

REPORT  
OF THE  
INVESTIGATION

RELATIVE TO THE

METHODS OF BUSINESS, RECORDS, ACCOUNTS AND  
VOUCHERS OF STATE INSTITUTIONS.

By J. W. RICH,

TO THE

GOVERNOR OF IOWA.

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PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR.

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G. H. RAGSDALE, STATE PRINTER.  
1890.

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# REPORT.

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HON. WILLIAM LARRABEE, *Governor of the State of Iowa:*

In pursuance of your letter of instructions of February 8, 1889, I have visited all of the institutions of the State, except the penitentiaries, and made examination of their methods of business, their records, accounts and vouchers, and beg leave to submit the following report:

## RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS.

The records of the several institutions are, for the most part, full and complete, and are written up to date. Accounts are generally in good form and sufficiently in detail—in some cases more in detail than seems to be necessary.

In the matter of statistical records of inmates, the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Orphans' Home were deficient, but the deficiency has probably been supplied before this time.

At the Hospital for the Insane at Clarinda, the minutes of the board of trustees are meager and leave too much of the details of important business off the permanent record.

Vouchers for moneys paid are carefully filed and preserved in all of the institutions.

## AUDITING BILLS.

Different institutions have different methods of auditing bills. The law requires auditing at the asylums for insane to be done in full board meeting; and it is so done, except at the asylum at Clarinda, where the auditing is done by a committee of the board. The full board audits at the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. At the College for the Blind, auditing is done at the first of each month, before payment, by a committee of the board. At the Institution for Feeble-minded, theoretically, bills are approved by the resident trustee before payment, but the practice is not uniform.

At the Industrial School, the Orphans' Home, and Normal School, expenditures from the support fund are approved by the superintendent or steward and are submitted to the respective boards of trustees



for approval at a subsequent meeting. Special appropriation expenditures are approved by the trustees, in all of the institutions, but not always before payment.

The records show frequent settlements with the treasurer in each institution.

#### REQUISITIONS FOR SUPPORT.

In drawing money from the state treasury for support, the asylums for insane base their requisitions upon the average number of inmates for the quarter, calculated upon the number present on the 15th day of each of the three months. The Institution for Feeble-minded, the College for the Blind, and the Industrial School make requisitions for the actual average daily number. The Institution for Deaf and Dumb, the Orphans' Home and the Soldiers' Home, make no allowance for inmates temporarily absent, but draw for the whole number enrolled.

#### ACCOUNTS.

A critical examination of the accounts of the various institutions being impossible in the time given to the work, only such general tests were made as would determine the general correctness of entries. These tests developed very few errors of any kind, and none of considerable importance. At the Industrial School at Mitchellville there appeared to be an item of \$52.60 collected by the steward not accounted for in settlement with the trustees. The matter was left for the steward to make further investigation and to compare books with the treasurer.

The practice of issuing time warrants in anticipation of special appropriations not yet due, as has been done at the Institution for Feeble-minded, is open to criticism, if it is not in violation of the law making such appropriations. The time warrants drawn in 1888-9 amounted to \$9,162.45. They drew no interest, but in some cases they were discounted.

They were drawn mostly in 1888 for the purpose of completing improvements commenced, for which appropriations were not available until 1889.

At Mt. Pleasant asylum appropriations were anticipated for similar purposes by means of private loans made by officers of the institution, and the interest was paid from interest received on state warrants.

Except in the Soldiers' Home there is room for improvement in all of the institutions, having large expenditures for subsistence, in the matter of accounting for commissary stores. There should be more complete record of stores issued and frequent invoicing of stores in

hand. In all cases where products from the farm go directly into the subsistence department, they should be accounted for in the same manner as purchased stores.

The forms used for this purpose in the quartermaster's department at the Soldiers' Home will serve as good models.

GENERAL CONDITION.

There is little to criticise in the management of the State institutions, as a whole. They appear to be conducted by their several boards of trustees and superintendents with due regard to the interests of the State and the well-being of those for whom they are maintained.

