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CONCERNING OUR STATE INSTITUTIONS

In 1848 the first public charitable institution in Illinois was opened Jacksonville—the school for the deaf. Later the school for the blind and the central hospital for the insane were opened also in Jacksonville, and these three comprised the state charitable institutions until after the close of the civil war. Since then the following institutions have been added: The soldiers' and sallors' home, Quincy; the northern hospital for the insane, Elgin; the soldiers' orphan home, Normal; the eastern hospital for the insane, Kankakee; the southern hospital for the insane, Anna; the Illinois charitable eye and ear infirmary, Chicago; the state training school for girls, Geneva the western hospital for the insane Watertown; the industrial home .0 the blind, Chicago; the asylum for the chronic insane, Bartonville; soldiers' widows' home, Wilmington; asylum for feeble-minded, Lincoln; asylum for incurable insane, Chester; St. Charles school for boys, St. Charles-making seventeen in all,

To build, equip and maintain these institutions more than \$42,000,000 has been expended. Their annual cost is already more than \$2,000,000-onequarter of the state's budget. They already shelter about 11,000 persons, two-thirds of whom are insane pa tients, and more than 2,000 persons are employed in their service. The expenditure must increase, for there is a constant tendency not only to enlarge existing institutions and to in crease the number of those for the insane, but new classes of dependents are being recognized as properly entitled to public care. As instance of this widening scope we need only mention the acknowledged need of public care for epileptics and for consumptives, and the newer recognition of the state's responsibility toward children.

Miss Julia Lathrop, for a number of years a member of the state board of charities, in writing of the control and management of these institutions, says: "Aloofness from party politics characterized our public charities from their beginning until 1892, and during that period it is fair to say that Illineis did contribute to science. For example, Mr. Frank Hall, superintendent of the school for the blind, won international recognition for his inventions in printing apparatus for the blind; Dr. Dewey made Kankakee known at home and abroad as one of the most advanced hospitals in the world. On the other hand, every one who has observed the Illinois institutions for the last ten years sees that they have been subjected to an entirely new sort of control, although there has been no new law for their government placed on the statute books. This new controi is that of party politics."

The year 1892 first witnessed the change from non-political to political management. From then until the present time the institutions have been run on the principle that all the appointive positions may be filled, and all the contracts let, in such a man ner as to strengthen the dominant po-

In commenting upon the effect of such management the Illinois State Federation of Women's clubs in a published communication, says: "Let us look closely at a single typical institution which, since its creation, has been an object of special pride to the state. The Illinois eastern hospital for the insane at Kankakee is more than twenty-five years old. There are more than 2,000 patients and more than 400 employes. It has cost the taxpayers, in construction, repairs and maintenance, between \$7,000,000 and \$8,000, 000. It was planned with much courage and originality, in defiance of the prevailing modes of asylum architecture, and its cottage plan became at once a model for imitation in other states. It was authorized in 1877 and opened in 1879 (a significant fact when compared with the seven years lately required to open the Peoria asylum) Dr. Richard M. Dewey was the first superintendent. Prior to his appointment he had had seven years' experience as a staff physician in a hospital for the insane, and was an eager student of advanced methods. The institution became at once a non-restraint hospital: that is, intelligent medical and aursing care was bestowed upon sick people instead of the mechanical restraint used in the average asylum. A training school for nurses, the only one in Illinois, was opened in 1886. About

cining you for the first time in the said-die west, a pathological laboratory was opened, and in many respects the administration was one of marked progress, and of marked superiority to that of other institutions for insane

in Illinois. "In the fourteen years of his superintendency Dr. Dewey states that he was able to conduct the hospital on a merit basis, undisturbed by politics. Once during his incumbency he was asked if he would be kind enough to place a brother of the governor on his medical staff, but he declined, and his right to decline was not questioned by the governor, who humbly yielded.

"In the first seven years of the tenyear period of flux, beginning in 1892, Kankakee had five superintendents and three and two-thirds sets of trustees. In the ten years the medical staff was passed through several cycles of change, and among the 400 employes of all classes, it was stated at

the time of the 1900 election that there were not more than a dozen who had been there under Dr. Dewey. The skilled allenist had been replaced as superintendent by a general practitioner; the chief of staff, instead of being a trained man-as required by law in the state of New York—is now a village doctor; the women physicians are all gone; medical internes (once chosen by severe competitive examinations) are no more; the pathological laboratory has fallen into neglect, the standard of nursing care has been sadly lowered. Taking these facts as indications, have we reason to be surprised by the facts shown in the investigation of Kankakee, held in August last?"

The persons now in immediate charge of our charitable institutions are not to be so much blamed for the character of their employes and the needless padding of the pay-rolls, as the people of the state who will permit such institutions to be run under such a system. Why should a system be continued which supports the needy politician and deprives the unfortunates of proper care and treatment? Why not deprive the politician of his job if he can't show, by a merit test, that he is capable of filling it? Take away the system which allows the employment of a needless high salaried official as a reward for political work, and the position will be abolished and the money saved devoted to the care of the inmates. The people who have relatives or friends in the institutions, the people who pay taxes which they desire to see honestly spent and accounted for, and all persons who have a regard for public decency owe a duty to the public and to themselves to ponder over the existing evils and to seek a remedy. There are those who believe that this state of corruption and inefficiency can be cured by the enactment of a state civil service law, whereby appointments can be made only after the applicant's fitness has been determined by experienced examiners; that if the power to appoint whomsoever is wanted for a position is taken away, that position, if useless, will be abolished and the money paid for positions which are needed. Whether they are right in their belief is certainly worthy of the careful consideration of every

Prof. C. A. L. Totten, formerly military instructor at Yale, replying to the question of a New Yorker whether 1903 is to be a lucky or an unlucky year, says: "What is the matter with either Friday or the number 13? As to America, it bears 13 all over its heraldry, and Friday has been its chief day (discovery of America, dec laration of independence, etc.). We have 13 letters in E Pluribus Unum, the motto on our great seal. We have 13, 13 times repeated, on that seal. Take out a new silver quarter, if you have one left, and count the thirteens, even on its obverse face. Mannasseh was the thirteenth tribe in Israel and we are the people."

"Lady servants" are coming into vogue in England. They are educated women, who do the work of cooks and chambermaids, but who, for superior worker, get superior accommodations, and do what they please after their work is done. Why, indeed, cannot a woman be both a lady and a servant? We see in this movement the solution of the servant-girl problem.

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