

ments. In the old or west wing of the prison the sleeping apartments are much larger than those of the east wing, and might, if space was the only desideratum, accommodate four persons to each room. These are now occupied by nine to each apartment, which is much beyond their proper capacity. This is objectionable, not only on the score of the health of the occupants, but it is to be regretted, because, in the contact of numbers, it opens the door for plots and contrivances for prison escapes, and becomes a school in the teaching of crime, and by familiar recitals of offences, place upon the mind the horrid image of vice. Notwithstanding this expedient, necessarily adopted for the want of room, the Warden has been compelled to sleep in a single room, measuring less than 50 feet each way, 160 colored male prisoners. In such a condition of affairs, if an infectious or contagious disease should make an incursion within the walls of the prison, the mortality therefrom would be startling.

In the judgment of the Committee, the General Assembly should not longer delay the vesting of the Directors of the Institution with the full authority for constructing proper dormitory apartments, and the placing at their disposal the most ample means to that end. Considerations of humanity suggest that the work should be promptly accomplished.

But to accomplish this object there will be additional grounds required, as recommended by the Committee of the House of Delegates at the last session of the Legislature, to visit the Institution. As the enclosure of the present prison is entirely too small for the object contemplated, we would therefore recommend the purchase of grounds on the northern or eastern limits of the prison walls, with the view of erecting buildings on the new space acquired; or, if it is thought that the State is able to bear the expenses at this time, we believe that it would be better to purchase a new site, and to erect suitable buildings thereon for the accommodation of the prisoners, and to convert the present prison into a work-house for minor offences, which, in the judgment of the Committee, would prevent many of the young from becoming hardened and depraved criminals.

There is in your Committee no division of sentiment upon the theory that the State should do one of two things, and that is to purchase a new site on the margin of the city boundary, and erect buildings thereon for all the purposes of the institution, or extend the boundaries of the present site, and erect thereon the required improvements; a large portion of the labor required to erect the same, can be performed by the inmates of the prison.

The Board of Directors ask for an appropriation of \$30,000 per annum; we think the amount asked for by the Board is moderate, considering the embarrassed condition of the insti-