Poor House System.

upon conviction of petty crimes, to make the length of confinement less, and direct the jailor to keep the offenders upon bread and water during the time of their imprisonment. The board would recommend in such cases that the prisoners be not sentenced to be kept longer than thirty days in any case, it may endanger the health of the convicts.

Resolved, That the jailer for the future, be directed not to % procure any thing more expensive for criminals than moccasins at fifty cents a pair, instead of shoes, nor procure any hats, and to purchase as little clothing as possible, and that of the poorest and least expensive kind."

• Previous to the adoption of the poor-house system, each town supported its own poor, and the records of the board show annual appropriations in many of the towns for that purpose, of from $50 to $800. In 1817, $50 was voted to build a town poor-house in Le Ray, • and in 1822 the supervisors recommended to the several towns to take into consideration at their next annual meetings the propriety of building a poor house and house of industry for the county, as advised by an act of March 3, 1820. In April, 1825, a meeting of the board was called, and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Hubbard, Hart and Stewart, was appointed to ascertain the most suitable site for erecting a poor house, and the price for which a farm could be purchased, within five miles of the Court House. The cost of buildings was limited to $2000. They were directed to advertise for proposals for purchasing a farm, if they should think proper. On the 7th of June an adjourned meeting of the supervisors met to hear the above report. After visiting the premises in a body, it was re- solved to purchase the Dudley Farm in Le Ray, five miles from Watertown, containing 150 acres, at $10 per acre. Committees were appointed to procure titles, and to fit up the premises, which continued to be occupied for that purpose until Nov. 1832, when the supervisors voted a petition for the power to sell the property and borrow $4000 on the credit of the county, for building a new one on a new site, if the interests of the county required it. They procured an act, January 25, 1833, granting this power, and providing for the execution of this trust, by three commissioners to be appointed by the supervisors. At their following session, the board, after much discussion, finally agreed to erect a new poor house, on a farm of 100 acres, purchased of J. Foster, for $1500, about a mile below Watertown, north of the river, and Orville Hungerford, Joseph Graves, and Bernard Bagley, were appointed to carry the resolution into effect.

The distinction between town and county poor was abolished by a vote of the supervisors in November, 1834, and this has been since several times changed. In 1832, the experiment of