

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIFTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 43.

The Committee on Reform School, to which was referred the report of the Superintendent of the Reform School, have in accordance with the instructions under which it acted, visited the School, and ask leave to present the following report :

February 4th the Committee visited the Reform School, were received by the superintendent and officers and politely shown over the buildings and surroundings. The Committee made as careful an examination into the condition of things as time would permit, visiting in succession the several work rooms, school rooms, dormitories, chapel, laundry and cook room. The work performed by the boys is divided into three classes: shoemaking, chair-bottoming and knitting and sewing. Discrimination is used in placing the boy at work, his age and capacity being considered. The Committee are well satisfied with the amount and character of the labor performed. The boys had the appearance of having sufficient food so far as quantity is concerned, and while your Committee would not wish to render an adverse criticism in regard to the food served to the boys, they cannot in justice pass the matter over without suggesting, if it may not be the part of wisdom to make less discrimination in the matter of food between these boys and other boys of the same age at their own homes.

While the committee were gratified at the general progress manifested in the school room, they received the impression that the methods of teaching used might be changed to the advantage of the boys. With the class in mental arithmetic your Committee were satisfied, but would suggest that in the studies of geography and reading, more familiar and practical instruction should be employed.

Everything about the institution indicated beyond a doubt a place of punishment. The Committee well understand that refractory boys under a certain age, who otherwise would be sent to jail, are sent here. The boys realize that they are sent to a penal

institution. So far this is in the judgment of your Committee proper and just, but if the true principle and purpose of this institution, which is reformatory, is to be carried out, it becomes a serious question, whether the discipline of a penal institution should be constantly enforced.

Personal neatness is one of the moral virtues, and all who make the improvement of boys and youth a study, unite in testifying that a habit of personal neatness lays the foundation of many excellencies. Ambition, pride, a regard for the good opinion of others, spring naturally from the exercise of this quality. That this habit is not enforced at the School was plainly evident in the untidy appearance of the boys. The Committee do not find the rooms of the buildings kept with that scrupulous care so important a trust demands.

With the farming operations and brick making your Committee were unable, owing to the season of the year, to make such an examination as they might wish, but so far as they could observe they express themselves satisfied. The farming stock showed that they were well fed and cared for. The barn was a model of neatness. The farming tools were housed and in good order.

This institution is the ward of the State and cannot be dispensed with. These boys may many of them yet reflect honor upon the State in return for this guardian care. Let then the State act wisely and kindly in the exercise of its power. The Committee would recommend in accordance with the request of the Trustees the following appropriations: Three hundred dollars (\$300) to complete the improvements already begun in the Laundry. Three hundred dollars (\$300) for a new cistern at the barn, and for the current necessary expenses for the ensuing year the sum of twelve thousand two hundred dollars (\$12,200).

All of which is respectfully submitted with the accompanying resolve.

F. M. HOWES,
JOHN KIMBALL,
JAMES M. COFFIN,
GEORGE W. S. PUTNAM,
MARSHALL C. WESTON,
WM. H. CUTTING,
MOSES ALLEY,
CYRUS FOSS,
M. S. MAYHEW,
JOHN WENTWORTH,

} Committee.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of the State Reform School.

Resolved, That the sum of three hundred dollars for
2 completing improvements already begun in the laun-
3 dry, also three hundred dollars for building a new
4 cistern for the barn, and twelve thousand two hundred
5 dollars to meet the current expenses of the ensuing
6 year, be and hereby is appropriated for the benefit of
7 the Reform School.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 18, 1873.

Submitted by Mr. HOWES of Franklin, and on his motion laid on the table and ordered to be printed, together with the accompanying resolve.

SAMUEL W. LANE, *Secretary.*