

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

FOR THE PROVINCE OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

BY THE SUPERINTENDENT



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1919.

*To His Honour Sir FRANK STILLMAN BARNARD, K.C.M.G.,
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

The undersigned has the honour to submit herewith the Fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Provincial Home for Girls.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. W. DE B. FARRIS,

Attorney-General.

Attorney-General's Department,

Victoria, B.C., March, 1919.

PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

SUPERINTENDENT'S FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT.

VANCOUVER, B.C., November 30th, 1918.

Honourable J. W. de B. Farris,
Attorney-General, Victoria, B.C.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit to you and the Honourable Members of the Legislature the Fifth Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial School for Girls, from January 1st to November 30th, 1918.

The present incumbent assumed the duties of Superintendent on January 1st, 1918. Since no two persons work alike, it was deemed best to make a complete change of policy rather than attempt to revise the old system. This will explain the changes noted below.

The policy pursued is to have the girls realize that this is not so much a place of punishment, but rather that here they are given another chance to make good. Believing that girls would prefer to be good girls and to be held in esteem by good people, no effort has been spared to achieve this purpose. The prison style of wearing the hair was abolished the very first day. Bright ribbons and pretty modes of hairdressing are encouraged. The unbecoming uniform has been replaced by one more girlish and pleasing.

A system of honour stripes has been adopted. For being on the honour roll for three months a girl is entitled to one stripe. Four stripes may thus be earned. A further period of three honour months will earn a different style of dress known as the honour or trusty uniform. An additional period of three honour months gives the right to wear a white collar on the trusty uniform.

As far as possible the honour system has been introduced. The transition here to the honour system had the customary results experienced in other institutions making the change—namely, an increased number of runaways. The new liberty had much the same effect as that of emancipation upon the negroes of the South, whose first act of freedom was to run away.

Instead of meals being eaten in silence under rigid surveillance, conversation in moderate tones is permitted under staff supervision. After repeated changes in the personnel a staff has been engaged who are not only efficient, but whose manners, temperament, and high ideals make them examples worthy of emulation. A harmonious home atmosphere has been effected.

Sufficient time has not elapsed to test the results of the honour system upon the released inmates. So far as conduct in the school is concerned, the girls have a kindlier attitude towards the staff, whom they regard as friends rather than custodians. Their attitude towards each other is gentler, more refined, and more moral. They work more cheerfully and take pride in doing it well.

System of Marks.—In adopting a new system of marking, it was deemed best to emphasize desirable features in character-building, and the following plan has been adopted:—

	MARKS.
Honesty, including honesty of purpose	1
Punctuality	1
Orderliness	1
Courtesy	1
Spirit towards work and institution generally	1
Effort	1
Good influence	5
Efficiency	5

Four marks are allowed to the Superintendent to correct any overindulgence or severity on the part of the staff. For one week's good conduct one day of time is remitted. For one month's good conduct one day additional is remitted.

A group of Vancouver women interested in the welfare of the institution have presented a handsome Victrola. A number of friends have contributed records that are an endless source of enjoyment.

To the Vancouver Woman's Musical Club the school is indebted for the gift of a very fine piano. Individual members of the same club are giving lessons to the girls in both piano and voice.

Under the auspices of the University Woman's Club there was conducted a Little Mothers' League, at which were given a series of talks on "The Care of the Baby." These were illustrated by using a life-size baby doll, a complete layette, baby bed, and food equipment. The lectures were given by Miss Cole, of the Victorian Order of Nurses; Miss Breeze, Head Nurse for Vancouver City Schools; and Miss Waterman, Superintendent of Infants' Hospital.

