

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1866.



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1866.

FORTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 9.

REPORT.

The Joint Standing Committee on the State Prison, in pursuance of a joint order of the Legislature of January 15th, authorizing them to visit that institution and ascertain what legislation is necessary thereto, to promote the best interests of the State, have attended to that duty and Report :

That on the 19th inst. the Committee visited the prison, and was received by its Warden, W. W. Rice, with that urbanity, warmth and kindness which are the natural characteristics of that gentleman. Here we were joined by the Hon. Joseph Farwell, ex-member of the Council, who had been constituted by that body a committee the previous year to visit and examine into the condition of the prison, financially and otherwise, and also by William Wilson of Rockland, one of the inspectors of that institution, and its physician, Dr. Chase, who, in connection with its Warden, proceeded to give the Committee a full exhibit and explanation of its records, showing the financial condition and general standing and prosperity of its affairs, the measures and principles adopted and interwoven into the administration for the preservation of order and discipline among the prisoners, which fully sustain the facts set forth in the several reports of its officers.

Next we visited the inside of the prison, cells, cookery, &c., in all of which were exhibited arrangement, order and cleanliness not to be excelled in any similar institution.

We also went through the various industrial apartments, the carriage shop, paint shop, shoe shop, and blacksmith shop, at the head of each of which is an experienced overseer, who gives direc-

tion to all the interests of his department, assigns to each his appropriate work, and sees that each and all perform the work assigned them with that care and diligence that becomes their duty in the relations they sustain to the State. In all of these departments was manifest that uniformity of arrangement, order and diligence, which reflects much credit to its several officers.

We were fully impressed that the labor of the prison has been so fully systematized, and its industrial interests reached that high state of perfection, which has so long been the great desideratum of its friends, resulting in the long wished for purpose of becoming a self-sustaining institution. For this result too much credit cannot be attached to its highly popular Warden, Hon. W. W. Rice, the inspectors, and officers connected with them, between whom is apparent that harmony of purpose and unanimity of effort which warrants the fullest conviction that the interest of the institution has been committed into the right hands.

For the health of the prisoners, we refer you to the report of the physician, Dr. Chase, which is fully sustained by our examination.

For the religious interests of the same we respectfully refer you to the chaplain's report, fully concurring in his suggestions, and rejoicing with him that a suitable and commodious chapel is nearly completed, in which the prisoners can be assembled for public worship and religious instruction.

The workshops and out-buildings of the prison are approximating to the demands the interest requires.

The enlargement of the carriage shop, and erection and nearly completion of the shoe shop, from former appropriations, more than warrants the outlay in the benefits derived.

No place for the shelter of wood is within the enclosure of the prison yard, and a shed for that purpose is *very much* needed.

There is not a sufficient shelter for lumber, and one connected with the carriage shop is greatly wanted, and we recommend the erection of a shed for this purpose in connection with the shop.

A new piggery is needed, the old one being in a dilapidated condition, wrongly located, and wholly inadequate to the interests of the prison.

The barn and shed are very much out of repair, unsound, incommodious, and not worth the repairing.

For these purposes, the building of two cisterns, one connected

with the shoe shop and one with the blacksmith shop, which economy will not allow to be dispensed with, and to paint and finish up the shoe shop, we strongly recommend the granting the appropriation asked for by the warden, believing it will be for the best interests of the institution and welfare of the State, and herewith submit a resolve.

Believing as the Committee does, that the discipline of the prison, the individual conduct of each prisoner, the manner and amount of labor performed, depends very largely upon the sanitary measures employed to accomplish the desired results, and fully approving of the measures and principles adopted by the warden, to aid him farther in his administration, we would recommend the enactment of the accompanying bill.

Respectfully submitted.

Per order.

J. H. RAMSDELL, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIX.

AN ACT relating to the discipline of the state prison.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled, as follows :

SECTION 1. The warden of the state prison shall
2 keep a record of the conduct of each convict, and for
3 every month that such convict shall appear by such
4 record to have faithfully observed all the rules and re-
5 quirements of the prison, the warden may recommend
6 to the executive a deduction from the term of such
7 convict's sentence according to, but not exceeding the
8 following rule and proportion : for a convict under the
9 sentence of two years or less, one day for each month
10 of good conduct ; three years or less and more than
11 two years, two days ; four years, three days ; five
12 years, four days ; seven years or less and more than
13 five years, five days ; nine years or less and more
14 than seven years, six days ; ten years and less than

15 fifteen years, seven days ; fifteen years and less than
16 twenty years, eight days ; and for all other convicts,
17 except those sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, ten
18 days.

SECT. 2. Chapter two hundred and thirty-five of the
2 laws of eighteen hundred and sixty-four; and all other
3 acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.

SECT. 3. This act shall take effect from its approval
2 by the governor.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the state prison.

Resolved, That the sum of thirty-five hundred dollars
2 is hereby appropriated for the building of a stable with
3 carriage and slaughter house annexed, piggery, lum-
4 ber house, woodhouse, cisterns and necessary repairs.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the joint standing committee on
the state prison.

Resolved, That the state treasurer is hereby author-
2 ized and directed to pay J. H. Ramsdell the sum of
3 one hundred and twenty dollars, it being for expenses
4 incurred by the committee visiting the state prison the
5 nineteenth of January instant.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, January 31, 1866.

Read and accepted, and on motion of Mr. RAMSDALL, laid on the table, and 350 copies ordered to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

THOMAS P. CLEAVES, *Secretary.*