

# 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. 1850.

---

Augusta:

WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1850.

---

---

# THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE.

---

No. 26.]

[HOUSE.

---

---

## REPORT.

---

THE committee on education to which was referred that portion of the message of the governor, relating to a seminary for the education of females, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to submit the following

### REPORT:

The governor, in that portion of his message referred to the committee, asserts, "that we have no well endowed seminary in the state for the education of females." This assertion cannot be denied. Neither can it be denied, that there is no academy or other institution of a high character in the state, devoted exclusively to the education of females.

As there are marked, distinctive differences between their nature, their tastes, the duties they are to perform and the responsibilities they are to meet, and the nature, the tastes, the duties and responsibilities of males, there should certainly be a difference in the education and training bestowed on each. Now, however, they usually attend the same schools, receive in a great measure the same education, and are brought under the same influences. This is surely not a wise course, neither is it a fulfillment of the obligations resting upon us rightfully to educate the youth of a state.

Of the importance of rightly educating the females of a state, there can be no question. They are to determine, in a great measure, the character of every succeeding generation ; to determine, whether the children committed to their charge shall, as men and women, be blessings or curses to the community ; for a mother's influence is continually and steadily exerted, whether for good or for evil, at that period during which the child is most susceptible to *all* influences ; and if that mother be herself ignorant, be not alive to the peculiar duties incumbent upon her, and the controlling and beneficent influences she can exert, what right have we to expect that the child shall be what he should be ? “ Can we gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles ? ”

Academies and other institutions in the state, furnish the means of educating females to a certain extent, but there is a demand for something higher than they afford ; a demand for an institution that shall furnish to the young women of the state, as good and as finished an education as is furnished to the young men of the state. A proof of this demand may be found in the fact, that so many young ladies are now sent to other states to obtain it. The catalogues of several institutions in Massachusetts for the past year, have been examined, and there have been found upon them the names of fifty-five young ladies belonging to the state of Maine. It is known that many more are sent to similar institutions in other states.

Is it creditable to the state of Maine, that this higher education cannot be obtained within our own borders, that her daughters must be sent elsewhere to be brought up to the New England standard of female education ? Let us set up that standard here. Let the state as a state, say to all who desire this higher education, remain here, and you shall have it. This can be done in no other way, than by endowing liberally some institution for the express purpose of furnishing this education, and endowing it so liberally, that, while the education given shall be of the highest order, the cost of tuition shall be the lowest possible ; so that all, however humble their circumstances may be, can, if they choose, avail themselves of its advantages.

The education of females should embrace, not only the more solid branches usually taught, but also what are called accomplishments; for, by possessing them can they alone fulfill their whole mission, which consists not only in building up and cherishing all that is good and excellent in the human character, but in endowing and making attractive that human character by adding to it grace and refinement.

It is of the highest importance, also, that females should acquire a knowledge of the laws of health and of the structure of the human body. Ignorance on their part upon these points, has produced much of the disease and deformity that now afflict our race; and it is time that females should cease to have the excuse of ignorance for bringing upon themselves and their posterity so great an amount of evil.

To accomplish these objects and bring about these beneficent results, young ladies should be gathered together by themselves within the walls of an institution, the best teachers in every branch of study provided for their education, and ample accommodations furnished for exercise within doors and without. Moreover, every thing within and around the place should be convenient and attractive. All this cannot be done, and at the same time be brought within the reach of all who may desire to avail themselves of the privileges offered by such an institution, without the aid of private or public munificence.

The committee are of opinion that the establishment and endowment of such an institution for the education of females, should not be left to private munificence alone; that the state, as a state, is under an obligation to do all this, upon the same principle that it is under an obligation to establish and endow a similar institution for the education of males. And as this obligation has been fulfilled in the one case, that it is now its duty to fulfill it in the other.

There are two ways in which this duty can be performed by the state. First, to erect suitable buildings in some place to be selected, to appoint a president and board of trustees, and carry on the institution directly as a state institution. To this plan there are

many and grave objections, aside from the great expense it would necessarily involve. The committee therefore at once rejected it.

Secondly. The state might adopt some institution now in existence and build upon it as a foundation. The committee had before them an application from the trustees of the Gorham Seminary for aid, and after listening to a full statement by the trustees and teacher of that institution of its present position and prospects, and of their plans and intentions for the future, they have come to the conclusion to submit the following propositions to the legislature:

*First.* To incorporate the trustees of Gorham Seminary, under the name and style of the Maine Female Seminary, and to place it under their charge, subject to the supervision of future legislatures.

