

INVESTIGATION OF ASYLUM

EFFICIENCY EXPERT REPORTS TO GOVERNOR.

Radical Changes Recommended in Message to General Assembly.

The efficiency expert, employed by Governor Manning to study conditions at the State Hospital for the Insane, has made his report, which is incorporated in a message to the general assembly. The message follows:

I have the honor of submitting herewith the report of Dr. A. P. Herring on the condition and needs of the Hospital for the Insane. You have doubtless read in the public prints of my purpose to secure a thorough, scientific, non-partisan investigation of this institution. I realize that we have been fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Herring, who has both technical training and practical experience necessary for such work. He has a national reputation and is endorsed by the highest authorities.

I requested Dr. Herring to give a calm statement of existing conditions; I wanted nothing sensational or hysterical. In the accompanying report you will find a strong presentation of what I want you to inspect personally and verify for yourselves. The general requirements for treatment of patients suffering from mental diseases, and suggestions for improvement in the physical condition of the hospital, and treatment of the insane as offered by Dr. Herring, will, I am confident, commend themselves to you as wise and practical, and nothing short of a plain and mandatory duty—a sacred debt to these suffering and impotent patients.

Keynote of Investigation.
Here is the keynote of the investigation:

"The duty of South Carolina to its insane is a cardinal, a supreme obligation to do all and everything without stint for their benefit that its financial resources possibly permit or enable it to do: to exercise in their interests, through the public officials, every effort and labor they are capable of, and to put into effect all the means and resources at its command to perform most effectually this great debt to humanity, this direct and immediate obligation to its people and this noble duty to all the future."

Dr. Herring says that the fundamental principles underlying the entire plan of reorganization proposed in the report is to make certain changes in the law relating the control of the State Hospital for the Insane.

Amendments Recommended.

The following amendments to the constitution governing the asylum are recommended:

1. The superintendent should be appointed by the board of regents, and not by the governor, removable only for cause and after a hearing.
2. The board of regents should consist of five members, appointed by the governor, with the sanction of the senate. They should be appointed, at first, one for two years, two for four years, two for six years, subsequent appointments to be made for a period of six years. The members of this board are not removable except for cause and after a hearing.
3. The superintendent to make all appointments, with the sanction of the board of regents, and to have the power of dismissal of same, to be approved by the board. The superintendent is to report to the board of regents the activities of the hospital, and the board of regents to report to the governor and general assembly. Briefly, the governor will appoint a board of regents in whom he has absolute confidence. They in turn will select a superintendent in whom they have every confidence, and who, of course, has had training in the care and treatment of the insane and in hospital management, and it will then be up to the superintendent to conduct the hospital in a proper manner. There should be no dual authority or divided responsibility.

Formulated by Board.

4. All rules and regulations for the hospital are to be formulated by the board and executed by the superintendent and his assistants. There is no reason why the general assembly should be asked to approve or reject the rules governing the conduct of a hospital for the insane.

5. To change the name from the "State Hospital for the Insane" to the "Columbia State Hospital," while the hospital for the negroes will be known as "State Park Colony."

6. To provide for voluntary admissions.

7. To provide for a fiscal agent, whose duty will be to see that every patient who has relatives or an estate responsible for his support will be made to reimburse the State. This might well be done in connection with the "State board of charities."

8. No female patient to be brought

to the overcrowding and lack of attendants, except to have a ward for the excited, infirm and demented cases and wards for the quiet patients.

9. To provide for a system of after care or placing out of patients who are able to leave the institution, and, while not entirely recovered, yet are able to live satisfactorily under proper supervision away from the hospital.

10. To provide for the admission, care and treatment of inebriates.

State Park Colony.

According to the report by A. P. Herring, M. D., under the present plans a colony for the negro insane of both sexes would be established at State Park. There is a building at this place which is now occupied by less than 100 negro women.

"None of the work on this building," says the report, "was done by the labor of patients. Under our proposed plan at least 100 able-bodied negro male patients would be transferred to State Park and housed in the small wooden building now on the place. These patients would be utilized in doing all of the general labor, such as excavating, clearing the land, unloading cars, mixing cement, etc. This would save the State a great deal of money and by erecting a permanent and comparatively inexpensive building all of the negro patients could be housed in the near future and at a comparatively small cost. I would say within \$400 a bed. This, to my mind, is one of the most important things connected with the entire plan of reorganization.

"The negroes could be used for farming purposes, and there is no reason why most of the produce used in the hospital could not be produced on this farm by the patients' labor. By occupying the negroes in this manner restraint could be absolutely abolished; the patients would be happier and more contented; there would be a large number of recoveries, and at the same time they would become a valuable asset to the institution and the State.

