

INVESTIGATING.

GOV. BUTLER'S CHARGES AGAINST THE TEWKSBURY ALMHOUSE MANAGEMENT

INQUIRED INTO BY A COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATURE.

The committee on public charitable institutions began Thursday evening, at the State House, its investigation of the management of the public charitable institutions of the State. The committee consists of 6 Republicans and 5 Democrats, 3 of whom are Senators and 8 Representatives. In accordance with his promise Gov. Butler attended to make good if he could, by evidence, the charges against these institutions which he had preferred in his inaugural address. It had been expected that a large number of curious people would be in attendance, but such was not the fact, although the room was uncomfortably crowded. Half a score of ladies were in the company, which also contained numerous members of the Legislature. The Governor's request that the committee get the books of the State almshouse, at Tewksbury, was assented to. Senator Gilmore, chairman, then swore George P. Burpee as the committee's stenographic reporter. The Governor's private secretary and stenographer were present. E. P. Brown, Esq., announced that he was present as counsel for the trustees, the superintendent and the managers of the State almshouse, and asked that the charges be presented in writing. Gov. Butler replied that he was there not to make charges, or as a public prosecutor, but to present certain evidence and ask certain questions, and that ample time and scope would be given to them whom the evidence concerns to produce any evidence to meet the charges. The chairman said the theory of the committee was that the charges were substantially contained in the inaugural address of His Excellency the Governor, and in the veto message of the appropriation bill, being substantially, that there is gross extravagance and mismanagement of the Tewksbury almshouse; that 70 percent. of the appropriation, substantially, is used for salaries; and that there have been from 150 to 250 bodies of babies sold to medical institutions a year. The committee decided to hear the Governor's evidence on these points as the basis of procedure.

Dr. John Dixwell of Boston was the first witness called by Gov. Butler. He testified that he was a regular physician, living at No. 6 Pemberton square; that he was educated at Harvard college, and that he graduated from the medical school in 1873. He testified that during the three years he saw and knew of several hundred bodies of infants, each year, being brought to the school for dissection. They were brought there in trunks, in a country team, and were deposited in a little ante-room on crates or shelves until the students were ready to use them. The students obtained the bodies by applying to "Bill" Andrews, now dead, who fixed the price at from \$3 to \$5 each, for infants, or for part of an adult, according to the supply. Andrews was a prize-fighter; he died by suicide. The bodies of infants were sought for by persons who wished to practice dissection, because they could easily be taken in a bundle and carried home. Personally he had two or three every week, during the season. Some of those dissected showed that they had died from starvation.

The witness said that Andrews told him the bodies came from the Tewksbury almshouse. Dr. Dixwell further said that he had given substantially the same evidence before the grand jury for Suffolk county about five years ago. Have seen remains of infants packed up for disposal with those of animals, birds, etc.

After arguments between the Governor and Mr. Brown, the committee took a vote, and decided to suspend this line of inquiry.

Mr. John A. Chase of Lynnfield, formerly an official at the almshouse, was called. He testified: Was employed there from April 2, 1880, to July 15, 1881; have a son there now. He went on to tell that he, and also his son, had delivered dead bodies of infants to the Grove Street School in Boston; his son was paid \$10 by Harvard and \$12 by a female medical college for bodies, but was paid nothing for infants. Witness had seen billets of wood sealed up in coffins in place of infants, and religious services said over them by the deceived relatives, who then took the coffins away for burial.

The hearing was resumed yesterday evening. The witnesses examined were Dr. Dixwell, John H. Chase and Charles H. Dudley. The latter was night watchman at the almshouse from Nov. 18, 1876, on; he testified at great length. He stated that when he first went there Capt. Marsh, the superintendent, told him twice: "But aside from the building being on fire, don't see too much." He also said: "Things here are in such a condition that every one looks out for himself." On further inquiry I was told I might get fees if I would join in the work done there nights. I also saw boxes filled with sheetings, bedding, carpets, etc., carted off to the railroad station at night; the family of Mrs. Marsh's daughter, who lived at Exeter, N. H., visited the almshouse very frequently and always took away boxes of such articles. I also saw Thomas J. Marsh, Jr., carrying off dead bodies by night in an express wagon to the depot in a stealthy manner.

The committee will sit again Monday at 2 o'clock.