

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1846.



AUGUSTA:

WM. T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1847.

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 31.

SENATE.

REPORT

OF THE

Joint Standing Committee on the Insane Hospital,

A. D. 1846.

THE committee on the Insane Hospital, to whom was referred so much of the governor's message as relates to the Insane Hospital, together with the reports of the trustees, treasurer, steward and superintendent of said Hospital, have had the same under consideration and ask leave to submit the following

REPORT :

Your committee, in accordance with the usual custom, have made their annual visit to the Hospital, and have examined with much care, the treatment of the patients and the various accommodations of the institution, for their comfort and recovery.

The Hospital under the superintendence of Dr. Ray, had attained to some distinction amongst similar institutions in our country. His popularity as a gentleman and a scholar, had become associated with the Hospital, and it was with feelings of regret, that the friends of the institution heard of his resignation as superintendent. Yet your committee are satisfied that the Hospital under the direction of the present superintendent, Dr. James Bates, fully sustains the character it had acquired under the government of Dr. Ray.

Family devotions have been established in the Hospital, and

many of the poor afflicted patients bow around the family altar and offer their evening and morning devotions to the great and good Parent who deigns to hear the supplications of his afflicted, insane children. Religious instruction on Sabbath evenings, is enjoyed by the patients, and hymns of thanksgiving are heard instead of the wailings of insanity.

The law of love and kindness appears to be the governing power in the Hospital, and your committee can with much pleasure assure the Legislature and the citizens of this State, that they cordially approve of the parental system of government adopted by the officers of this institution, so well calculated to gain the affections of the patients, to soothe their sufferings and restore them to the enjoyment of reason, the richest of heaven's blessings.

The trustees have purchased an elegant carriage for the accommodation of the patients, which is drawn by a span of fine horses belonging to the Hospital. And the patients are frequently seen riding forth in pleasant weather, enjoying with a high zest, the pure air of the morning and the rich scenery of Augusta, where the beautiful white cottages are scattered over the landscape glittering in the sunlight like snowdrops amidst the dark foliage of the shrubbery.

The patients have been furnished through the kindness of friends, with many valuable papers and periodicals during the past year, and the library of the Hospital has been increased over one hundred and fifty volumes from the interest on a donation made by the Hon. Bryce McLellan, late of Bloomfield.

The superintendent in his able report, has presented the public with much valuable statistical information, showing the necessity of sending patients to the Hospital in the early stages of the disease. Of those patients admitted to the Hospital within three months after being deranged, 62.9 per cent. were cured in 130 days; over three months and under twelve months after being deranged, 38 per cent. were cured in 164 days; over twelve months, only 14 per cent. were cured in 280 days. With these facts before us, founded on actual experience and observation, we think the public

must be convinced of the great importance of an early resort to the Hospital, to ensure a speedy restoration to health and to reason.

Your committee also learn that one hundred and seventy-five patients have enjoyed for a season, the advantages of this institution, during the past year, one hundred of whom were males, and seventy-five females, ninety-nine of whom have been admitted during the year. Ninety patients have been discharged, thirty-eight of whom were recovered, twenty-two improved, twenty-three unimproved, and seven of whom died.

Your committee learn from the reports of the trustees, treasurer and steward of the Hospital, that there has been an improvement in its financial concerns the past year, by an increase of funds amounting to the sum of 381·15, due from towns and from the State, for the support of State paupers.

We also learn that although providence has not smiled as heretofore, on the labors of the husbandman, yet the estimated value of the crops raised on the Hospital farm during the past year, amounts to the sum of \$919·52, and that all the labor has been performed on the farm by the patients, with the exception of the service of one man at \$12 per month and after deducting board, horse labor, &c., a balance remains in favor of the farm of \$454.

The trustees have made a reduction in the board of patients the past year, so that the board of males, including washing and mending, in no case exceeds \$2·50, and the board of females not exceeding \$2·00 per week ; in common cases, \$1·50 per week, for males, and \$1·25 for females. The result of making the reduction has proved its utility ; the number of patients has been increased, and the blessings of the institution have been enjoyed by the poor and needy as well as by the more wealthy. The trustees request an appropriation of \$602·58, to cover the expenses incurred in supporting patients directly chargeable to the State and also the sum of \$600 to aid in defraying the expenses of the Hospital the present year, and your committee have included that sum in the resolve which is herewith submitted.

The governor in his message, and the trustees of the Hospital in their report, have called the attention of the Legislature to the im-

portance of enlarging the Insane Hospital, and your committee, after having fully investigated the subject, came to the conclusion that the honor of the State and the good of the community require that an appropriation be made for building an additional wing to the Hospital. At this time there are eleven more male patients than there are rooms for their accommodation, and the number is daily increasing; and unless the Hospital is enlarged, those of our fellow citizens who may hereafter need the benefits of this institution, must of necessity be excluded for want of accommodations, and forced to seek an asylum in other States, after having contributed either by tax or donation, to the building and sustaining of the Hospital in their own State. From partial returns made in 1844, it appears that at that time there was not less than six hundred insane persons in this State, and that number has probably increased with the increase of population, and that consequently not more than one in six now enjoys the advantages of this institution, nor indeed can they unless the proposed additional wing be built for their accommodation.