Visitors.—During the year there were many visitors to learn of the working of the institution. Among these were the Honourable the Attorney-General, J. W. de B. Farris; the Honourable the Minister of Lands, T. D. Pattullo; Mrs. Ralph Smith, M.L.A.; Rev. F. A. Robinson, M.A., Toronto, Secretary of Evangelism for the Presbyterian Church of Canada; Rev. A. M. MacDonald, Edmonton, Superintendent of Neglected Children for Alberta; and the well-known author, Mrs. Nellie McClung, Edmonton. The latter gave a most inspiring talk to the girls, by whom it was very much enjoyed.

All the girls are given training in the countless details of housework, including cleaning, washing, ironing, cooking, bread-making, care of and waiting upon the table, and the mending and making of clothing. All this is on an institutional scale. When a course in Domestic Science is established it is hoped that the girls will be trained that they can assume full charge of the domestic work in the best houses.

In the school-room the half-day system is followed. The sessions have been lengthened to three hours instead of two hours and a half. Special training is given in drill and sight-singing in music. Excellent progress is being made under a painstaking teacher.

A Commercial Course has been established, covering instruction in stenography and type-writing. No one is permitted to take up the Commercial Course without having an academic standing equal to Entrance-work in the public school. By the end of the year five girls will be fitted to fill positions as stenographers, while one other has already gone out to complete her course in a city business college. Economic independence will do much towards sustaining a girl's moral reclamation.

During the early summer the men from Oakalla Prison Farm cleared an acre of ground. Part was completed in time to plant with potatoes that yielded at the rate of 7 tons to the acre. The remainder of the clearing was given over to our five "Victory" pigs, maintained at small outlay and valuable not only as food, but for rooting and fertilizing the raw land.

From the clearing there was salvaged some 65 cords of wood and about 1,000 lineal feet of cedar posts, ample compensation for the expenditure involved.

A number of minor improvements were made in the building, rendering it more secure and convenient. The former tile roof was used to pave the driveway. A dormitory that lacked dressing and lavatory facilities was converted into two staff bedrooms and staff sitting-room. Two other dormitories were provided with inspection windows between staff bedrooms and dormitory. Two rooms in the staff quarters were converted into secure and sanitary cell chambers by using cages from the Oakalla Prison Farm, thus replacing the unlighted, unventilated, and insanitary "black hole" formerly in use.

Commodious linen, medicine, and school-room cupboards were built on the dormitory floor. Electric bells now connect the dormitories with the staff rooms, enabling the girls to communicate with staff in case of illness or emergency instead of shaking the doors and waking the whole house.

The drying-room in the laundry has recently been made available for drying purposes for the first time in the history of the institution. Clothes-boilers have been built in that greatly facilitate the work on washing-days.

Instead of using the septic tank the sewer has been connected with the city sewage system.

All these changes kept a number of workmen busy on the premises for many weeks. This very much restricted the outdoor occupations of the girls, and the unusual noises and activities are largely responsible for the difficulties in discipline in the early summer.

Early in the year Dr. Mary Campbell made a careful examination of each girl. As a result about 50 per cent. of them were given specific treatment for venereal infection. The number is now greatly reduced. Each new arrival is segregated in the hospital until the doctor has pronounced her free from contagion. She is then given sleeping-quarters in the dormitory.

The general health of the girls has been carefully looked after by the matron, who is a trained nurse. One inmate, a chronic invalid, required constant care for six months. Ever since her discharge from here she has been a patient at the Vancouver General Hospital. During the recent epidemic there were but two mild cases of influenza. Our immunity is due to scrupulous cleanliness, plain, wholesome diet, regular hours, daily fumigation, and unceasing vigilance.

The reports of the schools most successful with delinquents show that the psychological tests are used as a scientific basis for reform-work. The inability to resist temptation owing to subnormal mentality is the cause of most failures in the work of moral reclamation.

This institution was fortunate to secure the services of the psychological clinician on the staff of the Vancouver public schools. The psychological report of Miss Martha Lindley shows a large percentage of subnormals in this school. It is worthy of serious thought and points to the very urgent need of providing constant custodial care for many of the inmates, so that society may be relieved of a serious menace and a perpetuation of feeble-mindedness.

