

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. 1848.

Augusta:

WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1849.

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 28.

SENATE.

REPORT

ON THE

INSANE HOSPITAL.

THE joint standing committee, to which was referred that portion of the governor's message, relating to the insane hospital—the reports of the trustees, steward and superintendent of the same,—and also other matters pertinent to the management of said hospital,—have given those various documents and suggestions the consideration and investigation to which their importance entitles them, and submit, in conclusion, the following

REPORT:

Your committee were deeply impressed, at an early period of the session, with the importance of the duty assigned them. The noble benevolence of individuals and of the state,—which, after a series of years has succeeded in erecting and putting in successful operation that monument of benevolence, of which the state may well be proud,—the INSANE HOSPITAL—has imposed upon the legislature, from year to year, the duty, by its properly constituted committees, of ascertaining, by careful investigation, whether the

beneficent designs of this refuge of those "ready to perish," are, to their fullest extent, fulfilled.

We therefore, with this idea of the importance of our appointment, have given the affairs of the hospital, that investigation which they, by their importance, so well deserve. We have also traversed its wards, observed the situation of its inmates, and scrutinized its internal arrangements and management. It would be strange,—where so much misfortune, under one general name but of so varied phases, is congregated,—involving so many different kinds of treatment—if there were not some in the community, who, in their zeal for humanity should complain of the ill-treatment of its inmates, or of the bad management of its concerns. Your committee have been met with such complaints. It had the effect to sharpen their vision, and to make them more zealous in this department of their duty. If those allied to these unfortunates only by the common ties of humanity, are so jealous lest ill-treatment and neglect should creep into this sanctuary consecrated to suffering,—how much more immediately does it devolve upon the constituted agents of the state to be watchful in this regard.

The examination of the wards,—the scrutiny of the inmates,—the interrogations to the superintendent,—the patient heed given to all who made any complaint;—have been exercised with an eye to the interest the citizens at large feel in the institution, and the reliance that, it was fair to suppose, might be placed upon the opinions that would be advanced in our report.

We have but to add, on this branch of our subject, that our investigations have led us to the conclusion, that the hospital is in faithful hands. The various officers are accomplished and energetic. The inmates are well cared-for, and are made as comfortable as the various types of their bereavement will allow. The scattering complaints that have reached us, are not sustained by investigation. The institution deserves to stand high, (as we believe it does) in the estimation of the citizens of the state, for its usefulness, and the fidelity to the great principles of humanity on which it is conducted.

The reports, in printed form, of the various officers of the institution, having been for some time before the legislature,—renders it entirely unnecessary that we should go into detail at all, on the subjects discussed in those reports. A mass of facts and suggestions are there presented, which will give every reader a full knowledge of the numbers of those in various years that have occupied the hospital—the per centage of cures, of deaths,—the productiveness of the farm, the capacity of the building,—and many other facts of interest to the legislature and the state.

To one subject your committee feel called upon to allude particularly, though mentioned at length by the trustees in their report. It is, the necessity of an appropriation for an immediate finish of that wing of the hospital, now but two-thirds completed. For this purpose,—and for the purpose of perfecting the mode of warming the institution, it will be necessary to appropriate the sum of \$10,000. Without this sum being placed at the disposal of the proper officers, the \$21,000 already expended will lie entirely inutile. The crowded state of the wards, must continue. The retarding of the recovery of the patients, and all the other evils incident to a want of room, must flow on unmitigated, for another year.

When it is considered that the misfortune provided for by this generous endowment is “no respecter of persons”—that the family over which the gloom of insanity never cast its pall, has no immunity for the future—that the strong in intellect as well as the most feeble, are liable to fall beneath the heavy hand of this destroyer of the nobility of man—and that a malady which is so seldom arrested or successfully anticipated should have a sure refuge and its prompt and philanthropic guardians a prompt and hearty support—your committee will not hesitate to believe that the sum necessary to complete the structure which is to do so much good, will with alacrity be granted by this legislature.

A resolve for that purpose, accompanies this report.

All which is respectfully submitted.

G. M. BURLEIGH, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE making an appropriation for the Insane
Hospital.

Resolved, That there be appropriated and paid out
2 of the state treasury, the sum of ten thousand dollars ;
3 the same to be expended (or as much thereof as will
4 be necessary) under the direction of the trustees of
5 the insane hospital, in finishing and completing the
6 new wing of said hospital.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

*Accompanying the Resolve asking an appropriation of \$10,000
to complete the new wing of the Insane Hospital.*

The trustees of the hospital before commencing building operations on the said new wing, procured to be made an estimate of the expense of materials and labor for erecting the contemplated building; which estimate shew the sum of \$21,400; for which an appropriation was made by the last legislature, being the sum asked for by the trustees.

It subsequently appeared that the estimates made were very imperfect and defective. That the expense of excavating the grounds and blasting and removing the ledge for the foundation of the building, amounting to the sum of \$1,218; for partition walls in cellar, cisterns, &c., to \$750; the pay of the architect, and numerous other items of expense,—had been entirely overlooked: And in estimating the expense of other articles, the amount fell far short of what was required. The amount of boards and timber necessary, was estimated at 97,000 feet; but the amount actually necessary and procured, was 182,610 feet; the cost of which exceeded the estimates \$1,223. The sum of \$500 was estimated as the expense of the warming apparatus; but subsequently the trustees changed the method for a more approved and effectual one, which will increase the cost from \$1,000 to \$1,200. These, with numerous small items, not included in the original estimate, (together with the pay of the architect,) will bring the amount required for its completion, nearly if not quite up to the sum of \$10,000.

The size of the building was increased, as stated by the trustees in their annual report, so as to afford an increased accommodation in the ratio of about one-tenth, and consequently increasing the cost of the structure nearly in that proportion.

G. M. BURLEIGH, *Chairman.*

July 21, 1848.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, July 21, 1848.

ORDERED, That 500 copies of the foregoing report, and accompanying resolve and statement of facts, be printed for the use of the Legislature.

DANIEL T. PIKE, *Secretary.*