

ly met with in public buildings of the kind, and would indeed be creditable to any private house; the prisoners were well clad and cleanly in their persons, and the food sufficient in quantity and quality. The discipline, if not at all times carried out to the strict letter of the law, is as perfect as the limited number of officers and guards would admit of.

But there are some matters in this connection which humanity demands at the hands of the Legislature as early action as the finances of the State will justify. The law requires that each prisoner shall be confined in a separate cell; this from the want of necessary accommodations cannot be carried out; five, six, and sometimes as many as eight are confined in one room, subject to all the evils that arise from free intercourse between criminals; in addition to this the basement cells of the eastern dormitory (some fifty in number) are under ground and unfit for the confinement of human beings—it is true the present Warden, by flooring the brick pavement, has improved their condition somewhat, still they are not fit to be used.

A new dormitory, with not less than 150 cells, should be erected as soon as the means of the State will permit.

There is another evil that requires Legislative action—it is too much the practice of the courts throughout the State to send persons to the Penitentiary for small offenses whose proper destination would be the County Almshouse or the Insane Hospital. There are now in the Institution many of both classes, some who commit a petty theft for the sole purpose of being provided with a home, and others idiotic or insane at the time of commitment.

One case may be instanced by way of illustration; the commitment is from Calvert County and reads thus:—

“George Norfolk, presented for feloniously entering the dwelling of Wm. Ogden and taking therefrom a bottle of whiskey, a pan of milk, and some bread and meat. Verdict of the jury, *Guilty, and insane at the time of the commission of the act and insane now*, and sentenced by the Court to be confined in the Penitentiary house of the State of Maryland *until he shall recover his reason*, and be discharged by due course of law.”

This is virtually an imprisonment for life for the offense of stealing something to eat, the party being idiotic and insane at the time, and the effect is to transfer his support from the county to which he belongs to the State at large.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

LAWRENCE SANGSTON,	} Committee.
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