

cal record which contains the name of every inmate, the date of their admission, their residence, and a multitude of facts relating to their history and that of their family. This book is so arranged as to show the subsequent history of the person while in the institution and his death, parole, release, discharge, as the case may be. Appropriate blanks corresponding to these books are furnished the institution and upon these all the information is conveyed to the board when it is from time to time entered in a like record kept in the office of the board. These statistical books and blanks are alike for the same kind of institutions. We thus have a reasonably full history in our office of every inmate in a state institution under the control of this board.

Other Books Required to be Kept and Reports Which Must be Made.

At each institution a book is required to be kept which is called a "Complaint Record." In it all complaints made by inmates, officers, or outsiders touching the management of the institution must be entered, with the action taken thereon by the chief executive officer. Monthly reports of these cases are made to this board. At the hospitals for the insane and the penitentiaries there is required to be kept what is called a "Mechanical Restraint Record," wherein must be entered a memoranda of each case where restraint has been applied, the character of the restraint, the duration, cause thereof, and its effect.

At the penitentiaries and Industrial Schools, records are required to be kept of all cases of punishment by means of mechanical restraint or otherwise for infractions of the rules. In all the above cases monthly reports must be made to the board upon blanks provided for that purpose. From time to time each institution must report its dietary in detail, showing the number of persons fed, quality of every article used, cost of same, and list per capita per meal, per day, and per week. Every quarter each institution must report the condition of fire escapes and fire apparatus, showing the result of tests made by fire apparatus and wherein same is defective.

Other Matters of Interest.

All books and blanks used at the various institutions in carrying out the system adopted are furnished through the board and the cost apportioned to the several institutions; in this way only can uniformity be secured.

No new building or improvement can be erected or made which is to cost over \$300.00 except on competitive bids.

The board appoints an architect who receives a salary of \$3000.00 and railroad fare, and who is required to prepare plans and estimates for all new buildings and improvements and look after the construction of the work. Plans are prepared by him for all pro-

posed new buildings for which appropriations are to be asked from the legislature, also estimates of their cost. These are laid before the proper committees for consideration. Formerly the legislature was besieged by all the superintendents, and many of the trustees of the institutions who formed a formidable lobby for appropriations. Now the needs of the institutions are presented by the board and the superintendents devote their time to attending to their respective institution duties.

The chief executive officer of each institution, except the wardens of the penitentiaries and the commandant of the Soldiers' Home, draws food supplies for himself and all members of his family under twenty-one years of age, from the institution stores, and he is not permitted to purchase with state funds any articles of food not bought for inmates.

In supplies we buy the best flour and meats obtainable. Fresh beef must be from native steers weighing when dressed from 600 to 800 pounds each. Great care is taken to have all goods of good quality, and the chief executive officer is made the sole judge as to whether articles furnished comply in all respects with the specifications.

Fire companies are organized and drilled at several of the institutions. All officers and employees having the custody of state property are required to give bond. All officers and employees except the chief executive and except those employed on the farms or in shops are required to be uniformed. This conduces greatly to discipline and indicates at once to the stranger those who are clothed with authority.

Semi-annual visits are made by the entire board to all institutions, and some member of the board visits the hospitals every month. Thus by visitation, by reports, by checks, by daily correspondence does the board keep in touch with the affairs at the several institutions. It is the policy of the board to promote capable and efficient officers to the positions of chief executive officers as vacancies may occur.

Results.

This system of control has now been in operation for more than two and a half years and has proven very satisfactory. It has resulted in paying women nurses and attendants the same wages as men receive for like service; in improving the character of the service; in bettering the condition of the institutions; in elevating the standard of care afforded to inmates. All this has been accomplished, notwithstanding the fact that the legislature, just before we took up the work, reduced the per capita allowance for support of inmates in the aggregate sum of \$100,000 per year, and the further fact that nearly all of the time since the law has been in operation, the market price of many

commodities has been steadily advancing. Over \$100,000.00 which the board might have drawn for support of inmates remains in the state treasury unexpended.

In his last report, the treasurer of state computes the decrease in cost of operating the institutions under the control of this board during the first year, as compared with the cost of the previous year "under the trustee system at \$370,490.73 or twenty-six and nine-tenths per cent." * * * "This saving, it is fair to presume, was not the result of unwise economics that were detrimental to the institutions. The character of the members of the board of Control is a sufficient guarantee that such was not the case. They have been the fruits of the application of business principles and methods in the conduct of the fourteen institutions under the board."

In the last sentence the treasurer has struck the key note as to how this board has been able to make such a large saving to the state, and at the same time improve the conditions at the institution.

I trust that the foregoing may enable your readers to form some idea of our law and the methods employed in enforcing it.

Very truly yours,

L. G. KINNE.

Chmn. Board of Control.

Des Moines, Iowa.

AN APPOINTIVE JUDICIARY.

EDITOR CONSERVATIVE:

Recently I read your brief argument favoring the practice of an appointive judiciary.

If you will examine authorities, at random, in the reports of courts of last resort, I think that you will find that the decisions of elective judges carry the greater weight. The judges proper to the District of Columbia are appointed by the president and are high-salaried, yet they are generally very inferior men, and low grade lawyers. Who ever heard of their decisions as authority for any other court to follow?

Even the supreme court of the United States has very few lawyers of high ability and attainments, and is growing weaker and weaker as time goes. Perhaps it is because the men are too old when appointed. To make it elective, say ten or twelve year terms, and put it on a selected reservation, away from Washington, would doubtless improve it and its work. I recall ex-Senator and ex-Attorney-General Garland's contemptuous allusions to it, "dozing and belching" through arguments.

POSEY S. WILSON.

Chicago, Ill.