

NINETY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

South Carolina State
Hospital



FOR THE YEAR 1922

COLUMBIA, S. C.
GONZALES AND BRYAN, STATE PRINTERS,
1923

REPORT OF THE REGENTS.

Columbia, S. C., January 1, 1923.

To His Excellency, Wilson G. Harvey, Governor of South Carolina:

The Board of Regents of the South Carolina State Hospital respectfully submits its report for the year 1922:

NUMBER OF PERSONS UNDER CARE OF THE BOARD

As shown by the statistical tables of the Superintendent's report, the number of persons in the hospital on December 31, 1921, was 2,354. The admissions for the year have been 841. The total number under treatment during the year was 3,446. The daily average number was 2,401, and the number in the hospital on December 31, 1922 was 2,399, an increase of 45 patients.

The Board has, in several previous reports, called attention to the over-crowded and unsanitary conditions of the quarters for negroes, particularly the negro male quarters and sought relief from these conditions. In last year's report it was pointed out that unless relief could be had, it would be necessary for the Board to instruct the Superintendent to refuse admissions, as further over-crowding would be inhumane. Many admissions have had to be refused, but the hospital has tried to take care of all emergencies in order that no insane person would have to be cared for in the county jails. Attention was called to the fact last year that the quarters for white men were rapidly approaching the maximum capacity and that provision would have to be made for them. During the year, admissions for a number of white men had to be refused on account of not having room for them. If the hospital is to meet the demands constantly being made upon it, additional buildings will have to be provided.

It has been the policy of the Board since the remodeling of the plant in Columbia was started, to ultimately segregate the colored people at State Park. This is deemed advisable from an economical point of view as well as the desirability of having the races separated. The Board fully realizes the financial conditions confronting the State at this time, but it should be

remembered that these conditions unfortunately bring about increased mental sickness, and, if the State is to do its part, provision must be made for their care, not only as an act of charity towards the mentally sick persons themselves, but as a protection to the community in which they reside. If it could be found feasible and practicable by a bond issue or otherwise to provide the necessary funds to meet the requirements of the hospital at this time, the Board feels that money could be saved, rather than by building in piece-meal as we will from now on be required to do. If funds for a building for colored men could be provided, this year, it would not relieve the condition of the over-crowded quarters for white men, but on the other hand, if buildings could be provided and all negro men sent to State Park, a part of the quarters now occupied by them could be rebuilt for white men and added to as time would demand.

Other urgent needs of the hospital are specially equipped buildings for both white and colored races for the criminal insane. Since the revision of the laws in 1920, the hospital is frequently called upon to receive criminals and hold them for the purpose of observation until their mental status can be determined. We have no special buildings for the care of these people and the Board feels that the hospital management should not be held responsible for the safety of these people, unless they are provided with secure buildings in which to hold them. It is further felt that it is not just to the other patients to require them to occupy the same quarters with the worst type of the criminal insane.

HOSPITAL CONDITIONS DURING 1922

We are glad to report that the general health of the hospital for the past year has been excellent. During the latter part of the summer, a few cases of dengue fever appeared at the hospital, but did not become epidemic, although an extensive epidemic prevailed in Columbia at the time. An epidemic of influenza occurred in December, in which there developed 337 cases. Fortunately the disease was mild and only a few cases developed pneumonia.

The death rate for the total number under treatment was 8.6%, one of the lowest death rates the hospital has had for years.