

FOURTH BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

HOME FOR THE FRIENDLESS

FOR THE

TWO YEARS ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 1890.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

OMAHA, NEB.:
HENRY GIBSON, PUBLIC PRINTER.
1890.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Board of Public Lands and Buildings:

GENTLEMEN:—The board of managers of the Home for the Friendless present their fourth biennial report of the home, feeling that they have much cause for gratitude that the prosperity and onward progress of the home are so well assured for the future. The home seems to have passed the experimental stage, and with more means at the disposal of the managers cannot fail to be a great power for good in the state, increasing in usefulness as the state grows in population and resources. As the last legislature appropriated just 27½ cents per day per capita, the record of the board of managers for the past two years consists largely of the devices of twelve women to make one dollar do the work of two. It has been only by practicing the most rigid economy and crowding the children very close together that the institution has kept its doors open to the needy cases constantly presenting themselves. As the storms of winter come upon us we are sure to have almost daily additions to our family. Many friendless mothers are enabled to keep their little ones in some poor sort of a home during the summer, but cannot possibly provide for their many wants in cold weather.

The opening of the industrial home at Milford has relieved the home of one class of inmates, but the state's great increase of population has been felt in the constantly increasing number of applications for children for admission to the home. Few adult inmates have been received since the last biennial report. The eight old ladies who have for some time found a quiet resting place at the home occupy the only available rooms for that class of inmates. The friends of the Society of the Home for the Friendless would be glad to see the aged

cared for in a state institution established for their especial benefit.

The need of a commodious school-room with modern improvements cannot fail to be felt by those who visit the home. Three years ago the room was full with only 40 pupils, but with an average attendance the past year of nearly 60 the room is overflowing. The little ones have their kindergarten work in clay and paper and their pretty songs, and they need a room separate from the older children. The girls, in addition to their regular school work, are taught to sew and mend. The examinations of the children show that their progress compares favorably with that of children in the public schools. The teachers' October report to the board tells of the children's generosity in helping the destitute in the western counties. The call for assistance met with much sympathy from these friendless children, many of whom have known what it is to be cold and hungry, sick and poor.

Each child was anxious to give the best he had. One had a cap too small for him, another a picture card received at the Sunday school. A few had pennies given them by kind friends for their own spending money. Eighty-seven cents in money was thus collected and it included about every penny among the home children.

In the nursery are found some cases which properly belong to hospitals. Some of the babies are badly diseased before being brought to the home. More room for nursery purposes is badly needed, that sick babies may have quarters separate from those that are well.

The home is in great need of fire protection. There are no fire-escapes on the building, no chemical fire extinguishers in the halls, no hose to connect with the pumps and not enough water in the two wells if we turned on the hose. During the last siege with typhoid fever, when four were ill at one time, there was not enough water in the wells to run the laundry so that the sick might have clean beds every day. If

the home could be connected with the city water system and be provided with sufficient hose the danger from fire would be greatly lessened. The lighting of the building with gas or electricity would also do away with much of the danger from fire incidental to the use of so many kerosene lamps in a building full of children.

The green-house affords much pleasure and some revenue, and, with the grounds properly graded and laid out, the flowers would aid greatly in beautifying the home.

The complete system of sewerage now in operation at the home, thanks to the efficient help of your honorable board, has added much to the health and convenience of the home.

The ladies of the board feel most grateful for the work thus done by the Board of Public Lands and Buildings. Many of the rooms at the home when the wind was from the south were full of pestilential odors and the back yard was often unendurable. The city authorities had ordered our cesspool cemented, and then its contents had to be pumped out and large bills for pumping confronted us. At this point your board came most efficiently to our help. Two large out-houses with sewer connections are now one of our great needs.

A new school building and chapel combined is the greatest want at the home. The first floor could be used for both chapel and school purposes, with dormitories above for the little boys and a room for the governess in charge. The basement would make a fine play-room for stormy weather.

