

REPORT.

The undersigned Committee appointed in pursuance of the following joint resolution :

Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Hon. Senate concurring, That a Joint Committee, composed of two on the part of the House, and one on the part of the Senate, be appointed at once to visit the Penitentiary at as early a day as practicable, and that they be instructed to report the result of their investigations in relation to the suggestions and recommendations contained in the Governor's Message of January 22d, and also other matters pertaining to the public interest in the Penitentiary, to this General Assembly," beg leave to submit to the General Assembly the following report:

Your committee have carefully examined the Prison grounds, walls, and all buildings, as well as the proposed plans for enlarging and completing the Prison.

The Penitentiary is situated on the north bank of the Mississippi River at Fort Madison, and but a short distance from said river. It occupies a narrow point of land bounded by two small creeks, the one on the east, the other on the west. There has been a deep ravine in front of a part of the main building, which has been nearly filled up. North and in the rear of the prison is a hill, which overlooks the entire prison yard and buildings. The yard of the Prison is three hundred and fifty feet square; the main building forms two hundred feet of the south wall, at the southwest corner of which is the entrance gate facing toward the south. The west wall is completed, and is a passably good structure of stone. There is also about one half of the east wall completed, with the exception of the coping, and is built the same as the one on the west. The entire north wall, about one-half of the east wall, and one hundred and eighteen (118) feet of the south wall is constructed of nothing but high posts and boards. The watch-

towers are all completed except the one at the north-east corner of the yard, which has not been commenced. The towers at the south-west and south-east corners of the yard, have good, substantial brick guard houses built upon them, while the one at the north-west corner has on it a very inferior guard house, built of rough boards. The Prison yard has been graded up to near a level, to do which has caused a fill to be made on the inside and outside of the east and west walls, in some places to the depth of 25 to 30 feet, while on the south and east they have filled some thirty feet, "and the whole grounds surrounded with deep ravines, high hills and abrupt precipices, east, north and west, once studded over with a dense forest, but now nearly bare. Such is the unpropitious location of the Iowa Penitentiary."

Inside of the Prison yard is a one-story frame building, used as a kitchen and dining room, for the use of convicts; it is but of little value, built of combustible material, and constantly endangering the shops and Prison building.

There is also inside the yard a number of old buildings and sheds, which are liable at any time to be consumed by fire, and which, in the opinion of your committee, should be removed as soon as possible. They have been and are at present used as lumber houses by the lessees of the convict labor.

The wash-house is a very inferior building, and also liable to take fire at any time, but if it should burn down, its situation is such that it in all probability would not endanger the shops or main building.

There are three shops inside the walls, built of brick with stone foundations, and covered with tin and slate, in which can be conveniently and profitably worked two hundred and fifty (250) convicts. There is room within the present enclosure to build one more shop, which will accommodate 100 more, making in the aggregate, room for the working of three hundred and fifty convicts.

The Prison building is two hundred (200) feet long by forty-four (44) feet wide, showing a two-story front, built of stone and covered with a pine shingle roof. Within this building and surrounding the cells is a corridor ten feet in width. The cells are three stories high, built of stone, with brick partitions and iron doors. The first and part of the second tiers of cells have either no ventilation at all, or if they have any, the tubes intended for that purpose con-

nect the cells, so that convicts can easily converse from cell to cell, whilst they but poorly answer the purpose of ventilation. The forty cells now completed on the third range have a good system of ventilation, and are better constructed than either of the others. The stairs and platform surrounding the cells are badly constructed, and are in an unsafe condition, while *there is not a first class Prison Lock in the whole Penitentiary building.* The building is poorly and badly lighted, and not warmed at all. The apparatus used for heating being common stoves, which are set at such a distance from the chimneys as to require about one hundred feet of pipe; this is fixed with an occasional drum so as to keep up a great deal more smoke than heat. The floor of the corridor is made of "grub plank," and in connection with the old buildings in the yard above referred to, affords a superb abode for a numerous tribe of rats, which appear to enjoy in the highest degree the pleasures of their retreat.

Thirty-four (34) feet of the west end of the Prison building is used for the Warden's house. It is dark, damp, and badly arranged, inconvenient, and wholly unfit for a respectable residence. There is a hall ten (10) feet wide between the cell-room and Warden's house, which is the entrance to the Prison yard, and is the only "clerk's office" that the institution can boast of. Its only light is derived through a grated sash door on the one side, and a side light door on the other.

As we have before stated, there are three tiers of cells; each of these tiers has fifty-four (54) cells, excepting the upper or third tier, which has but forty completed, there being room for the erection of fourteen more, which if completed, would make the whole number of cells one hundred and sixty-two, there being completed at the present time one hundred and forty-eight.

