

78-RCE-CNH
State Inst - St Peter

REPORT

OF THE

Commission to Examine the Patients

IN THE

HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

AT ST. PETER.

MADE TO THE GOVERNOR,

JANUARY, 1878.

MINNEAPOLIS :
JOHNSON, SMITH & HARRISON.
1878.

RED WING, January 8th, 1878.

To His Excellency, J. S. Pillsbury,
Governor:

I have the honor herewith to transmit the report of the "Commission for the Examination of the Insane," appointed by you under act approved February 28th, 1877, with bill of *expenses actually* incurred.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES N. HEWITT,
Secretary of the Commission.

REPORT.

To His Excellency, J. S. Pillsbury,
Governor of Minnesota:

SIR:—The commission appointed by you under the provisions of the act approved Feb. 22, 1877, to examine patients at the Hospital for the Insane, have respectfully to report:

The commission organized by electing Dr. C. K. Bartlett, Chairman, and Dr. C. N. Hewitt, Secretary.

They had access to all the records, and every facility for their work. The Superintendent, at their request, presented seventy-five (75) persons to the commission, as are in the hospital who come under the terms of the law. These were carefully examined individually by the commission, and a record has been kept of each case. Under the terms of the law, the following disposition was made of the persons examined:

Retained for further observation.....	8
Declared fit for removal under the terms of the law.....	67
Of whom there have been removed by counties.....	20
Accepted by counties, and awaiting transportation.....	2
Not accepted by counties (other than grasshopper counties).....	9
Decision of counties not yet received.....	4
Has no county.....	1
Removed by friends.....	3
Relations have promised to take.....	1
Retained as of grasshopper counties.....	24
Discharged as not now insane.....	3
Total decrease.....	67

The changes affected in the population of the hospital, by the action of the commission, are :

There are already removed by counties.....	20
“ “ “ “ “ friends.....	3
“ “ “ discharged as not then insane.....	3
Total.....	26
Remaining at expense of counties... ..	9
“ awaiting decision of counties.....	4
“ as of grasshopper counties.....	24
“ awaiting removal by friends.....	1
“ as of no county.....	1
“ awaiting transportation by counties.....	2
Total remaining.....	41

Of the whole number examined, we found ten (10) idiots, and ten (10) imbeciles. Twenty in all who are not proper subjects for care in a Hospital for the Insane. Their presence is an injury to the insane, and the influence of the insane upon them is bad. Some of these are capable of great improvement under suitable instruction, and all would be benefitted by it.

We urge upon the Legislature the necessity for the organization of a School for Feeble Minded Persons. We believe that competent persons can be induced to establish such a school by private enterprise, if the State will give them the care and education of these and other feeble minded children, who are properly the subjects of State care, and will pay what it now costs to maintain them in the existing institutions.

It is believed that such a school would derive a further and sufficient income from the care of other such children, whose parents are not only willing to pay, but anxious, for such educational advantages.

Since the last meeting of the commission, the Trustees of the Institution for Deaf, Dumb and Blind, have offered to organize a school of this kind, as a part of their work, in one of their present buildings, if the State will pay the salary of an expert to conduct it. We think favorably of this proposition.

Whatever plans the wisdom of the Legislature may select, something ought to be done immediately for the care and education of this unfortunate class.

In accordance with the terms of the law the commission ordered the discharge of 39 persons from other than grasshopper counties, who as idiot, imbecile, or at present harmless dements needing no

medical treatment, and can be as easily cared for away from the hospital as in it if comfortable quarters and proper care are provided for them. The commission are, however, well aware that with the exception of a few, the counties of this State have no provision at all for such cases, and that such as have any, have not that which is necessary. We hoped, therefore, that all the counties would have accepted the alternative of the law, and left their cases at the hospital, and paying for their care there the actual cost, about three dollars and seventy-five cents (\$3.75) a week. This is much less than they would cost anywhere else. As reported above, twenty (20) have already been removed by their counties, but it is safe to assume that nearly all will be returned to the hospital sooner or later.

The commission wish to record here their opinion that unless they have a well-organized hospital for the insane under competent medical supervision, counties should not attempt their care at all. In a poor house, even the best, such persons are entirely out of place, and liable, especially females, to dangers which it is not necessary here to specify. The experience of the past in this way ought never to be repeated.

There are at present in the Hospital for the Insane, 335 males and 244 females; total population, 579—all that the new hospital and the old buildings too can healthfully accommodate. The number is constantly increasing, and faster than it is decreased by discharges or deaths. Additional provision for the care of the insane is therefore necessary.

We may be permitted to emphasize the fact that the earlier asylum treatment is begun, the greater the probability of the speedy and permanent cure of insanity. It is therefore not only a duty, but it is *economy* to provide every facility for the admission to care and treatment of every case, at the earliest possible moment after the condition is certainly recognized.

In view of the fact that whatever is now done will determine the policy of the State in this direction for many years to come, we respectfully recommend that a commission be appointed (made up of men fitted for the duty) to study the whole subject in the light of the State's necessities, and of the most advanced and approved methods of providing for the care and cure of all classes of the insane. We know of no other way so sure to lead to a satisfactory conclusion upon a matter which, like this one, demands honest, thorough, and careful collection and study of all the facts bearing on it before a decision is attempted.

The expenses of the commission have been as follows, for which no provision has been made :

Traveling expenses of Dr. Leonard from Minneapolis.....	\$ 8 20
Hotel bill in St. Peter	4 50
Traveling expenses of Dr. Hewitt from St. Paul.....	8 00
Hotel bill in St. Peter	4 50
Paper and postage	1 00
Total.....	<u>\$26 00</u>

All which is respectfully submitted.

CYRUS K. BARTLETT, M. D.,
 CHARLES N. HEWITT, M. D.,
 W. H. LEONARD, M. D.,
 Members of Commission.

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS

OF THE

Minnesota Hospital for Insane,

(LOCATED AT ST. PETER.)

TO THE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA,

FOR THE

FISCAL YEAR ENDING NOV. 30th, 1878.

TRANSMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL
SESSION, 1879,

MINNEAPOLIS:
JOHNSON, SMITH & HARRISON.
1879.