Cottage number two has been the chief improvement since the last biennial report. One-half of it is used for a quarantine. All newcomers to the home are obliged to pass the first two weeks in quarantine. The other half is used, when necessary, for children sick with contagious diseases. It is difficult to see how the home could have prospered without this valuable improvement, an improvement for which we are much indebted to your honorable board.

The present boiler-house is used as a laundry on the first

floor and as a dormitory above, an arrangement both inconvenient and dangerous, as we are often reminded by the not infrequent boiler explosions elsewhere. The boiler itself is old, and our bills for repairing it are very high. If a new, commodious boiler-house could be built and two new boilers put in it would add to the facilities for work at the home and lessen somewhat our running expenses.

The appropriations granted us by the last legislature have not sufficed for our needs except in the fund for officers' salaries and employes' wages. With a new building we shall have increased facilities for caring for the friendless children, and will need more help. The officers of the home are paid as follows: Superintendent, \$75 per month; assistant superintendent and physician, each \$50 per month; matrons, \$35 per month.

The help are paid from \$15 to \$50. In times of serious illness, where night nurses are needed, the board must employ additional help. It is impossible to make an exact estimate of employes' wages, as the amount varies from month to month. During an epidemic of the measles and la grippe much additional help was employed. The treasurer's books show that the average monthly pay roll of the helpers is over four hundred dollars.

The repair fund, clothing, bedding and furniture fund and the fund for stationery, etc., are now exhausted, with no money available from new appropriations until April 1. It will be impossible for us to keep out of debt and support our large family, and the number in the home always increases in cold weather. We earnestly hope that the appropriations for the home for the next two years will enable us to come before the next legislature with no deficiency.

The management of the home feel that the best interests of the home would be promoted if the institution could be moved to a larger tract of ground. The health of the children would doubtless be improved by a larger play-ground,

and the boys could have work to do after school hours in helping in the garden. Many supplies for the home could be furnished at little expense if we had grounds for garden and small fruits and pasture.

Inmates from the following counties have been received:

Adams, Buffalo, Burt, Butler, Cass, Cheyenne, Clay, Cum-
ing, Custer, Dawson, Dodge, Douglas, Dundy, Fillmore, Fron-
tier, Gage, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Holt, Howard, Jef-
ferson, Johnson, Kimball, Lancaster, Madison, Merrick, Nance,
Nemaha, Nuckolls, Pawnee, Phelps, Polk, Red Willow, Rich-
ardson, Saline, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward, Stanton, Thayer,
Thomas, Washington, Webster and York. Friendless women
from Iowa, Kansas, Illinois and Wisconsin, to the number of
nine, have been given temporary shelter until transportation
could be furnished them to return to their old homes. Three
doorstep babies have also been received.

Number of inmates in home November 30, 1888.....	116
Number of inmates admitted since November 30, 1888.....	346
Total	462
Number of children surrendered to friends.....	120
Number of children placed in homes.....	68
Number of adults returned to friends.....	47
Number of adults for whom work was found.....	16
Number sent to industrial school.....	2
Number sent to hospital.....	1
Number of deaths.....	51
Number given temporary shelter.....	46
Total	351
Number in home November 30, 1890.....	111
Total	462
Number of officers.....	4
Number of employes.....	19
Total	23

Estimates of salaries, employes' wages, current expenses, building and general improvements for Home for the Friendless for the two years ending March 31, 1893:

	Per annum.	Total.
Officers' salaries.....	\$2,520	\$ 5,040
Employes' wages.....	5,000	10,000
Living expenses, drugs and food for stock... ..		18,000
Fuel and lights.....		6,000
Repairs and improvements.....		3,000
Stationery, printing, books, telegraph, telephone, postage and incidentals.		2,000
Clothing, bedding and furniture.....		5,000
Laying out grounds and grading.....		500
Barn, out-house with sewer connections.....		1,000
Chapel, school building, heating apparatus, gas-pipes and furniture for the same.....		15,000

Respectfully submitted,

MRS. A. W. FIELD, Clerk.