

**REPORTS OF THE TRUSTEES,
RESIDENT OFFICERS AND THE
VISITING COMMITTEE OF THE
MAINE INSANE HOSPITAL,
DECEMBER 1, 1881**

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Reports of the Trustees, Resident Officers and the Visiting Committee of the Maine Insane Hospital, December 1, 1881 by Various

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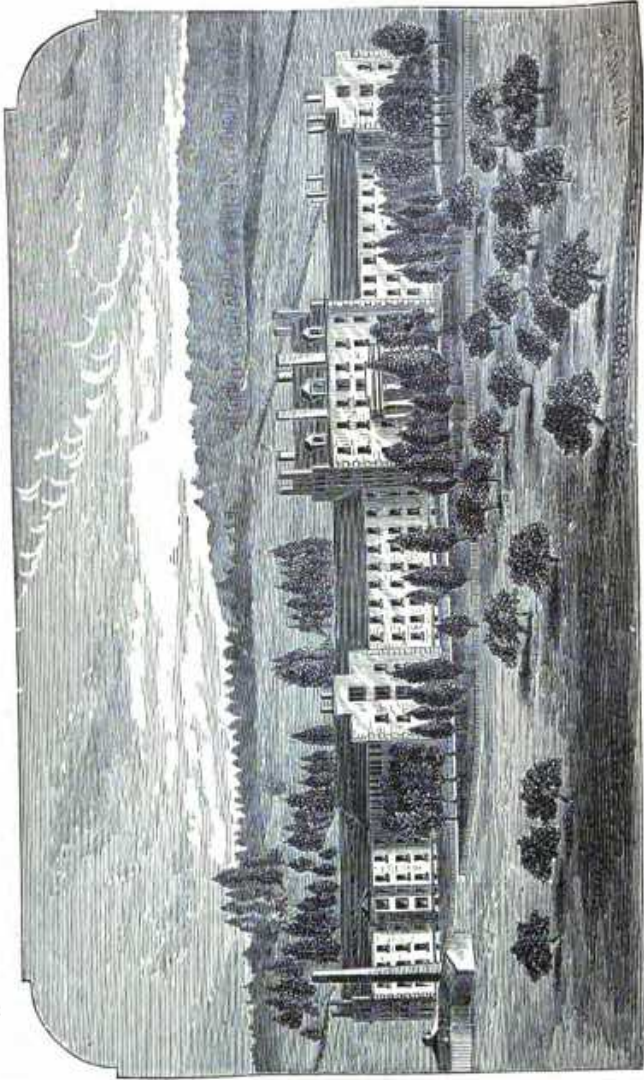
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VARIOUS

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VISITING COMMITTEE,
OF THE
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DECEMBER 1, 1881.

Published agreeably to a Resolve approved February 25, 1871.

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1882.

OFFICERS FOR 1882.

TRUSTEES.

J. S. CUSHING, M. D., SKOWHEGAN, *President*.
J. H. MANLEY, AUGUSTA, *Secretary*.
SILVSTER OAKES, M. D., AUDEX.
CHARLES W. JOHNSON, M. D., EAST MACHIAS.
MRS. C. A. QUINBY, AUGUSTA.
R. S. MORISON, BANGOR.

RESIDENT OFFICERS.

DR. H. M. HARLOW, *Superintendent*.
DR. B. T. SANBORN, *Assistant Superintendent*.
C. B. LAKIN, *Steward and Treasurer*.
FRANK B. CUSHING, *Clerk*.
REV. C. F. PENNEY, *Chaplain*.
MISS ALICE G. TWITCHELL, *Matron*.
VERMONT R. LUCE, *Supervisor of Male Wards*.
MISS HANNAH W. HAM, *Supervisor of Female Wards*.
MISS EMMA C. GLIDDEN, *Head Nurse*.

STANDING COMMITTEES FOR 1882.

On Finance—Morison, Johnson, Manley.
On Improvements—Cushing, Quinby, Oakes.
On Conference with Legislative Committee—Manley, Quinby, Oakes.
On Library—Morison, Harlow.

VISITING COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR.

<i>January</i> —Oakes, Johnson.	<i>July</i> —Manley, Quinby.
<i>February</i> —Cushing, Manley.	<i>August</i> —Cushing, Oakes.
<i>March</i> —Full Board.	<i>September</i> —Full Board.
<i>April</i> —Morison, Quinby.	<i>October</i> —Johnson, Morison.
<i>May</i> —Oakes, Cushing.	<i>November</i> —Quinby, Cushing.
<i>June</i> —Full Board.	<i>December</i> —Full Board.

TRUSTEES' REPORT.

*To the Honorable the Governor and the
Executive Council of the State of Maine:*

The Trustees of the Maine Insane Hospital respectfully submit this, their Forty-First Annual Report.

In doing this, they take pleasure in saying that they believe the Maine Insane Hospital is gradually, year by year, reaching a higher plane of usefulness, and more completely accomplishing the high mission for which it was established. This is being effected by the united and faithful efforts of all the officials to promote the best interests of the hospital and the welfare of its inmates; by the many valuable changes and improvements made in the last few years, which have helped to perfect the internal workings of the hospital and to surround it and the patients with those associations and attractions deemed conducive to their contentment and their recovery, such as have, for the past season, daily elicited expressions of satisfaction from patients, friends and visitors.

