

Saint Paul

April 15th / 79

To His Excellency,

Gov. J.S. Pillsbury

Sir –

We have the honor to transmit herewith our first report as Commissioners to visit the State Hospitals for the Insane.

Very Respectfully –
Your Obe'd't Servants

Geo. Weston Wood
C.H. Boardman
W.H. Leonard

In accordance with the provisions of Act No. 19, adopted by the late legislature, we visited the Hospital for the Insane at Saint Peter on the 10th inst.

We find the sanitary condition of the new or main building to be exceptionally good.

As much cannot be said for the older buildings, situated in the town. The need of fitting ventilation and sewerage is there very evident; although every effort is made by the superintendent to atone for these serious defects by scrupulous attention to cleanliness, and by the adoption of all other means in his power to remedy them.

As these buildings are not worth the expenditure which would be required to fit them for the purposes of a hospital, we are of opinion that they should be abandoned.

The general management of the entire institution is admirable. Good order and a system of thorough supervision are apparent throughout.

No instance of punishment has occurred during the past year: indeed, punishment is not permitted to be inflicted.

Restraint is never imposed except to prevent injury to patients themselves, and damage to the buildings and other property. It is never harsh or excessive, and does not exceed two per cent of the whole number of inmates.

No elopements are reported during the past quarter. The patient whose death was due to exposure (see table) cannot properly be said to have eloped: he was among those work upon the farm, and strayed away.

The deaths during the last quarter, and their causes, were as follows:

Marasmus	4
Phthisis	2
Pneumonia	1
*Exposure	1
Epilepsy	1
Cardiac Thrombosis	1
Total	10

[* Strayed away on Jan 20th, /79, and found after search at Kelso completely exhausted.]

We have instructed the superintendent to transfer the following named children to the training school for idiots and imbeciles at Faribault.

Chas. Joseph Bender	Blue Earth
Edward Lynch	Fillmore
Louis Schapple	Hennepin
Margaret Richards	Houston
Pauline Torn	Nicollet
Estella Silsbee	Olmsted
Stina AspaasPolk
Geo. Peter Schrantz	Ramsey
Henry Bury	Wright
Joseph Erickson	Wright
Esther Erickson	Wright
J.H. Toboban	Otter Tail
Nels LarsonMeeker
August Malmberg	Carver

The persons named in the following list, as to whose insanity there is doubt, were directed to be sent to the Judges of Probate of their respective Counties for further observation:

Harriet B. Kelsey Anoka
Carl Carlson Chisago
Chas. B. O'Conner Dakota
Freeman Jacobs Nicollet
Frank Ellis Olmsted
Chas. Reichart Lyons

On the 23rd inst. we visited the Second Hospital for the Insane, at Rochester.

The administration of this institution is in a high state of efficiency, and its sanitary condition is excellent.

Since the establishment of the hospital resort even to the ordinary methods of restraint has been rarely necessary: punishment is never inflicted.

There has been one elopement: that of Sylvester Churchill, Dodge County. This man seems to be incorrigible: he had eloped twice from the Hospital at St. Peter, and has not yet been returned to the Rochester Asylum.

The only death that has occurred is that of Thomas Murphy of Houston Co. He was taken to the Hospital ill with pneumonia - which proved fatal.

Andrew Delaney, of Fillmore Co. was directed to be transferred to the training school at Faribault.

There appeared to be no inmates of this Hospital excepting such as are undoubtedly insane.

In conclusion, we would call attention to the large number of harmless incurable patients to be found in both hospitals. Some of these, it would seem, might be cared for at their homes, and the expense of their maintenance be thus saved to the state; while some provision ought to be made for the rest so that the room now occupied by them may be available for those who are suffering from forms of insanity which are more amenable to treatment and that the existing institutions may be really Hospitals, and not simply Houses for Incurables.