the moralist and philosopher, and opens a field for medical research which may well excite the deepest interest of all. The soothing influences of christianity have exerted the most benign influence upon these unfortunate beings, and their religious wants can only be im-

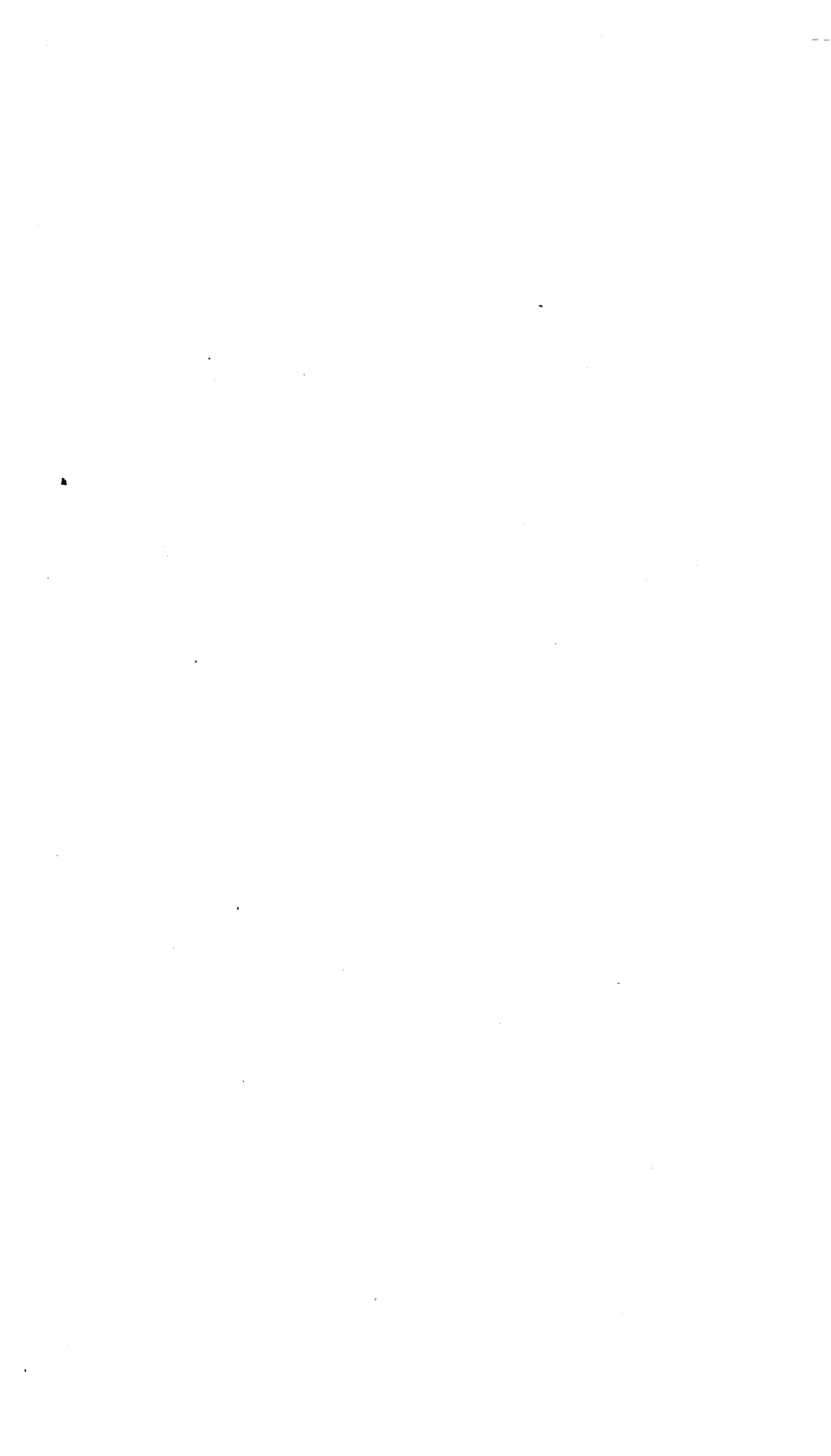
perfectly answered by reason of having no suitable place for their stated assembling. The appropriation asked, for finishing and converting the attic story of the main building into a suitable chapel, will effectually supply all that is necessary to insure to the patients constant religious instruction.

The Committee are aware that objections often exist in the minds of the friends of insane persons against sending them to a public Hospital; but these objections are for the most part founded in error in relation to the manner in which the patients are treated, and the Committee feel it a duty to assert in their Report, that every comfort is enjoyed at the Asylum which the condition and character of the patients render possible. The kindest means only are employed, and the good result of these means is evidenced in the improved condition of all who have been admitted since the Hospital has been fitted for their reception. There are instances of persons who, under the care of friends, have been confined for years in the strictest solitude—some have been loaded with chains, as the only possible means of preventing them from inflicting injuries on themselves, or from being dangerous to the safety of their friends. In all these cases, where the patients have been removed to the Hospital, such has been their improved condition that they have quickly been removed from those restraints, which before their removal were imposed upon them for reasons of imperative necessity.

The inmates of the Asylum, who were visited by the Committee, appeared contented and happy, and their associations with each other of a pleasant character, and such as tend to improve their mental condition, and the Committee found the general management of the Institution perfectly correct and satisfactory, so far as they were able to judge by a single visit.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

THOS. C. LANE, per order.



STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the Insane Hospital.

RESOLVED, That there be allowed and paid
2 out of the Treasury of this State, in addition to
3 the sum of four thousand five hundred thirty-three
4 dollars and twenty-one cents, unexpended of the
5 Resolve of October 1840, the further sum of three
6 thousand two hundred sixteen dollars and seventy-
7 nine cents to be expended under the direction of
8 the Directors of the Insane Hospital. And the
9 Governor with advice of Council is authorized to
10 draw his warrant on the Treasury for the same.

IN SENATE, April 1, 1841.

Laid on the table, and 500 copies ordered to be printed
for the use of the Legislature.

[Extract from the Journal.]

ATTEST:

DANIEL SANBORN, *Secretary.*