The plan proposed for the extension of the Prison is to build an octagon of sixty-four feet in diameter at the east end of the present main building; to build a Warden's house in front of and on the south side of the octagon; to continue a wing of the width and similar to the present building, north of the octagon, and to extend a wing east of the octagon, to be used as a female prison; and also to raise the present building fifteen feet in height, and construct two more tiers of cells on top of the ones now built; to convert the present "Clerk's office" and Warden's house into cell

room; to take out the present small windows and put larger ones in.

Towards carrying out the above plans the foundation for the octagon has already been built, as well as one side wall of the foundation of the Warden's house, the whole costing between five and six thousand dollars.

The estimates made by the architect, Mr. Edwards, for the completion of the contemplated work, are as follows:

To complete the octagon,.....	\$63,477
To build female wing,.....	22,827
To build Warden's house,.....	12,511
To build Prison wall,.....	6,924
To raise present building and add two tiers of cells,.....	45,200
To convert Warden's house into Prison,.....	23,000

Making a total of..... 173,939

besides the convict labor that can be used on said work. This amount is exclusive of the cost of the wing proposed to be built at the north side of the octagon and extending into the prison yard. If this plan should be carried out there would be a total of four hundred and thirty (430) cells.

Should the General Assembly desire to incur the expense, it would be well to adopt the plans above referred to, and let whatever is done go to the ultimate completion of said plan.

Were the grounds suitable, and the yard sufficiently large, or could suitable adjacent ground be had, your committee would not hesitate to recommend the adoption of the plans, costly as they may appear to be, as they combine most of the essential elements that go to make up a first class Prison. But looking at this ineligible situation of the Prison on account of the ground surrounding it, the limited number of convicts that could be profitably employed, your committee are constrained to recommend a change of plan that shall conform to the capacity of the grounds.

This, in our opinion, can be done by building a Warden's house and Clerk's office in front of the present main building; by converting the present Warden's house into cell room; by building a kitchen and dining room with hospital above (building the same fire proof,) inside of the yard and near the west wall, on the site of the present kitchen and dining room, and by raising the walls

of the main building and adding two more tiers of cells to those already built. If this plan is carried out it will give the following room:

Cells now completed,.....	148
Cells to be completed on 3d tier,.....	14
Three tiers of cells in the present Warden's house, ..	42
Two tiers additional in both ranges,	136

Making the total number on this plan,..... 340

The last above mentioned plan can be completed by the use of convict labor at the following cost:

Fourteen cells in third tier at \$143,.....	\$ 2,002
Converting Warden's house into cells,.....	10,500
Raising walls, slating roof, and building 2 tiers cells,.....	36,000
Building Warden's house,.....	5,000
Prison yard walls,.....	6,796
Building kitchen and hospital,.....	14,000

Aggregate cost,..... 74,298

Making a difference in cost of the two plans of \$90,641, and only a difference in the accommodation of the number of convicts to the amount of ninety.

The work that is at present needed is to take up the present floor of the corridors and put in concrete ones; to build the fourteen (14) cells on the third tier; to build the Warden's house and Clerk's office, and complete the yard walls and towers. This will cost as follows (if the convict labor be employed,) including the necessary architect, foremen, additional guards, and tools:

For the corridor floor	\$284
For the 14 cells at \$143 each,.....	2002
For completing the yard walls including the wall from the corner of the main building to the S. E. corner of the yard,.....	6796
For building warden's house,.....	5000

Total.....\$14,082

Your committee are clearly of the opinion that the Legislature should determine the plan to be carried out in the further improvements to be made in said prison, and to specify it so clearly that i

cannot be mistaken ; and whatever is done should be to carry out that design.

Your Committee are of the opinion, considering the short time that will elapse before the expiration of the lease of convict labor, that convicts should be employed in the prosecution of the work, or at least a portion of them.

We cannot take leave of this subject without adding our testimony to the neatness and cleanliness that we found throughout the entire prison and grounds, and the good order and strict discipline that is maintained. Your Committee are of the opinion that in this particular our State prison will compare favorably with those in the older States.

Your Committee most earnestly recommend that the Legislature take some steps towards the improvement and safety of the prison—either adopting the plans as recommended in the former part of this report, or such others as may be determined in the judgment of the Assembly. In its present condition it is not a safe place of confinement for convicts. Nothing but the vigilance of the Warden, the close attention of the officers, and the watchfulness of the guards secure their confinement.

The law requires that the Warden should reside in the penitentiary. We think, taking into consideration the amount of the bond that is required of him, the amount of labor that he performs, the responsibility that rests upon him, and the danger attending the position that he occupies, justice would require that he be placed on the same footing that the principals of the asylums are ; that he not only live in the institution, but that himself and family be subsisted by the State in addition to his present compensation.

We recommend an increase in the pay of the guards to forty-five dollars per month. Men fit for the place cannot be had or long retained for less money. It requires men not only of *nerve* but of character for this position.

All of which is respectfully submitted for your consideration.

D. P. STUBBS,	} Committee.
R. S. FINKBINE,	
J. H. BROWN,	

DES MOINES, Feb. 18th, 1864.