This representation is only in unison with that in our last annual report. Favorable as it then was, the Trustees soon found that there were impressions or apprehensions existing in the minds of very many, extending even to the friends of patients, that all was not well at the Insane Hospital. Believing then, as they do now, that the Maine Insane Hospital is justly entitled to the confidence of the public and its fostering care, and, that the public mind and the friends of those who are now patients, or may be in the near future, might be relieved of all unnecessary anxiety in this direction, the Trustees deemed it advisable to ask the Legislative Hospital Committee, if desirable on their part, to make a full and

thorough investigation into all the affairs of the hospital and its general management.

It is well known to the people of this State, and in other States, that such an investigation was made, reaching back over a long series of years, and extending into the very minutia of hospital work, from the efficiency of officers and faithfulness of attendants, to the cure and treatment of its unfortunate inmates. Without going into the details of this investigation, so fresh in the minds of the people, it is sufficient to say, that the Committee, composed of intelligent and impartial men, after a long and patient hearing of all that could be said, both for and against the Institution, were able to render such a report that, in their opinion, not only vindicated it from all suspicions and aspersions but reflected great credit and honor upon all the officials of the hospital for their faithful and valuable services, which should be a source of satisfaction to our State, and to the many friends of four hundred and fifty patients, in the assurance the Committee gave, that their friends have a comfortable home, are kindly watched over and provided with all that may help to restore them to a sound mind, to their homes and to a life of usefulness.

We would, therefore, respectfully refer all those desirous of knowing the condition and workings of the Maine Insane Hospital to the report of the Legislative Hospital Committee of 1881.

The Maine Insane Hospital with its officers, is not the only institution of the kind that has been the object of unfriendly criticism and suspicion. The history of similar institutions is replete with like experiences. This must necessarily be, so long as patients, though with fevered brains, perverted reason, and morbid impressions, are yet capable of relating cunningly devised tales of abuse and neglect, too often to find credence in the minds of those unfamiliar with the characteristics of insanity, and so long, too, as dismissed attendants and disaffected spirits can throw

into the avenues of public gossip discreditable reports upon honorable transactions and unavoidable circumstances.

STATISTICAL RECORD.

For this record and the internal workings of the hospital the past year, we respectfully refer you to the report of the Superintendent, which we forward to you, together with that of the Steward and Treasurer and other officers.

THE SANITARY CONDITION

of the hospital has been good, but few deaths from epidemics, acute diseases or accidents, have occurred. One case of suicide to report, which was done in an unexpected time and manner, which illustrates the fact that the insane, though appearing in their best mood, are not to be trusted. Having made careful inquiry into all the particulars, we are satisfied that the usual care had been exercised to prevent such an accident, the details of which can be found in the report of the Visiting Committee.

Two hundred and two have been admitted the past year, a number larger than any previous year except 1871, which furnished the same number, though the daily average was only 385, with a record of 45 deaths, against 442 the past year with only 41 deaths. The general average the past year was 442, while that of 1880 was only 412, making an average increase the past year of thirty.

Of the number discharged, 54 are reported recovered, 54 improved and 40 not improved. Several cases were discharged by the Superintendent and Trustees, that could have been longer retained with profit to themselves and convenience to friends, but being of the milder type of the disease and apparently harmless, they were allowed to go, to make room for the more violent ones that were daily asking for admission. The Superintendent has been under the necessity of refusing many applications to be received into the hospital the past year, for the want of accommodations. We are sorry

to report this fact. It illustrates the want that has existed for two or three years, and for as many years has been presented by the Superintendent and Trustees in their annual reports. The great call for hospital accommodations the past year renders the demand still more pressing. The inquiry, "What shall we do with our insane," is one not to be ignored, but demands candid consideration. It is apparent to all conversant with the condition of our own hospital and those in other States, that insanity is increasing with succeeding years, and in the opinion of good judges, beyond the ratio of increase of population. The cause of this it is not our province here to discuss.

In 1861 the average number of patients for that year was only 254; in 1871, 385, and in 1881, 442, making an increase of 74 per cent. in the last two decades. This increased demand for hospital accommodations may be attributed to two causes—the increase of the malady and the fact that the people have become convinced of the good results and safety of hospital treatment, and influences which cannot be secured in the home circle. That no misapprehension may be entertained, we will say that our own State is not alone in being afflicted with the increase of mental diseases. Rhode Island Asylum for the Insane, built some nine years since, has within the last four years been enlarged by two stone additions, to accommodate one hundred more. The Insane Hospital at Danvers, built a few years since at an expense of \$1,800,000, cannot well accommodate the increase of the insane of the State for the time occupied in its construction. Several of the New York asylums, with patients numbering from ten to twelve hundred, report this past year an increase from ten to twelve a month.

These few statistics, with others that might be given, are sufficient to give prominence to the fact that the increasing demand for hospital accommodations is not confined to the limits of our own State.