

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIFTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 57.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON INSANE HOSPITAL.

The Committee on Insane Hospital, in addition to legislation proposed, beg leave to submit the following report :

In our several visits to the institution we have been treated with the utmost courtesy by the officers and attendants, all our many queries being answered satisfactorily and with uniform kindness.

Commendable and noteworthy improvements have been made, to the great advantage and increased comfort of the unfortunate occupants of the hospital.

The farm is admirably managed—its productiveness constantly increasing,—the buildings in good condition, water supply ample, means and appliances for the extinguishment of fires all that need be ; the capacity of gas works, laundry, heating apparatus, coal-shed, &c., sufficient not only for the present occupancy of the hospital, but for a greatly increased number.

Although we readily and very glad express our gratification that so much has been accomplished, we earnestly call the attention of the trustees to several improvements that should be made, which are comparatively inexpensive, yet which we regard as very important.

Several of the wards are not well supplied with light. This deficiency can be measurably remedied by the enlargement of space for admission of light over the doors of the several rooms, and enlarging alcove windows to full wall space ; and

we see no good reason why such changes should not be made without further delay. The great benefits to the patients, to be derived therefrom, and their increased comfort, alike demand the early accomplishment of these proposed alterations.

We also express our conviction that the supply of heat by night during the winter months, should not be allowed to range far below that of the day. Especially is this necessary to be observed for that class of patients who occupy the lodges; and a heating flue should be supplied to each lodge. The reasons are too obvious to require mention, and we trust this suggestion will receive the attention its importance demands.

There is another matter to which attention is called in the report of the visiting committee as demanding a change—the construction of bath-room and water-closet in one room. The objection to a separation is, “want of room;” but we respectfully submit whether a still greater crowding together of the patients and inmates for the night, would not be an improvement on this *union nuisance* of bath-room and water-closet. We believe its existence should not longer be allowed—that *a change is demanded and should be made.*

We are convinced also that the best interests of the patients demand an increased number of attendants, which of course would be attended with an increased expense; but the people of the State of Maine will not shrink from duty toward this unfortunate class of its citizens for that reason, especially when the institution is not only self supporting, but laying by a surplus of its earnings every month. We are confident that this suggestion will address itself to every generous mind acquainted with the facts, the wants and necessities of the insane, as too self-evident to require argument, and we forbear making further comments thereon.

These matters are not presented in a fault finding or captious spirit, but from a sense of duty devolving upon us as representatives of the people, in whose right and by whose edict this institution exists.

The improvements provided for by legislation recommended,—the recommendations herein made carried into effect,—

with those other improvements and changes which will result therefrom to the interests of the inmates from a better classification,—a less crowded condition of the several wards, and better accommodations for the sick, will be received with gladness by the many friends of the institution, and of its unfortunate occupants throughout the State.

Respectfully submitted.

J. W. DEARBORN,

For the Committee.

STATE OF MAINE.

In SENATE, March 5, 1880.

Presented by Mr. DEARBORN, read and accepted, and on motion of Mr. BERRY tabled to print.

C. W. TILDEN, *Secretary.*