

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE

NO. 42

In Senate, Feb. 4, 1915.

Read and accepted and on motion by Sen. Allen tabled for printing and 1500 copies ordered printed.

W. E. LAWRY, Secretary.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE
HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

Report of a Joint Special Committee appointed by the 76th Legislature of Maine, consisting on the part of the Senate of Senators Allen of Kennebec and Murphy of Cumberland, and on the part of the House of Messrs. Jones of China, Nute of Wiscasset and Donovan of Lewiston, to sit during recess and report according to the following order passed by the two branches of the Legislature:

Ordered, That whereas the Seventy-sixth Legislature has had under consideration various proposals relating to extensions of the scope, work and equipment of the State School for Boys at South Portland, the Industrial School for Girls at Hallowell, and for the establishment of a Reformatory for Women, therefore,

Ordered, The House concurring, that a Special Committee of five, consisting of two on the part of the Senate and three on the part of the House, to serve without pay, be appointed to investigate these several proposals and report to the next Legislature by bill or otherwise."

To the House and Senate in the Seventy-seventh Legislature Assembled:

Your Committee appointed pursuant to the foregoing order, beg leave to report as follows:

The Committee has visited the State School for Boys at South Portland and the Industrial School for Girls at Hallowell, and have become acquainted with their needs, their facilities, their purposes, their trustees and officers, and the work that these institutions are accomplishing and ought to accomplish.

The Committee has, after due inquiry, visited the following institutions in other states, examining their buildings, inquiring into their work and seeking information from their officers, viz:

The Women's Reformatory at Sherburne, Mass.

The Girls' Industrial School at Lancaster, Mass.

The Woman's Reformatory at Bedford Hills, New York.

Your Committee has also held hearings upon the subject of a Reformatory for Women, one early in the spring of 1914 at Portland, and another in the fall of 1914 at Bangor, both of which were largely attended. Your Committee, in addition to these hearings, has received and carefully considered, very

many letters from state officials and interested citizens from all parts of the state—citizens who are of high standing in their respective communities.

The findings and recommendations of your Committee are as follows:

STATE SCHOOL FOR BOYS.

We find this school in good condition, and while we find that some changes and improvements calling for an expenditure of money aside from the regular maintenance appropriations are desirable, the need is so far over-shadowed by the requirements of the other existing institution and the proposed institution upon which this Committee is to report, that it does not seem advisable to urge this need by your Committee upon the present Legislature.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

We find this institution very much overcrowded, unable to take girls who are committed to it by the courts, and lacking in proper facilities for carrying on the training of those girls already committed to it. There are no schoolrooms except by use of rooms in the cottages where the girls live, that are needed for other purposes. There is no assembly room into which all of the girls can be gathered either for general or religious instruction and entertainment. Hospital facilities, which are necessary in an institution of this kind, are lacking. Central storerooms are inadequate. The need of this School which is most felt throughout the State, is greater capacity, and your Committee is of the opinion that the first step in order to secure

such greater capacity is to provide proper facilities for training girls who are already here, by the erection of a building containing proper schoolrooms, assembly hall, hospital facilities, refrigerator and storerooms, and sleeping-rooms for some of the teachers who are now quartered in the cottages with the girls. This will relieve the congested condition of the present cottages, providing room for more girls and permitting the rooms now occupied as schoolrooms to be used for other purposes, thus placing the School in such condition that, if in the future it is found this increase is inadequate, an additional cottage or unit can be added without increasing the overhead expense for administration or general purposes.

The Committee therefore recommends to your Honorable Body, the passage of a resolve appropriating for the construction of such a building, the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) for the year 1915, and twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the year 1916, and for equipment of the same, \$5,000 for the year 1916. The Committee also recommends that whenever funds are available that the State purchase the Barber house and lot, so called, adjoining. There are also two lots of land adjoining the property which the State ought to purchase whenever it can do so.

REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN.

Your Committee finds that there is imperative need for an institution of this kind, and that the need is not confined to any one section of the State. Your Committee is of the opinion that men and women offenders should not be committed to

the same institution. Furthermore, it is convinced that it is absolutely useless to send young women to jail for short terms, along with hardened criminals, where there are no reformatory influences whatever. There is a manifest reluctance on the part of officials charged with the enforcement of the criminal laws of the State to commit women to these places, and undoubtedly many women are at large, with the consequent far-reaching evil effects upon the community, who ought to be committed to an institution of this kind. It seems evident that this reluctance is based upon the personal knowledge of these officials as to the unfitness of the places to which they may now be committed, and the uselessness of such a procedure. Your Committee believes not only that a reasonable percentage of the young women committed to such an institution would, by reason of the instruction, influence and general improvement in their mental, moral and physical condition while there, become respectable citizens, but also that the existence of such an institution would act as a deterrent to those who now realize that they are likely to escape any punishment whatever, or at worst receive nothing more than a short term in the county jail.

From its inquiries, your Committee feels that such an institution should be upon the farm colony plan. The buildings should not be of an expensive, but simple, design, and there should be not less than three hundred (300) acres of land, with plenty of outdoor work.

There is submitted herewith and made a part of this report, a bill designed to secure such an institution, and your Com-

mittee unanimously recommends the passage of this or some similar law creating a Reformatory for Women, carrying with it an appropriation of \$20,000 for the year 1915, and \$30,000 for the year 1916.

Respectfully submitted,

JOS. W. ALLEN,
EDWARD W. MURPHY,
CHARLES W. JONES,
LLEWELLYN NUTE,
Committee.