

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1867.

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1867.

FORTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 45.

The Joint Standing Committee on the State Reform School, in compliance with an order of the Legislature, have visited that institution and ask leave to

REPORT :

That, on Thursday the 17th day of January, your Committee left Augusta and reached that institution the same day, spending that and a part of the following day, and some of the Committee all of the day with the intervening night, thus having a good opportunity for observing the workings of the institution in its various departments, marking how each hour was occupied, the method and system of instruction—how the labor was conducted, the arrangement for exercise and recreation, as well as the necessary appendages for cooking, eating, washing and sleeping.

The members of the Legislature having the printed reports of the Trustees and Superintendent of the School before them, your Committee respectfully refer you to their minute tabular statistics of the institution, believing it to be a truthful exhibit covering the whole ground.

Assuming the object of the Legislature in authorizing your Committee to visit that institution was mostly for the purpose of ascertaining if the money granted for its benefit, and duties imposed upon its officers, have been wisely and honestly expended and timely and faithfully discharged. From all the observations your Committee was enabled to make during their short stay, we are of the opinion that the Superintendent is desirous of confining the expenditures within the strictest rules of economy, and with his assistants to discharge all their obligations efficiently. However near to, or however far short, of these standards of expenditures and duties, they have been able to reach, one thing the Committee

is agreed in saying, that the State can ill afford to dispense with the vast amount of good which is being accomplished through this institution in its beneficial and elevating influences over that large class of unfortunate children and youth, that come within its fostering care, even though the expense was far greater than it now is. Your Committee are fully impressed with the difficulties that attend the administration of the various and diversified interests of such an institution. That much has been accomplished in improving, perfecting and systematizing the sanitary educational and industrial interests since the founding of this institution cannot be denied; but that there remains still opportunities for improvements your Committee are equally clear, especially in the industrial departments. And while the State can never hope that this, like some other institutions, can become self-sustaining, yet the Committee are fully impressed with the opinion, that fruitful ingenuity, and a solicitous, energetic, comprehensive and practical spirit, might seek out other employments, quite as well adapted to the capacity of the boys, and with very much more satisfactory results.

For information upon the sanitary condition and improvements suggested thereupon, we respectfully refer you to the report of the Physician of the institution.

With the discipline of this institution, your Committee were well pleased and have no improvements or suggestions to recommend.

In the school departments your Committee were favorably impressed with the appearance, intelligence and qualifications of the teacher, Mr. Berry and Mrs. Libby of the first division, and Miss Towle of the second division; also with the general good order that prevailed and the interest manifested by the boys, and the apparent proficiency they are making in their studies.

If in the minds of any there may be apprehensions of extravagance, most assuredly the Trustees are not guilty of any unnecessary extravagance in the diet afforded the boys. Your Committee would have been better pleased with a little larger outlay in the varieties of diet, particularly for their breakfast. We are of the opinion that weak or poor coffee, with dry bread alone, does not afford nutriment sufficient to develop a robust and healthy physical constitution of boys at this age, and we recommend some addition to the bill of fare in their morning diet.

We would also invite the attention of the Trustees to the respectful consideration of the ten hours' confinement of the boys,

during the winter season, mostly in a sitting position, and determine whether or not this is not too heavy a tax upon their endurance in order to a healthy development of their energies. Also to the importance of enlarging their play-ground and providing some system of gymnastics for the exercise and diversion of the boys.

This institution, conceived in a spirit of benevolence and philanthropy, founded by a charitable liberality, situated in a most healthy and beautiful location, surrounded by the most pleasing natural scenery and all the improvements and accomplishments of refined civilization, if kept under the control of competent and faithful officers, and well guarded, fostered and endowed by the State with a solicitous care and a liberal hand, will become the asylum of thousands of homeless, neglected and wayward boys, who here will be subdued and conquered by the power of kindness and wholesome restraint, receiving here their first impressions of moral obligations and their first stimulus for intellectual improvement, and when fully reformed and properly educated and prepared for self-control, will be released from their bondage, and go out to bless themselves and the world.

Inspired by such hopes, and under so favorable auspices, the State may well expect the Trustees of this institution will labor "to bring it up to that high point of excellence at which its results shall equal the reasonable expectations of its early friends and founders."

To untie the hands of your Trustees, and aid in the accomplishment of this result, your Committee recommend the appropriation of the sums asked for in their report, and hold them responsible for the realization of those hopes which the State may reasonably expect, viz :

For deficiencies,	\$1,103 15
For repairs,	2,000 00
For other expenses,	15,200 00
Total,	<u>\$18,303 15</u>

Which amount of eighteen thousand three hundred and three dollars and fifteen cents is herewith asked for in the accompanying resolve. Per order.

J. H. RAMSDELL, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the state reform school.

Resolved, That the sums of one thousand one hundred
2 and three dollars and fifteen cents, for deficiencies ;
3 also two thousand dollars for improvements and repairs;
4 also fifteen thousand and two hundred dollars, making
5 eighteen thousand three hundred and three dollars and
6 fifteen cents, be and hereby is appropriated for the
7 benefit of the state reform school for the fiscal year
8 ending April first, in the year of our Lord one thou-
9 sand eight hundred and sixty-eight.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 13, 1867.

Reported by Mr. RAMSDALL, from the Committee on State Reform School, and on his motion laid on the table and ordered to be printed, together with the report accompanying.

THOMAS P. CLEAVES, *Secretary.*