

REPORT

No. 49

OF

JOINT COMMITTEE

TO VISIT

IOWA INSANE HOSPITAL,

TO THE

TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

AND

ACCOMPANYING MEMORIAL.

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REPORT.

To the Twelfth General Assembly of the State of Iowa :

Your Joint Committee appointed to visit the Iowa Hospital for the Insane at Mount Pleasant, beg leave to submit the following:

Your committee, after a careful and minute inspection of the hospital, would report that they find the same in an entirely satisfactory condition, the various wards and apartments being models of order and cleanliness, while the patients gave evidence of the utmost attention and kindness on the part of the officers and employes, which could but be highly gratifying to every friend of suffering humanity. There are at the present time three hundred and fifty-seven patients in the hospital, of which number one hundred and eighty-nine are males, and one hundred and sixty-eight females, which is an increase of forty-nine since the report of the committee to the last General Assembly.

Where so large a number of persons of all classes, and of both sexes are collected together, exhibiting all possible phases of mental alienation, and subjected as such persons necessarily must be to a strict discipline, one would expect to hear many expressions of discontent, and to witness many acts of insubordination; but such, happily, was not the case here. On the contrary, all classes appeared pleased to see the attendants and return the salutations of the Superintendent and his assistants with much apparent satisfaction, which, to the minds of your committee, was sufficient evidence of their being governed by kindness:

The physical condition of the patients is as good as could be expected, and but little force is required in their government.

The total number of persons employed in the institution is sixty-nine, of which thirty-five are males and thirty-four females. Many of the attendants have been in the hospital for several

years, and by reason of the knowledge and experience thus acquired, are much more valuable than persons of less experience and receive proportionately higher wages. The affairs of the institution are in an eminently flourishing condition, both financial and agricultural, one evidence of which may be found in the fact that the productions of the farm for the last two years amounts to nearly \$8,000.

During the past season forty-five acres were cleared off and put in a condition fit for spring crops, the labor being nearly all performed by the patients.

Your committee examined with care the manner in which the various sums appropriated by the last General Assembly had been expended, every facility being afforded us by the Superintendent to obtain all the information that we desired with the most satisfactory results, and we now desire to express our firm conviction, that the sums thus appropriated have been judiciously expended, which is in a great degree the result of the personal attention and untiring zeal of Dr. Ranney.

The reservoir, for the construction of which ten thousand dollars was appropriated has been in use since May, 1867, and has fully met the most sanguine expectations of its originators, furnishing a constant supply of pure and wholesome water, and is likely to prove equal to the wants of the institution for many years.

For digging drains and perfecting the system of sewerage the sum of three thousand two hundred dollars was granted, all of which has been expended in the most economical manner, and has sufficed to complete all needed improvements in this direction. At the same time that these improvements were being made and in connection therewith, an improved system of ventilation was put into successful operation, whereby a dry pure atmosphere is supplied to the entire building, which adds greatly to the health and comfort of the inmates.

For painting and repairing the building two thousand six hundred and fifty dollars was appropriated. This has been expended under the immediate supervision of the Superintendent, and has accomplished the purposes for which it was granted: the protection of the building and the comfort of its inmates.

The two thousand five hundred dollars designed for furniture has been expended in the purchase of such articles as were

most needed, and while it has but partially supplied the want in that direction, has done much for the comfort of a class of persons whose condition, at the best, can not be otherwise than deplorable. Again your committee desires to express their surprise and gratification at the order and neatness which prevailed in all parts of the hospital, but more particularly in those portions of the building occupied as sleeping apartments.

Each bed consists of a good husk mattress, over which is a hair mattress, with sheets and counterpanes of snowy whiteness that gave an impression of home comfort rarely found in public institutions.

The fifteen hundred dollars for fencing and improving grounds, and for shrubbery, has been expended in the manner contemplated, and while it has added much to the value as well as beauty of the premises, another appropriation is needed to complete the improvements in this direction as yet but fairly begun.

The sum of eighteen hundred dollars appropriated by the last General Assembly for the purpose of introducing the "Automatic Gas Apparatus" proved so entirely insufficient that no action was taken thereon, and the building still continues to be lighted by kerosene oil lamps, which your committee consider extremely dangerous. It is impossible calmly to contemplate the results of a conflagration in an institution of that character, or to estimate the loss of life that must unavoidably attend such a catastrophe, closely confined as the inmates necessarily are, with all modes of egress barred, and all hope of aid from without cut off. In view of the necessity of a change in the method of lighting the hospital, your committee deem it their duty to call your attention to this matter at the present time, feeling confident that when it is once understood there will be no delay in making the necessary additional appropriation with which to carry out the proposed improvement.