In the management of the asylum at Clarinda, however, some exceptions are to be made. The management at that institution seems not to be well organized, and there is evident want of harmony in the administration of its affairs. There is lacking a local executive head to direct and take responsibility. There is need for some changes in the system of accounts and in methods of business.

It appears from the account kept at the institution with the treasurer that, during the biennial period, money has been drawn from the state treasury, on account of the special appropriations made by the Twenty-second General Assembly, in excess of immediate demands to meet expenditures.

The following is a statement showing the dates and amounts charged to the treasurer, and the credits given him for moneys paid over to Trustee Hunter as "paymaster," on account of the furnishing fund:

DR.	CR.
1888.	1888.
April 17, to State.....\$ 2,000.00	May 12, by Hunter.....\$ 1,074.44
May 12, to State..... 5,000 00	June 12, by Hunter..... 658.39
July 11, to State..... 5,000.00	July 11, by Hunter..... 697.68
Aug. 14, to State..... 8,000.00	Aug. 14, by Hunter..... 699.34
	Sept. 15, by Hunter..... 8,575.93
	Sept. 15, by Hunter..... 5,000.00
	Oct. 10, by Hunter..... 3,294.81
Total.....\$20,000.00	Total.....\$19,999.99

Following is a similar showing of receipts from the State and payments to Mr. Hunter as "paymaster," on account of the contingent fund:

DR.	CR.
1888.	1888.
April 17, to State.....\$20,000.00	May 12, by Hunter.....\$ 1,756.85
May 12, to State..... 10,000.00	June 12, by Hunter.... 12,957.93
July 11, to State..... 10,000.00	July 11, by Hunter..... 9,561.72
Sept. 15, to State..... 25,000.00	Aug. 14, by Hunter..... 5,923.56
Nov. 14, to State..... 15,999.97	Sept. 15, by Hunter..... 14,280.00
	Oct. 10, by Hunter..... 1,144.46
	Oct. 15, by Hunter.... 3,510.31
	Oct. 15, by Hunter..... 6,729.67
	Nov. 14, by Hunter..... 11,607.08
	Dec. 13, by Hunter .... 11,388.69
	1889.
	Jan. 16, by Hunter..... 2,139.70
Total.....\$80,999.97	Total.....\$80,999.97

Putting these two accounts together and tracing the dates of debits and credits, there is shown a large balance constantly on hand.

The compensation allowed the treasurer by the board of trustees was one-half of one per cent on the money passing through his hands. The compensation paid was \$540, or one-half of one per cent on construction fund, \$82,000; furnishing, \$20,000; contingent, \$6,000. The amount that actually passed through the treasurer's hands was less than the sum of these (\$108,000) by \$1,000.03, which was paid directly by the auditor of state to the architect; so that the amount paid to the treasurer as commission was in excess by \$5.00, or one-half of one per cent on \$1,000.03.

There was submitted with this report a memorandum book of notes and statements relating to each of the institutions, for your further information. There are also submitted herewith letters from S. B. Raymond, secretary of the board of trustees, and Wm. Foster, architect and superintendent of construction.

Respectfully submitted,  
J. W. RICH.

November 19, 1889.



# REPORT.

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TO HON. WILLIAM LARRABEE, *Governor of Iowa*:

In pursuance of your letter of instructions of February 8, 1889, in connection with the work of examining the various state institutions, I have visited several counties of the state for the purpose of examining into the administration of county jails, poor-houses and asylums for the insane not cared for in state asylums.

Interpreting your instructions to have special reference to the accommodations provided for, and care given to, the class of insane mentioned; and understanding also that the examination was to extend only far enough to arrive at a fair average judgment of its condition throughout the state, I have visited such counties only as seemed to be fairly representative, and in number sufficient to establish a reliable average.