*Secondly.* To provide that this institution shall be devoted exclusively to the education of females.

*Thirdly.* To endow it with a quantity of land equal to two townships.

The committee would respectfully submit the following statement of facts as to this institution, to which they would refer as the ground of their action in the recommendations they have now made.

Gorham Seminary was incorporated in the year 1803, and is located in the pleasant and healthy village of Gorham, about nine miles west of the city of Portland. It can now be easily and conveniently reached from all parts of the state. But the facilities for access to it, will, in a short time, be greatly increased by the opening of a railroad from the city of Portland, which passes directly through the place. The institution now owns about nine acres of land, and two buildings; one forty feet square and two stories high, the other one hundred and thirty feet long and forty wide, built of brick, and four stories high, with a basement, both in good repair. The apartments in this last named building are fully furnished in every way, and will accommodate the principal and his family and one hundred young ladies. The institution also owns four pianos, an organ, a library, and an astronomical, philosophical, and chemical apparatus. The buildings and other property have cost about

\$25,000, the larger portion of which has been contributed by private munificence.

There are now connected with the institution four male and six female teachers and two hundred and five scholars, one hundred and six of whom are young ladies, from all parts of this state and from other states. Particular attention has been given during the few past years to the education of females, and the committee have learned from reliable sources, that the education given has been of a high character.

These facts, in the opinion of the committee, show, that this institution at Gorham, is admirably adapted in every point of view, as a foundation upon which the state may build up a seminary of a high order for the education of females, and that the wise and enlightened suggestion of the governor can in no better manner be acted upon than by adopting and liberally endowing this institution in the manner proposed by the committee.

They would therefore respectfully submit the following bill, with the hope that its provisions may meet the approbation and concurrence of both branches of the legislature.

R. M. CHAPMAN, *per order.*

# STATE OF MAINE.

---

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND  
FIFTY.

---

AN ACT to change Gorham Academy to a Female  
Seminary.

---

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled, as follows :*

SECTION 1. Thomas Jameson, John Waterman,  
2 Daniel C. Emery, Caleb Bradley, Toppan Robie,  
3 Jacob Smith, James Irish, Josiah Pierce, Samuel  
4 Stephenson, Carlton Hurd, John W. Chickering, Wil-  
5 liam Bradbury, Asa Palmer, Seth Storer and John R.  
6 Adams, the present trustees of said Gorham Acad-  
7 emy, incorporated March fifth, eighteen hundred and  
8 three, their associates and successors, are hereby in-  
9 corporated as the trustees of the Maine Female Sem-  
10 inary, and shall have all the rights and powers inci-  
11 dent to similar corporations.



SECT. 2. Said Seminary shall be devoted exclusively to the education of females, and no male pupil shall be received therein.

SECT. 3. The seminary hereby created shall be located in the town of Gorham, in the county of Cumberland, on the same ground now occupied by Gorham Academy.

SECT. 4. All the provisions of the act of incorporation mentioned in the first section of this act, shall be applicable to the incorporation hereby created, so far as the same can be applied consistent with the intentions of this act.

SECT. 5. It shall be the duty of the trustees of Gorham Academy, within three months from the passage of this act, to assemble in a meeting duly and legally called, and consider the question of accepting this act, and if a majority shall, then and there, vote to accept the same, they shall forthwith file with the secretary of state a certificate signed by such majority, and from the day of filing the same all powers granted by said act of eighteen hundred and three to the trustees of said Gorham Academy shall cease, and this act shall be in force, and all property vested

12 in the trustees of Gorham Academy, shall then im-  
13 mediately vest in the trustees of Maine Female Semi-  
14 nary.

SECT. 6. The legislature shall have the right to alter  
2 or amend this act at any time after the acceptance  
3 of the same as aforesaid.

SECT. 7. When the trustees aforesaid shall have  
2 accepted the provisions of this act and filed a certifi-  
3 cate with the secretary of state as aforesaid, the land  
4 agent is hereby authorized and directed to convey to  
5 said trustees a quantity of land equal to two town-  
6 ships from any lands belonging in whole or in part to  
7 this state, and the funds arising therefrom shall be  
8 held by the trustees, in trust, to carry out the inten-  
9 tions of this act.

---

---

## STATE OF MAINE.

---

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Aug. 3, 1850.

ORDERED, That 400 copies of the foregoing Report and Bill,  
be printed for the use of the Legislature.

EDMUND W. FLAGG, *Clerk.*