The four thousand dollars granted, with which to replace those portions of the steam pipes most seriously damaged, has been expended for that purpose and with the exception of a small sum with which to complete the same, and to make any further repairs upon the boiler that may have become necessary since the last season, it is anticipated that the expenditures in this connection will be light for several years.

The great expense heretofore necessary for keeping the steam apparatus in repair, arose mainly from the character of the water furnished by the artesian well, it being strongly impregnated with the various sulphates, and also with free sulphuric acid, which renders it particularly destructive to the iron pipes and boilers. This difficulty has now been removed by the construction of the reservoir now in use and which will in a few years save to the State the whole amount expended in its construction, beside removing a fruitful source of disease in the patients.

Having dwelt at some length on the manner in which the various appropriations by the Eleventh General Assembly have been expended, your committee would now call your attention to their views of the expediency of the several improvements contemplated by the officers of the hospital as set forth in their reports which are now before you.

Your committee have also considered the propriety of a further appropriation for the purchase of certain lands adjoining the present hospital farm, the necessity for which is fully set forth in a memorial to the General Assembly from the trustees, and which your committee have considered of sufficient importance to present as a part of their report, together with a plat of the lands therein described.

The sum of \$3,500 is asked for, with which to supply the wards and dormitories with additional furniture, such as settees, bedsteads, &c., which are rendered necessary to provide for the increased number of patients admitted since the last session, which is about fifty.

This sum we consider to be all needed for the purposes above specified, and recommend that the same be appropriated.

An appropriation of \$4,200 is desired, which, with the appropriation of \$1,800 made at the last session, will suffice to introduce the "automatic" gas apparatus, and your committee recommend that such appropriation be made, discretionary power being given the Trustees in its expenditure, either for the establishment of "Drakes' machines" as was contemplated at the time of making their report, or to arrange with any gas company which may be formed in the city of Mount Pleasant.

Your committee could express their concurrence in that portion of the report of the Superintendent relative to an appropriation of \$3,800, with which to construct ironing and store-rooms.

The principal reasons for this recommendation are, that the present ironing-room is much too small to meet the present wants of the hospital, having been constructed when it was much less extensive than at present; and, secondly, the present ironing-room is immediately over the boiler, and in summer the heat is so great, that a person can remain in the room but a short time.

This addition can be made by building the two side walls, thus connecting the main central wing with the engine-house in its rear, and if built, will do much to secure the comfort of those patients employed in the ironing-room.

Relative to the appropriation of \$1,500 for the purpose of constructing a lodge at the main entrance to the hospital grounds, your committee desire to say, that while we fully agree with the Superintendent and Trustees as to the desirability of the improvement suggested by them, yet, in view of the large appropriations that seem indispensable in connection with this Institution, we think it advisable to dispense with this for the present.

For fencing and improving the grounds two thousand dollars would not be extravagant, in the opinion of your committee; and they therefore recommend the appropriation of that sum for such purpose.

A further amount of five hundred dollars is desired with which to purchase a cemetery lot, outside of, but contiguous to, the hospital grounds. The present burial place is in a beautiful grove on the farm, which is very desirable as a resort for the patients during the warm seasons, but from which they are now in a great measure excluded.

In view of these facts your committee are of the opinion that the small appropriation desired for this purpose should be granted.

In order that the stock on the premises may be furnished with suitable stabling and for the protection of the wagons and other farming implements, as well as to provide storage for the productions of the farm, and believing that a building can be so constructed as to meet all these necessities, your committee recommend that the sum of twenty-two hundred dollars be appropriated with which to erect such a building.

The amount of twelve hundred dollars which is thought to be necessary for repainting the buildings, your committee consider within the limits of strict economy, and would recommend that the same be appropriated.

Under the head of contingent fund an appropriation of two thousand dollars is recommended. Your committee consider it their duty to investigate this subject, and after careful inquiry, are of the opinion that the amount above named should be added to the other appropriations. A large portion of this contingent fund, it is anticipated, will be required to complete the repairs upon the steam boilers and pipes, which have given evidence of failing in some places since the appropriations of last session were applied.

The more readily to present the foregoing recommendations to your attention we will recapitulate as follows :

For furniture.....	\$3,500.
For gas apparatus.....	4,250.
For stove and ironing rooms.....	3,800.
For fencing and improving grounds.....	2,000.
For cemetery lot.....	500.
For barn.....	2,200.
For painting.....	1,200.
For contingencies.....	2,000.
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Total.....	19,450.