As a result of such examination, I beg leave to submit the following:

## JAILS.

Most of the jails built in recent years, especially outside of the heavily populated counties, are light brick structures, enclosing steel cells, warmed by steam or stoves, but as a rule poorly ventilated, relying for ventilation upon windows or openings in the roof. In some of this class of jails, the sanitary conditions are good; in some bad.

In the more populous counties, where jails were built years ago, when less attention was paid to sanitary conditions than is now deemed necessary, even for the criminal classes these conditions are uniformly bad—in some of them, very bad. This is notably the case in Des Moines county, whose jail should be abated as a public nuisance.

The jail of Scott county is better than that of Des Moines county, but it is damp, ill ventilated and unwholesome.

The jail of Dubuque county is still a little better, but will bear much improvement without danger of stepping beyond the bounds of propriety in a penal institution.



Several of the jails visited in the interior of the state were without occupants, and none of those visited confine insane persons, except temporarily.

#### COUNTY POOR-HOUSES AND INSANE ASYLUMS.

The number of counties visited to examine these institutions was seventeen, namely: Benton, Black Hawk, Linn, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Scott, Des Moines, Henry, Hardin, Marshall, Story, Polk, O'Brien, Pottawattamie, Jackson and Johnson.

Of these, Pottawattamie and O'Brien have neither poor-house nor asylum for insane. The former cares for its sane paupers by the county commissioner system, and provides for its insane, not in state institutions, at Mercy Hospital, Davenport, a private establishment. The latter county seems to have no sane paupers, and has no insane as county charges outside of the state institutions.

Dubuque and Scott counties have no poor-houses, but provide for their insane, not in the state institutions, in private asylums—the former at St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital for Insane, located at Dubuque, and the latter at Mercy Hospital, located at Davenport.

Of the remaining counties visited, Henry, Johnson and Polk have quite complete accommodations for the care of a limited number of insane, entirely separate from the sane paupers. Of these four, Johnson has the best arranged buildings, but Polk is the only one that provides special attendants for the care of the insane. Polk has two such attendants—one woman and one man, whose whole time is given to the work.

Other counties visited have small, detached frame buildings for accommodation of the insane, or such of them as need to be separated from the sane; namely, Delaware, Des Moines, Marshall and Hardin.

The remaining counties, Benton, Black Hawk, Buchanan, Linn and Story, have no means of separating sane paupers from insane, they eat at the same tables and occupy the same sitting-rooms. As a rule the same apartment answers as dining-room and sitting-room.

Des Moines county has poor accommodations, though it has a building, such as it is, especially for the insane, and the care is very poor, the worst of any institution visited.

Marshall county has a detached building for the insane, but a dining-room is used in common by sane and insane; little restraint is practiced, and the insane are kept employed as far as possible.

The supervision here seems to be intelligent and humane.

More or less work is done by the insane in each of the counties visited, where they are kept at the poor farm; but the amount and

quality of the work depends very much upon the time at command, the patience and the tact of the steward in charge.

Restraint upon the freedom of insane persons is, to some extent, almost a constant demand; but the character of the restraint needed depends as much upon the person exercising it as upon the persons subjected to it. In the counties visited, the common means of restraint is the lock and key confining the person to the sleeping room; if violent or refractory, to the "strong room" or the "dark room." In one county (Johnson) on the floor of the "dark room" lies an ominous ball and chain! But the steward, only a few weeks in charge, gives assurance that little use is made of the room, and less of its solitary piece of furniture.

In another county (Linn) almost constant restraint is applied to an insane inmate, either by locking in her room, or by locking to a staple in the wall.

Some allowance should be made for the methods of restraint adopted in some of these institutions, in view of the fact that no proper means are provided for the care of the insane. Such allowance, however, is due the stewards in charge, and not the boards of supervisors whose duty it is to provide better accommodations.