The year's experience has shown that provision ought to be made for the separate accommodation of the persistently incorrigible and vicious, who are a constant disturbance to the well-being of the institution, and who very much lessen the chance of reform among the more promising ones. This will obviate the necessity of using a wing in the Oakalla Prison Farm for the older and more vicious girls who are committed here from the Police Court.

Number of Inmates received.—The roll of the institution on January 1st showed thirty-nine inmates. During the year twenty new girls were received, making a total of ninety admitted since the opening of the building on April 3rd, 1914. Of these, thirty-six are still inmates of the institution.

Released on Probation or discharged.—During the year we have released on probation or discharged twenty-three girls. Of these, eight were returned to the custody of the parents; seven who had not suitable homes with relatives were placed in good positions at a proper rate of wages; two were placed on probation to the Vancouver City Mission; two were given into the custody of the Indian Department; one was made a ward of the Catholic Children's Aid; one was apprenticed to the monastery; one was transferred to the Salvation Army Maternity Home; one was released by an order from the County Court.

Countries where born.—Of the thirty-six girls now in the school, twenty-five were born in Canada, four in the United States, four in England, and three in Scotland.

Nationality.—Thirteen are of Canadian descent, ten of English, five of Scotch, three of half-caste Indian, two of Indian, two of American, and one of Irish.

Length of Sentence.—Five are given two years; thirty-one have been given indefinite sentences of not less than two years.

Age at Commitment.—At eleven years, 1; twelve years, 1; thirteen years, 2; fourteen years, 6; fifteen years, 8; sixteen years, 11; seventeen years, 7.

Offences committed.—Incorrigibility, 26; theft, 5; keeping house of ill-fame, 2; vagrancy, 1; arson, 1; forgery, 1.

Escapes.—During the year there have been twenty-two escapes. All were soon recaptured, some within half an hour after their exit. There are many causes for these runaways; chief among them are lack of active employment, lack of physical exercise, the exposed and public situation of the institution, and the subnormal mentality of over 50 per cent. of the girls that makes them the victims of unwise leadership.

The insecurity of the building has been largely corrected, making a contemplated exit somewhat more difficult and discipline by segregation a possibility.

More outdoor work is a paramount necessity. It provides wholesome exercise, can be made instructive in the knowledge of growing things, turns into useful channels all surplus energy, and is conducive to moral conduct. Hence the urgent desire that the area of tillable land be extended by clearing the entire acreage around the building.

A substantial fence should enclose the cleared portion of land. This will also obstruct the view of ill-disposed passers-by and prevent the present almost nightly visits from prowlers around the building. Some sort of covered structure should be provided for exercise in rainy weather.

The ideal aimed at is to give the girls as great a share in outdoor work and games as in housework. To inculcate a love for animal pets and for all growing things, to create a love for

a wholesome outdoor life and simple pleasures, will go far to effect a girl's moral reclamation. Besides this, the labour of the girls will greatly assist in making the place self-supporting.

In conclusion, I would respectfully suggest that a copy of the evidence or a history of the facts of the case be furnished with a girl's commitment papers. The officers accompanying the girls very often do not know their charge's history. The girl herself seldom reports it correctly, so that the Superintendent is at a disadvantage in not knowing the girl's true story, and the work of reformation is hampered.

The following is the present staff of officials:—

Superintendent—Margaret W. Bayne.

Matron—Mary B. Menzies.

First Assistant—Laura Jewell.

Second Assistant—May Mitchell.

Laundrywoman—Jennie F. Ham.

Needlewoman—Barbara Sample.

Cook—Grace Grant.

Teacher—Janet A. G. Mill.

Commercial Teacher—Annie Edgell Sprott.

Gardener—F. W. Cameron.

Engineer—J. R. Clark.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

MARGARET W. BAYNE,
Superintendent.

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