

CHAP. 78.—An Act To change the proceedings for admission to the Government Hospital for the Insane in certain cases, and for other purposes.

January 31, 1899.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That hereafter proceedings for admission to the Government Hospital for the Insane of indigent insane persons residing in the District of Columbia, and of independent or pay patients admitted to the said hospital under section forty-eight hundred and fifty-four of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and for admission temporarily to said hospital of nonresident insane persons found in the said District, shall be commenced by petition presented in open court to the justice of the supreme court of the District of Columbia holding a special term for orphans' court business, stating the facts necessary to admission to said hospital as heretofore provided by law.

Government Hos-
pital for the Insane.
Proceedings for ad-
mission to.

R. S., secs. 4844, p.
941.

Petition.

SEC. 2. That such petition shall be signed and sworn to by some responsible resident of the District of Columbia, but shall not be filed until the court shall be satisfied as to the responsibility and residence of the person signing and swearing to the same.

—authentication.

SEC. 3. That the order of the court directing the filing of the petition shall require a copy thereof to be served on the alleged lunatic and another on the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, and shall fix a time for the hearing of the application, and a copy of such order, duly authenticated, shall be inscribed on each of the said copies before service thereof.

—service, etc.

SEC. 4. That so soon as may be after the filing of the petition the court shall appoint two or more physicians, not connected with any hospital for the insane, to examine the person alleged in the petition to be insane, and testify as to his mental condition, each of such physicians to be paid a per diem compensation of ten dollars by the District of Columbia, on the certificate of the court that his account for such service is just and correct, and other witnesses examined on such application shall be paid by the District the fees and allowances prescribed by law for witnesses summoned in behalf of the United States; and all other costs of the proceeding shall be paid by the District: *Provided*, That in the case of independent or pay patients the petition shall be signed by one of the nearest relatives of such insane person, by his legal guardian, or by some friend. All costs of the proceeding shall be defrayed out of the estate of such person, and a deposit shall be paid into court sufficient to cover such costs; and the request for admission to said hospital shall be made within five days after the entry of the order of court.

Medical examina-
tion.

—costs.

Proviso.
Pay patients.
R. S., sec. 4854, p. 941,
amended.

SEC. 5. That the court shall require the presence of the alleged lunatic at the hearing of the application, unless for good reason it shall direct otherwise by an order stating such reason.

Presence of lunatic
at hearing.

SEC. 6. That the order of the court on the hearing of the application on the petition and evidence shall be made without an inquisition by jury, and all the proceedings under the petition shall be entered in the minutes of the court.

Record of proceed-
ings.

SEC. 7. That it shall be the duty of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, so soon as practicable, to return to their places of residence or to their friends all indigent insane persons not residing in the District at the time they became insane who are now detained in the Government Hospital for the Insane, or who shall be committed to the said hospital to be temporarily cared for, as provided in section forty-eight hundred and fifty of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and all necessary expenses incurred by the Commissioners in ascertaining the locality where such persons or their friends belong and in returning them to such locality shall be defrayed by the District of Columbia.

Return of certain
indigent insane.

R. S., sec. 4850, p. 940.

SEC. 8. That all provisions of law inconsistent with this Act be, and the same are hereby, repealed.

R. S., secs. 4844, 4845,
4846, 4847, 4848, 4849,
4850, pp. 939, 940; vol.
19, p. 347, repealed.

Approved, January 31, 1899.