

Saint Paul -
Sept: 24 / 80

Governor John S. Pillsbury -

Sir -

We visited the Hospital for the Insane at Saint Peter on the 21st inst.

We have nothing to add to what has been said in our former reports with reference to the management of the hospital; its excellent condition continuing to bear witness to the efficiency and humanity of the superintendent and his staff.

The hygiene of the institution is good at present; but we cannot forbear in offering our last report (the term for which we were appointed will expire before the time for another visit) from again calling attention to the serious difficulties that must before long result from the lack of sufficient accommodation for the insane.

There are at present in the hospitals at St. Peter and Rochester 325 male and 338 female inmates: a total of 663; and 32 are absent on furlough or "trial visits" most of whom are liable to be returned at any time. But without taking this latter class into account, since there are accommodations in the two hospitals suitable for only 580, there is now an excess of 83. When the new wing of the hospital at Rochester is completed, which will scarcely be before next summer, owing to the lack of an appropriation for furniture and heating, it will be filled at once by the surplus from St. Peter, which is found chiefly in the wards for women.

Although the evil as it now exists is serious, and results not only in inconvenience, but at times even in graver difficulties, it might perhaps be endured if the discharges kept pace with the admissions or if the latter did not increase, so that the total number of inmates should remain a fixed quantity. But the admissions are increasing at the rate of from 50 to 70 annually; and it is easy to see that before long there will be an absolute and imperative necessity for making further provision for these unfortunates; and as much time must necessarily be consumed in the selection of a proper location and the erection of suitable buildings, we would respectfully urge that immediate steps be taken for the solutions of a problem whose neglect must entail serious consequences.

We are in favor of the establishment of another hospital which shall be constructed upon what is known as the cottage plan, not only because its adoption has proved in many instances highly satisfactory and among those who are competent to pronounce upon its merits, but also because it is comparatively inexpensive; as the isolated pavilions required can be built at a fraction of the cost of the institutions now owned by the State.

Since our visit to St. Peter in March last, there have been admitted to the hospital 125: there have been 19 deaths and 2 elopements.

We have directed to be sent to the School for Imbeciles at Faribault. Mary Kavanaugh, Even Olson, and Ellen Olson.

WH Leonard
G. Weston Wood
C. H. Boardman
Commissioners