At the request of your committee the trustees have furnished a plan for an additional wing to the Hospital, together with an estimate of the cost of building the same, made by Mr. Keene of Augusta.

The estimated cost of building said wing amounts to the sum of \$21,400, and it will accommodate 73 patients.

It will not be necessary to expend more than eight or ten thousand dollars the present year, for the purchase of bricks, lumber, stone, &c. Your committee have therefore included in the resolve that is herewith submitted, the sum of \$21,400, to be appropriated to building an additional wing to the Insane Hospital, under the superintendence and direction of the trustees of said Hospital, with authority to expend a sum not exceeding \$10,000 the present year, and the balance next year.

The plan adopted by the trustees meets the approbation of your committee. The wing is to be built of granite, and to be three stories high above the basement. There is to be a kitchen and washroom in the basement story. The other three stories are to

be with a gallery in each, with a tier of single bedrooms on one side and a tier of double bedrooms on the other, which are to be used for the accommodation of the sick patients who may require the constant attendance of a nurse, or for patients that may safely sleep together.

There will be a parlor, dormitory and suitable washrooms in each story; and a verandah, or room with open lattice-work, to each gallery, for a promenade for patients whose health will not permit of greater exposure. There will be 18 cells at the eastern extremity of the wing, for the use of that class of patients that from necessity must be confined.

From the governor's message we learn that an opportunity presents itself for purchasing an addition to the Hospital farm. A lot of 26 acres of good pasturage adjoining said farm can be purchased for the sum of \$1,050. Your committee are of the opinion that the money would be well invested in the purchase of said lot, and that it would make a very important addition to the farm. Should the lot be purchased an addition would be made to the stock of cows belonging to the farm, and a sufficient supply of milk, butter and cheese thereby obtained to meet the wants of the patients. Milk is an important item of food; it is cheap, wholesome and nutritious, and your committee are of the opinion that the sum paid for the lot, would be saved to the State in a few years, in a reduction of the price of board. With this view of the subject your committee recommend that an appropriation be made for the purchase of said lot, and to this end they have included the sum of \$1,050 in the resolve that is herewith submitted.

The governor in his message, and the trustees in their report, urged the importance of taking the census of the insane persons in this State. Your committee agree with them on this subject and consequently have reported a resolve for that purpose, which is also herewith submitted.

Your committee would remark that it is of the utmost importance that the appropriation should be made to insure the success and prosperity of this institution—an institution worthy the commendation and patronage of every friend of humanity.

Governments are instituted for the protection and happiness of their citizens. And while the legislature of Maine is fostering the great interests of the State, encouraging the development of her resources, aiding the enterprise of her citizens, and disseminating the blessings of our republican institutions among the busy multitude, let them remember the afflicted and down-trodden. Let them visit the poor prisoner in the prison-house. Let them give hearing to the deaf, eyes to the blind, and restore reason to the insane. Then shall the welcome plaudit of well done good and faithful servants, be theirs.

JOSEPH BARRETT, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVES in relation to taking the census of insane persons and idiots in this State.

Resolved, That the aldermen of cities, the selectmen
2 of towns, and the assessors of the several plantations
3 in this State are hereby empowered and directed to
4 make a return to the secretary of state, on or before
5 the first day of November next, of the number, sex
6 and age of insane persons and the number and sex
7 of idiots, having their residence in their respective
8 cities, towns and plantations on the first day of Sep-
9 tember, A. D. 1846, designating the number and sex
10 of such persons in the insane hospital in this State
11 and in other States, the number and sex supported by
12 the public, and the number and sex of such insane
13 persons and idiots (if any) supported in county jails,
14 houses of correction, or almshouses.

Resolved, That the secretary of state shall prepare
2 and furnish the several cities, towns and plantations,
3 blank returns in conformity to the foregoing resolve,
4 accompanied with a copy of these resolves.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE making an appropriation for the Insane Hospital.

Resolved, That there be appropriated and paid out 2 of the State treasury for the use and benefit of the 3 insane hospital, the sum of twenty-three thousand six 4 hundred and fifty dollars, to be expended under the 5 superintendence and direction of the trustees of said 6 hospital, as follows, to wit :

7 Twenty-one thousand and four hundred dollars to be 8 expended in building an additional wing to said hospi- 9 tal, of which, a sum not exceeding ten thousand dollars, 10 to be expended the present year for the purchase of 11 materials for said building, and the balance to be paid 12 out and expended next year for finishing said building.

13 One thousand two hundred dollars of the sum here- 14 by appropriated, to be applied to the payment of the 15 expenses of supporting State paupers in said hospital 16 and for the expenses of the hospital the present year.

17 One thousand and fifty dollars of the sum appropri- 18 ated by this resolve, to be applied to the purchase of 19 twenty-six acres of land adjoining the hospital farm, 20 for the use and benefit of said hospital.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, July 23, 1846.

Ordered, That 1,000 copies of the foregoing Report and accompanying Resolves be printed for the use of the Legislature.

DANIEL T. PIKE, *Secretary*.