"In addition to the colony for the negroes there could be erected at State Park a building for the idiotic and imbecile children, who are now living with the patients in the State hospital. The importance of segregating the imbecile and feeble minded children from the adults has never been questioned. There should also be constructed at State Park a separate building for cases of tuberculosis and pellagra. There is a splendid opportunity, both at the present hospital and at State Park, to develop farm colonies."

Dr. Herring's Report.

Dr. Herring in his report makes the following statements relative to conditions at the State Hospital for the Insane in this State:

1. The present superintendent is a gentleman who was in general practice in the rural districts before his appointment to his present position. He is kind and courteous in his manner toward the patients, and I am firmly convinced that he is doing everything in his power for the comfort and well being for those under his care, but he has certainly not had sufficient executive experience or psychiatric training to be held responsible for the proper management of an institution of nearly 1,700 patients.

2. The present staff consists of four physicians in direct charge of the patients. The first assistant is in charge of the 400 white male patients and has no assistant. The second assistant is a woman physician, who has had no previous hospital experience with the insane. She is responsible for the treatment of over 600 white female patients and has no assistant. These two physicians and the superintendent live on the hospital grounds. The physician in charge of over 400 negro male patients does not live at the institution, but visits every day for a few hours or more, as may be necessary. He has no assistant. The physician in charge of the negro women has about 300 patients under his charge, in addition to visiting the negro women at State Park. He does not live at the institution and has no assistant physician. To expect four physicians to look after nearly 1,700 patients in addition to their other enormous clinical duties, and only two of whom devote all their time to the work, is not only a physical impossibility, but is evidently so unjust and absurd, to the patients and to the physicians, that it needs no argument. There is a pathologist and a dentist, who spends a part of each day at the hospital.

Staff Conferences.

3. It is impossible, Dr. Herring says, under the present condition to have regular and frequent conferences of the medical staff.

4. There is a receiving ward for the white men and one for the white women, neither are being equipped for the proper examination and treatment of the patients. They are receiving wards in name only and in no sense meet the requirements.

5. There can be no satisfactory classification of the patients under the present conditions, due primarily

to the overcrowding and lack of attendants, except to have a ward for the excited, infirm and demented cases and wards for the quiet patients.

6. The system of clinical records is not uniform, some departments using a book, while others use a history sheet, and a great deal of the clerical work must be done by the doctors. This entire department will have to be reorganized.

Need Pathologist.

7. A laboratory has been recently established in the main building, where a limited amount of satisfactory work can be performed. There is, however, sufficient work in a hospital of this kind to require the services of an experienced pathologist.

8. There is no provision for any form of special treatment.

9. There is a dentist in regular attendance, but no regular visiting consulting staff. A small operating room has been equipped in the hospital ward of the women's department. This room is neat, clean and apparently satisfactory for the present needs.

10. The Nurses' Training School in the female department is the most hopeful and attractive feature about the institution. The superintendent of nurses is a graduate nurse and well equipped for her duties of general training. Unfortunately she has had no previous experience in a hospital for the insane. The male nurses are not required to take the training nor do they wear any distinctive uniforms.

11. Female nurses are not employed on the male wards.

Lack of System.

12-13. There is no systematic use of occupation and recreation. Some of the patients work about the wards and in various departments of the hospital and farm. The most distressing phase of life in this institution is the utter lack of work and play for the patients, under the supervision of a teacher. The weekly dances are given in winter and the moving picture shows during summer. Diversional occupation is unknown.

14. During the past year 224 patients were discharged as improved, and 109 as unimproved, while 560 died. There is no after care or placing out system.

15. There is no special provision for the tuberculosis insane.

16. There is no way to segregate the pellagrins. The importance of this is shown in the following table, taken in part from the 90th annual report of the hospital:

Pellagra Statistics.			
	Admitted.	Recovered.	Died.
1907	4
1908	46	0	33
1909	112	4	68
1910	213	14	106
1911	284	28	154
1912	273	35	228
1913	366	36	165
1914	462	7	356

Dr. Herring says that from the above statements it is evident that the asylum does not "in any way conform to the standards existing in a modern hospital for the insane."

Points Out Defects.

Dr. Herring calls attention to "several defects which need immediate attention" as follows:

1. The fire protection is entirely inadequate. Not only are these buildings veritable firetraps in their present condition, but the lack of fire extinguishers and the condition of the hose, as found in some of the wards, makes the danger from fire a real and terrible disaster to contemplate. Only recently has the thread on the standpipes been standardized, so that now the hose of the city fire department can be used on any of the fire plugs.

