

**THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE BOARD  
OF HEALTH OF THE STATE OF  
VERMONT FOR THE YEAR  
ENDING SEPT. 1ST, 1889**

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Third annual report of the secretary of the state board of health of the state of vermont for the year ending sept. 1st, 1889 by Various

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*Year Ending Sept. 1st, 1889.*

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1889.



STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
RUTLAND, September 1st, 1889. }

*His Excellency,*

WILLIAM P. DILLINGHAM,

*Governor :*

SIR :—I have the honor herewith to transmit the Third Annual Report of the State Board of Health, for the year ending September 1st, 1889.

Very Respectfully,

Your Obedient Servant,

CHARLES L. ALLEN,

Secretary.





No. 93.—AN ACT TO PREVENT THE SPREADING OF  
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES AND TO ESTABLISH A  
STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

*It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of  
Vermont:*

SECTION 1. The governor, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, shall appoint three persons as members of a State Board of Health for the State of Vermont. The term of office of said members of said board shall be so arranged that the term of one of them shall expire at the end of every second year. Vacancies in said board shall be filled as they occur by appointment of the governor, and confirmation by the senate when next in session.

SEC. 2. The members of said board first named in said appointment shall call a meeting of said members immediately after notice of said appointment shall be received by said members, and said board shall meet within six days after said notice, at the time and place designated in said call, and said board shall organize by electing one of their number to be president of said board, and the board shall also appoint a secretary, who shall be a reputable practicing physician of this State, and if not one of the members of said board by appointment he shall be a member of the board by virtue of his appointment of secretary. The said secretary shall hold his office until said board shall appoint another secretary, and he shall be the executive officer of said board of health.

SEC. 3. The board shall take cognizance of the interests of life and health among the inhabitants of the State; shall make or cause to be made sanitary investigations and inquiries respecting causes of disease, especially of epidemics, and the means of prevention; the sources of mortality and the effect of localities, employments, habits, and circumstances of life on the public health. They shall also, when requested, or when in their opinion the sanitary interests of localities require it, advise with municipal officers with regard to the location, drainage, water supply, heating and ventilation of public buildings and the drainage and sewerage of towns and cities.

SEC. 4. The board shall meet biennially on the second Tuesday of the session of the legislature at Montpelier, and at such other times and places as in the judgment of the board the public health may require, and also whenever the public safety of the people or the stock and domestic animals of the State shall require. The secretary, as executive officer of the board, shall superintend the performance of the work prescribed in this act, and shall perform such other duties as the board shall direct. He shall also respond to the invitations of boards of selectmen of the several towns, or the mayor of a city, in case of epidemics, contagious diseases or

other unusual sickness, by visiting the locality, or in such other ways as may be deemed best; he shall render the secretary of state any necessary assistance in preparing for publication the annual registration reports, as required by law, relating to births, deaths and marriages in the State, and he shall make report to the governor on or before the first day of September in each year of the investigations, discoveries, and recommendations of the board, which report shall be printed and distributed as soon as practicable thereafter in the same manner as other public documents of the State.

SEC. 5. The compensation of members of the board shall be five dollars per day and actual expenses while in the discharge of their official duties, and the governor and auditor of accounts may allow to the secretary of said board such additional sums for services as secretary, or for services in times of extraordinary peril, as seem to them reasonable, provided the whole expense of the board, including the secretary for services rendered and all expenses incurred, shall not exceed one thousand five hundred dollars in any year, except in some extraordinary public peril, in which case the governor may order said board to do and perform service for the safety of the State and her people in excess of said sum, but never to exceed the sum of two thousand five hundred dollars in all in any one year.

SEC. 6. This board shall have authority to promulgate and enforce such regulations for the better preservation of the public health in contagious and epidemic diseases as they shall judge necessary; and any person or persons or corporation neglecting or refusing, after having been duly notified in writing, to comply with the requirements of such regulations shall, upon conviction thereof, pay to the treasurer of the State a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars, said offense to be prosecuted for before any court of competent jurisdiction in the State.

SEC. 7. This act shall take effect from its passage.

Approved November 23, 1886.

# REPORT.

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The law establishing the State Board of Health gives so little power to the Board that it has been found impossible to do much really efficient work. The Board, however, has endeavored to educate the people in the principles of hygiene. For this purpose it has published a quarterly pamphlet, *The Sanitary Visitor*, and circulated it as widely as its funds would allow.

At the regular meeting, in October, 1888, the Board drafted a bill, in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Second Annual Report, which, after having been before the Legislature during several weeks, and finally emasculated in one of its most important points by the Committee on Public Health, was passed by both houses, and then vetoed by the Governor.

The Public Health Committee struck out from the original bill the section making it a penal offense to bury a dead human body without a written permission given by a health officer, which permission must be based upon the certificate of the attending physician as to the cause of death. In some towns there are two villages and the health officer might live in one and the death might have taken place in the other,—thus the person having charge of the burial would be obliged to go two, three or even five miles, to get the burial permit. This, occurring in a few instances, the committee thought such a burden that it entirely overbalanced the advantage of having reliable statistics from the whole State.

The following is the bill drafted by the Board of Health. The parts stricken out by the committee are included in brackets. The additions are printed in italics :