

A communication from the 'Northern Home for Friendless Children,' a benevolent Institution in Philadelphia calls attention to the fact that a number of its inmates are indentured as apprentices to citizens of Maryland, and that legislation upon your part is desirable to recognize the validity of such indentures and to give to them the like effect with those made between parties residents of this State. I submit herewith a copy of that communication and commend it to your attention.

The commissioners to superintend the building of the new hospital for the insane whose appointment was authorized by the Legislature at its last session, were appointed shortly after its adjournment, and I had hoped to receive in time for this communication a report of the present condition of that work, and an estimate of the amount necessary to complete it. The recent death however of one of the members of that board who acted as its Secretary, has probably delayed that report; it will doubtless be soon received by you. I am informed that no part of the hospital has been yet completed, although the whole of it is considerably advanced. That part of former appropriations unexpended at the time of the appointment of the present commissioners has been disbursed by them in payment of debts previously contracted, and in the protection of the building against the damage to which it was liable from its unfinished condition.

The want of this Institution has long been very seriously felt, and I would earnestly recommend that you appropriate an amount sufficient to complete it and put it in operation as soon as the expected report shall furnish you with the information necessary for that purpose.

The Trustees of the Sheppard Asylum, filed in this Department as required by the Charter, in January, 1863, a report showing the condition of that corporation, with an account of its receipts and disbursements for the previous year, a copy of which is herewith sent. The report for the last year is not yet received, but will be laid before you whenever it is.

#### MARYLAND PENITENTIARY.

The report of the Directors of the Penitentiary for 1863 has not yet reached me, that for 1862 is herewith transmitted, and the other will no doubt be very shortly laid before you. I am enabled, however, to say from information received, that the financial embarrassments which have so long crippled the operations of that Institution, and caused such frequent appeals to the Treasury for its relief are about, as I hope, to disappear.