

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1857.

PART SECOND.

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1857.

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.]

[No. 12.]

STATE OF MAINE.

THE Committee on the State Reform School, in compliance with an order of the Legislature, has visited and examined that institution, and ask leave to present the following

REPORT:

The high objects had in view in establishing this school, are in the judgment of your Committee being realized. During the short space of time it has been in active operation, three hundred and forty-five boys have been its inmates. Most of them have come from the various cities and larger towns of the State. The circumstances by which they were surrounded previous to their commitment, were unfavorable to their moral and physical health. Here they are taught to respect themselves and each other. Habits of industry are inculcated. Their physical powers are developed in the workshop, in attending to the domestic duties of the establishment, and in active exercise about the farm. Their hours of play and recreation are also laid under contribution for the same object. Their minds are disciplined in the school room, and their moral training carefully attended to in the appropriate exercises of the chapel and Sabbath school. The whole course of training and discipline adopted, seems eminently calculated to correct false impressions of character, and inspire the mind with sentiments of

respect and honor. Your Committee were very favorably impressed with the gentlemanly deportment and good order that prevailed among the boys. All appeared to be contented and happy. The workshops presented an air of cheerfulness and activity, more than indicating that it was considered no unpleasant task to make a shoe, bottom a chair, or mend a garment. A good degree of skill was manifested in the execution of their work, especially by those who had been practicing any length of time. There has been a decided improvement in the school during the past year. More care has been taken to grade them thoroughly, so as to give each teacher more time with each scholar. Good progress has been made by most of the boys in their studies, so that the several grades of schools will compare favorably with our country schools generally. The boys acquitted themselves with a great deal of credit in all their studies.

Several of the Committee addressed the boys, reminding them of the valuable privileges they were enjoying, and urging upon their attention the importance of improving them to the best advantage.

Your Committee found the buildings in good repair generally. Every thing within and without exhibited marks of careful oversight. The large and commodious barn in progress a year ago, has been finished, furnishing ample and convenient accommodations. A chair shop has been added to the institution during the year past. A wharf has been built on the [premises] that will be a great accommodation. Roads have been constructed, and other permanent improvements made to a limited extent.

The financial operations of the school were carefully looked into, and so far as your Committee were able to judge, a just economy has been practiced.

The farm needs several hundred rods of substantial fence erected immediately, to secure it from public depredations. But if the State should not provide means to build all the permanent fence needed this year, it would be economy to build a temporary one.

The sewer spoken of in the report of the Trustees would be a

very decided advantage, and it is hoped the means will be provided to build it.

The Committee would respectfully suggest to the Trustees the propriety of having the financial and school year end at the same time. This might subject them to some inconvenience in making their next report, embracing as it necessarily would something more than a year, but would be more than overbalanced by having the report in such form as to be readily understood by all.

Your Committee would also call the attention of the Trustees to the propriety of giving to the worthy and laborious Superintendent, Mr. Lincoln, some further assistance.

Perhaps if some practical and experienced farmer could have charge of the farming operations, thus relieving the Superintendent from many of his arduous duties, and affording him more time to be devoted personally to the large number of boys that constantly need his sagacious oversight, it might prove an essential benefit to all the interests of the institution.

The usefulness of this school, and in the judgment of your Committee, its indispensable necessity, is every day becoming more and more apparent. It is securing to itself its just tribute, the confidence of an intelligent community. The liberal patronage of the State heretofore bestowed, in providing the ways and means to carry on its operations successfully, it is believed will be continued with a liberal hand.

Your Committee would not close this report without expressing their sentiments of regard for the worthy Superintendent, teachers and overseers of the institution, who are earnestly devoted to their various and responsible duties, and who kindly rendered us every assistance possible in our examination and inquiries.

Per order of the Committee.

STEEL SCAMMAN, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 19, 1857.

Ordered, That 1000 copies of the foregoing Report (from the Committee on State Reform School) be printed for the use of the Legislature.

JOSEPH K. CLARK, *Secretary pro tem.*