The following are the numbers reported as insane, provided for outside of the state asylums, by the counties named:

Pottawattamie .....	22
Scott .....	53
Dubuque .....	50
Delaware.....	8
Benton... ..	10
Linn.....	19
Jackson' .....	23
Marshall.....	13
Black Hawk.....	3
Henry.....	11
Des Moines .....	18
Johnson.....	17
Story.....	7
Buchanan.....	2
Hardin .....	7
Polk.....	41
Total... ..	<u>304</u>

As before stated, Pottawattamie, Scott and Dubuque counties provide for their insane in private asylums. All others are cared for at the respective county poor-houses.



PRIVATE ASYLUMS FOR INSANE.

Mercy Hospital, at Davenport, owned and managed by the Sisters of Mercy, has two buildings detached from the hospital, devoted to the care of the insane—one for males and one for females. The location of the hospital is healthful and attractive, and its administration seems to be excellent.

The number of insane county charges here at the time of the visit, September 14, 1889, was reported to be 115.

St. Joseph's Hospital for insane, owned and managed also by the Sisters of Mercy, is a new institution, located a short distance in the country from Dubuque. It was not fully equipped and in running order at the time of the visit, but had already received over fifty patients, nearly all Dubuque county charges. For a new and partially equipped institution, this also seemed to be well managed.

THE SANE POOR.

In most of the counties visited, the sane poor appear to have comfortable quarters, good clothing, and to be otherwise reasonably well provided for. There are exceptions to the rule, where buildings are old, poor, ill-arranged and certainly can not be comfortable through an Iowa winter.

Among the inmates of these houses were found several blind persons—one man in Dubuque county; one woman in Delaware; three men in Jackson, and one woman in Henry. Of these, two men in Jackson, age about thirty and thirty-three years, and a woman in Delaware, about thirty years of age, might become self-sustaining in an industrial home for the blind; and at least two of the other three would become partially so.

There were also found two children in Henry county and one boy in Marshall county who seemed to be fit subjects for the Institution for Feeble-minded. Two children in Jackson county, of a family of four, possibly belong in the same institution.

INSANE OUTSIDE OF THE STATE ASYLUMS.

It seems safe to estimate the number of insane in the state, outside of the state asylums, cared for at public expense, at 1,500. Of these, not more 150 are in private asylums, leaving 1,350 in the various county asylums and poor-houses.

Nearly all of these have been inmates of some one of the state asylums and have been returned to their respective counties. They are

commonly classed as "incurables"—and such they are in fact. Their condition appeals strongly to the best sentiments of humanity for better care than they have, or can have, under present conditions.

The principal difficulties in the way of county management of these unfortunates are:

*First*—The expense to provide the necessary buildings to separate the insane from the sane, and to admit of classification when the numbers become so great as to require it. It must be borne in mind that classification is one of the prime necessities in successful management of the insane.

*Second*—The difficulty of securing the services of competent persons to manage a poor-house and an insane asylum, at a price which the average board of supervisors is willing to pay. And,

*Third*—The unwillingness of boards of supervisors, as a rule, to pay for as much help as such an institution absolutely needs.

Some of the difficulties in the way of county management would be relieved if the state asylums, in selecting those to be returned to the counties, were careful to select such as require little personal care and little or no restraint. And still further relief might result if authority were lodged in some executive officer, commission or court to return to the state asylums from the county asylums any insane persons who might become violent or unmanageable, or who might require much personal care for any reason.

Much has been said about the care of the "incurable insane" by the state, meaning by the term "incurable" those who are returned to the counties from the state asylums as "incurables."

Provision should certainly be made for such; but it should be remembered that the term "incurable" applies equally well to nearly ninety per cent of the insane now in the state asylums. It is unquestionably as much the duty of the state to provide for the care of the "incurable" outside of the state asylums as the "incurable" inside those institutions. If this can not be done in state institutions, then it becomes a question whether it would not be better to adopt a district system in place of the present county system.

The present system may be said to be cheap, as administered in the average county, but that is its only recommendation. It is not humane.

Respectfully submitted,

J. W. RICH.

November 19, 1889.



