

HOUSE....No. 118.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 3 mo. (March 25,) 1850.

The Committee on Public Charitable Institutions, to whom was referred that portion of the Governor's Address relating to such institutions, and also the order relating to an institution for the demented, idiotic, and incurably insane, have considered of the same, and would

REPORT:

That the want of further accommodations for the insane, has been pressingly felt for some time past, and has increased from year to year, till the time has come, when, in the opinion of your committee, the State cannot, in justice to itself and to the numbers now suffering for the want of those accommodations which it has undertaken to furnish to all its insane, longer omit to adopt prompt measures to supply that want.

A joint committee of the two branches of the Legislature, was appointed in 1848, on the subject of insanity in the State, and directed to sit during the recess of the Legislature. The committee entered into a thorough investigation of the subject, devoting much time and labor thereto, and made an elaborate and exceedingly comprehensive and able report, to the Legislature, which will be found in the Senate Documents for 1849, No. 9. The conclusion which the committee unanimously came to, was, "that the erection of another Lunatic

Hospital is required, to meet the pressing wants of the community.”

At that time, it was ascertained that, of fifteen hundred and twelve insane persons, then in Massachusetts, six hundred were unprovided for in public or private asylums, devoted to their interests. The State Hospital, at Worcester had, for a long time, had more patients than its accommodations were intended for, and the pressure upon it has been so great, that, at the present time, there are sixty-three more than can be conveniently and suitably provided for. Numerous applications are made for the admission of patients, which it is impossible to receive. During the past season, no effort has been omitted, to meet the claims thus made on the institution. In every case, in which the circumstances would warrant it, a discharge of patients has been made, in order to make way for new comers; and a short time since, an order was passed by the trustees, for the removal of a considerable number of patients to the county institutions, to which, by the provisions of law, authority is given for the transfer of certain classes of patients. But those establishments were all so full, that the order could only partially be complied with.

The consequence of this state of things is, that the accommodations of the hospital are mostly taken up by those whose disease is of long standing, of whose recovery there is little hope, and who require little else but good custodial care,—to the exclusion of new cases, of which, under the treatment they would receive, if admitted, a great proportion might reasonably be expected to recover.

We are, therefore, unanimous in the opinion, that a new hospital ought forthwith to be established by the State, at some suitable place to be selected by competent persons, after investigation into the relative advantages of the various sections of the State; and for that purpose, report the annexed bill.

For the Committee,

JOHN MILTON EARLE.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty.

AN ACT

Authorizing the erection of a Second Hospital for the
Insane.

BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :

1 SECT. 1. His excellency the governor, with the
2 advice and consent of the council, is hereby author-
3 ized and empowered to appoint a board of three com-
4 missioners, who shall purchase an eligible site in such
5 section of the Commonwealth, as the said commis-
6 sioners may deem expedient, and cause to be erected
7 thereon a suitable hospital, for the care and cure of
8 the insane; the accommodations of such hospital to
9 be sufficient for two hundred and fifty patients, a su-
10 perintendent and steward, with their families, and all
11 necessary subordinate officers and assistants. And
12 the said commissioners shall have power to make all
13 contracts, and to employ all agents necessary to carry
14 into effect the powers hereinbefore granted: *provided*,
15 that the aggregate amount of expenses and liabilities,
16 incurred by virtue of said powers, shall not exceed
17 the amount of one hundred thousand dollars; and the
18 said commissioners shall present all their accounts to
19 the governor and council, to be by them audited and
20 allowed, from time to time, as they shall deem proper.

1 SECT. 2. In order to defray any expenses incurred,
2 in pursuance of the preceding section, or to repay any
3 sums borrowed, as hereinafter authorized, the treas-
4 urer is hereby empowered, under the direction of the
5 governor, with the advice and consent of the council,
6 to issue scrip or certificates of debt, in the name and
7 behalf of the Commonwealth, and under his signa-
8 ture, and the seal of the Commonwealth, to an
9 amount not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars,
10 which may be expressed in the currency of Great
11 Britain, and shall be payable to the holder thereof, in
12 London, bearing an interest of five per cent., payable
13 semi-annually, in London, on the first days of April
14 and October, with warrants for the interest, attached
15 thereto, signed by the Treasurer, which scrip or cer-
16 tificates, shall be redeemable in London, on the first
17 day of April one thousand eight hundred and sixty-
18 three, and shall be countersigned by the Governor of
19 the Commonwealth, and be deemed a pledge of the
20 faith and credit of the Commonwealth for the re-
21 demption thereof. And the treasurer may, under the
22 direction of the governor and council, dispose of any
23 portion of said scrip, at any price not less than its
24 original par value.

1 SECT. 3. The treasurer, under the direction of the
2 governor and council, may borrow, in anticipation of
3 the issue of any of the scrip authorized as above, of
4 any of the banks of this Commonwealth, or of any cor-
5 porations or individuals, such sums as may be neces-
6 sary for any of the purposes of this act: *provided*,
7 that the whole amount borrowed by authority hereof,
8 and remaining unpaid, shall, at no time exceed the
9 amount of one hundred thousand dollars.