With the exception of that for an avenue lodge, which your committee considered it advisable to omit, the sums named are substantially the same as those recommended by the trustees of the hospital, and in our opinion are all required to carry on the affairs of the institution for the next two years.

We desire to call your attention to the recommendation of the Superintendent and trustees relative to the purchase of a certain tract of land adjoining the present hospital farm on the south, as also to a memorial of the trustees asking an appropriation with which to make a further purchase of certain lands adjoining on the west. We would first call your attention to that portion of the report relating to the lands lying on the south, deeming this a subject of paramount importance, by reason of circumstances at present existing.

This tract consists of thirty-seven and a half acres and is all under cultivation.

The sewers from the hospital discharge into a ravine running through this land in close proximity to the house in which the owner resides, and during a large part of the year an effluvia arises therefrom that is extremely annoying to its inmates. Aside from any act of justice due to the owner of this land, the question of damages recoverable by suit at law should be taken into consideration, such a course being already threatened and not likely to be long delayed, unless some steps are taken to remedy existing difficulties.

After due deliberation your committee are unanimously of the opinion that the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars should be devoted to the purchase of the above mentioned land, thereby avoiding future annoyance and trouble, at the same time that the hospital is being benefitted by the greater facilities furnished for agricultural purposes, the farm as at present existing being much too small.

A point upon which your committee desire to touch is that in regard to an increase of the salaries of the officers in this institution. Believing as we do that to procure the services of skillful and efficient persons for the management of institutions of the nature of this, is one of the most important steps in the pathway to success and prosperity, and, being of the opinion that talent, worth and executive ability should be encouraged and sustained, we do therefore recommend that the salary of the Superintendent of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane be raised to two thousand dollars per annum; that of the first Assistant Physician to seven hundred, and of the second Assistant to six hundred, and that of the Matron to three hundred and fifty, these salaries all being less than those of the same officers in similar institutions in other States.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

H. C. BULIS,
M. A. DASHIELL,
E. MECHEM,
Committee.

MEMORIAL.

To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Iowa :

The undersigned, Trustees of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane, would respectfully call the attention of your Honorable Body to the importance of securing additional lands, adjoining those already owned, for the use of the Hospital. The Board in their report did not ask for an appropriation sufficient to purchase all they thought desirable, lest the aggregate of appropriations asked for might be deemed extravagant, and operate to the prejudice of those they regarded as indispensable. The sum specified — \$2500 — was asked for with a view to the purchase of a tract on the south of the present grounds, of some thirty-seven acres. There are other grounds lying very convenient on the west — a tract of eighty acres — which the undersigned believe should be procured for the purpose, if it can be done at a reasonable outlay of money. This land is owned in separate parcels of ten and twenty acres, and is held at from one hundred dollars to two hundred and fifty dollars per acre. It is all under cultivation, and some parcels have on them valuable improvements, comprising apple-orchards and other fruit-trees, with grape-vines, etc., which would be of peculiar advantage to the institution, while the trees growing on the grounds now owned are attaining a bearing condition. The south twenty acres of the above tract has on it a good dwelling-house, a commodious barn and an orchard of bearing-trees, and is held at \$250 per acre. The other parcels have on them no buildings, but some of them have orchards of bearing-trees, etc.

The undersigned incline to the opinion, that additional ground can be purchased at better advantage now, or soon, than at any

WASHINGTON STREET

AVENUE

WILSON STREET

10 A.

10 A.
Vineyard

10 A.

10 A.

20 A.

Orchard

20 A.

HOSPITAL

GROUNDS

7 1/2 Acres

Woodland Cemetery
40 A.
5 Acres

County Road

3 1/2 Acres

period subsequent to the next regular session of the General Assembly; and they regard such purchase as very important, if the hospital shall be enlarged so as to accommodate seventy-five or one hundred more patients.

Should the above parcel of twenty acres, having on it a dwelling house and barn, be procured, the house would be very convenient for the occupancy of the man employed to oversee the farming operations, and the barn would answer in the room of a new one, and would obviate the necessity for the appropriation asked for such purpose.

The precise figures at which one of the ten acre parcels of the above tract can be had, have not been ascertained, and it may be that the price demanded for that, and also for another ten acres adjoining, may be judged too high, and their purchase regarded inadvisable. The cost of the whole would probably be about \$13,000 perhaps a little more or less. Sixty acres of the tract can be had for \$8,700.

The undersigned therefore respectfully ask the General Assembly to make an appropriation for the purchase of so much of the said eighty acre tract, as may be deemed advisable.

Witness our hands, February, 1868.

M. L. EDWARDS.

A. W. McCLURE.

J. M. SHAFFER.

B. CRABB.

JNO. R. NEEDHAM.