2. The sanitary conditions throughout the entire institution are in bad repair and entirely inadequate. The free and constant use of receptacles is practiced. With one bath tub on each ward to accommodate over forty patients, it is self-evident that the bathing facilities are not satisfactory.

Heating and Ventilating.

3. The heating and ventilating system is old, out of repair and inadequate. The buildings are heated by about eighty stoves and furnaces.

4. The method of cooking and serving the food in several kitchens and numerous dining rooms, delivered through tunnels in the basement and then by dumb waiters to the wards, renders it absolutely impossible to have the food hot and palatable when served.

5. The floors, ceilings and interior walls in nearly every part of the institution are badly in need of repairs.

6. In their present physical condition many of the buildings are not fit for human beings to be housed in, and immediate repairs should be made. The present run-down condition of the interior of the buildings is due to the fact that adequate repairs have not been made for several years.

Summing up the conditions at the Asylum, Dr. Herring has the following to say:

That the physical condition of the

interior of the buildings is very bad; that the internal organization of the hospital needs a thorough reorganization to bring it up to the requirements of a modern hospital; and, that with all of these handicaps, it is hardly to be expected that modern care and treatment for the insane can be secured. So that I wish to make it perfectly plain that we should not criticize those who are in immediate attendance of these patients, but that, on the other hand they should be given credit for doing as much as they do under the unsurmountable difficulties. The overcrowding of the wards and lack of attendants and need of sufficient money are all contributing factors in the present state of affairs.

Discusses Plans.

Discussing the plan for reorganization of the State Hospital for the Insane, A. P. Herring, M. D., Governor Manning's efficiency expert, says that he has ever kept in mind the fact that, first of all, it must be practical and at the same time sufficiently adequate and elastic to meet all future requirements, and in the second place it should be within reasonable financial limits. Dr. Herring first considers the general plan of arrangement of the buildings and the distribution of the patients. The internal organization is included under a separate head.

The report declares that the most evident steps at the present time is to remove all of the negro insane, the idiots and imbeciles, the tuberculous and pellagrous patients to State Park. He says by doing this that there will be plenty of room for the white insane at the old Asylum for many years to come. "In fact," he says, "by developing the farm colony idea there will never be the overcrowding of these buildings that exists at the present time."

First Thing Necessary.

"The first thing that is absolutely necessary," says the report, "in a hospital for the insane is a psychopathic reception hospital building. This is the active medical centre which controls and stimulates the life of the entire institution. Here the patients who enter the hospital are first received, thoroughly examined, and, if need be, detained for treatment. All patients who are actually disturbed receive in this building hydro-therapeutic treatment and any other treatment indicated; in other words, they are treated as sick individuals. In this building are also located laboratories, examining rooms, operating rooms and every facility needed for the proper treatment of the mentally sick. In this connection I would also suggest that an out-patient department be inaugurated in this building for the purpose of doing any important work in preventive psychiatry. The close proximity of the hospital to the city renders it especially adaptable for this new field of medicine. The building which could be used for this purpose is the old asylum building, the walls of which are substantially constructed and the general outline of the building well adapted for this purpose."

Internal Arrangement.

"The internal arrangement will, of course, be changed and practically an entire new interior installed. The details concerning the arrangement of the interior of this building will have to be taken up later with an architect. We would make provision for a hundred patients, none of whom would remain in this building for any great length of time. Leaving this building for the present, we will consider next the central building, and this description will apply to both wings of this building.

"No very radical changes need be made in these buildings so far as their general arrangement is concerned. Of course, nearly all of the buildings throughout the entire institution require new floors and an entire new sanitary equipment and new heating. A number of small rooms would be thrown into one large room. Attractive day rooms and dormitories would result from abolishing a large number of cells and small rooms.

Business Office.

"The rearrangement of the business office in the central portion of this building will also be necessary."

"The Parker building, which is now occupied by the negro men, will have to be extensively renovated, and will be used to relieve the congestion now existing in the wards for the white men. The Parker annex, a two-story brick building, will be converted into an industrial shop and placed under the supervision of a competent teacher. In this building the patients will make brooms, mattresses, rugs, shoes, baskets and a great many other things necessary in a large institution. This would be one of the most valuable departments, both from a therapeutic and financial standpoint. Without a building of this kind no hospital is complete.

"The building for women need not be changed except for the general repairs as suggested on the men's

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