

inmates during the last year was one hundred and eighty-one, while the building will easily accommodate three hundred; as a matter of economy then, it becomes desirable that there should be no waste room in the building, and that there should be means supplied adequate to the expense of full occupation.

Moved by every consideration of humanity, as well as by their loyalty as citizens of the State, looking back with satisfaction to the past, and urged forward by a determination to make the future even more fruitful in good, the Board have no hesitation in laying before the Legislature their claims for at least the full sum asked for at the last session. Sincerely grateful for the aid already afforded by the State, still it is due to themselves and the cause for which they have devoted their means, their energies and so many years of their time, very frankly to confess that they look upon the Institution under their charge, as a creditor of the State for relieving it of the responsibility of the care of so many youthful delinquents, and thus striking at the very fountain head of crime, and cutting off the future supply of the jail and penitentiary. The State, by its statute, has put the Board in the place of parents to these children of vagrancy and vice. It has said to us, educate them, reclaim them, and so discipline them in the ways of honesty and virtue, of industry and obedience, that they may become good and useful members of the community. And can the State clothe us with this authority, directing her courts and magistrates to commit these children to our care during their minority and holding us to our responsibilities, not indeed by penalties—for ours is a free will service—but by our faithfulness as men whose works must stand before a higher power for judgment; we say, can the State do all this and refuse to recognize the claim we present for the support of these unfortunate victims of neglect and crime? We trust not.

To insure success for our plea, we believe that it is only necessary to understand the true character of the House of Refuge; to know distinctly what are its aims and how those aims are to be accomplished, what it claims to do for the individual and for society and what it has already done in the cause of a wise and practical benevolence. We believe this, because, among other gratifying evidences, members of the last Legislature who with hesitation voted for even the smaller sum and have since visited the institution, have regretted that even a larger amount than was asked for had not been appropriated. That a similar conviction would be the result of an examination of the Refuge in its details, by every intelligent member of the present Legislature, we cannot doubt, and it would afford the greatest pleasure to every member of the board at any time to submit their charge to such an examination either to individuals, to committees or to the whole Legislature as a body.

With these preparatory remarks, the Board would now respect-