

# PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

---

## SUPERINTENDENT'S SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

---

*Hon. W. J. Bowser,*  
*Attorney-General, Victoria, B.C.*

SIR,—I have the honour to submit to you and the Honourable Members of the Legislature the Seventh Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial School of British Columbia, from 1st December, 1910, till 30th November, 1911.

During the year thirty-five boys have been admitted, making a total of 169 since the institution was opened, February 1st, 1905. Twenty-five have left during the year, thirteen were liberated on termination of sentence, nine were pardoned or paroled for good conduct, one boy was transferred to gaol for safe-keeping, and two left without leave and made their escape to the United States. During the year five boys made their escape from the school and were successful in getting across the line, but the United States immigration officers having been notified were on the look-out for them, and arrested three of them and handed them over to the Provincial police.

*Countries where born.*—Of the fifty-three boys now in the school, twenty-nine were born in Canada (one being an Indian and three others quarter-breeds), nine in the United States, nine in England, four in Scotland, and two in Italy.

*Length of Sentences.*—Sentences range as follows: Five years, 4; four years, 2; three years and a half, 1; three years, 10; two years, 17; indefinite, but not less than two years, 7; 12 indeterminate, until released by Juvenile Court.

*Ages.*—Eleven years, 2; twelve years, 5; thirteen years, 9; fourteen years, 9; fifteen years, 7; sixteen years, 15; seventeen years, 6.

*Crimes committed.*—Incorrigible, 10; theft, 23; housebreaking, 11; forgery, 1; wounding, 1; obtaining goods under false pretences, 1; receiving stolen goods, 2; placing dynamite on railway track, 1; vagrancy, 3.

With regard to the indeterminate sentence, we think it should have a qualification, and that clause 11 of the "Industrial School Act" should be strictly adhered to, which provides that no boy shall be recommended for a remission of sentence until after being one year in the school.

It is impossible to size up a boy and do him any permanent benefit in a few weeks or months, and especially during the past year has our work been made doubly difficult by kind, but mistaken, friends of the boys who have been thus sentenced, who have kept up a constant agitation for their release almost from the first week they entered the school, assuring them that it would only be a week or two until they would be free; and some of these same boys are not angels, and have been very difficult to manage, made all the more so by being kept in such an unsettled state. Officials trying to advise some of these boys have been met with the remark: "Oh, what is the odds? Sure, I will only be here a week or two, anyway." Better



far that these boys should understand from the day they enter the school that they must give proof of genuine reformation, and that for a reasonable length of time, and by so doing earn their discharge.

The year just closed, although a most strenuous one, has, we believe, been fruitful of good results. Our work, which in the past has been difficult enough, is becoming still more strenuous each year. The splendid work of the Juvenile Court and Detention Home, let me say from personal knowledge, has proved to be a life-saving station in the City of Vancouver. Since the "Juvenile Delinquents Act" went into operation in this City and Province many boys who would otherwise have been sentenced to the Industrial School have instead been placed on probation, and as a result of the wise counsel given them by the Judge and the officers of the Detention Home have been led to see the error of their ways, and have been saved altogether from commitment, which is surely a matter for thankfulness; but, as a natural consequence, a more difficult class to handle now comes to us, as it is after the home, the school, the Church, suspended sentence, and probation have all failed that the boy reaches the Industrial School, as it were, in the last stages of juvenile crime; and to take hold of such boys with criminal tendencies, who by consorting with vicious companions have formed many bad habits, and in the course of a year or two to give such a boy a better conception of life, teach him obedience to law and order, build him up mentally, physically, and morally, then return him to his home, and unfortunately usually to old companions and old temptations, and still expect such a boy to remain a good and useful member of society, is a big proposition; but we hope that our work in this direction has not been altogether in vain, as I am pleased to report that the great majority of the 116 boys who have left the school are conducting themselves in a satisfactory manner. At the same time, the comparatively short period that boys usually remain in the school is too short to accomplish permanent results in education, industrial training, and character-building. The results of my experience during the past seven years would lead me to emphasize the fact that the sentence for an indefinite term, but not less than two years, has been found to be the most satisfactory and most beneficial for the boy. I have had small boys in the school with a definite sentence of two years who at the end of their term had no home to go to. It would have been the salvation of such boys if we could have kept them long enough in the school to give them a fairly good education and taught them a trade sufficiently, and thus equipped them to go out and earn an honest and respectable livelihood. I have some such boys in the school at present, and what to do with them when their sentences expire is a puzzle.

While the general health of the boys has been excellent and the school has been free from any epidemics, yet we have had several very serious cases of sickness, which were a cause of much anxiety, and required very careful nursing.

The Indian boy "Augustine" was a heavy charge, having his death upon him when he entered the school. The loathsome disease on his knee and finger required daily attention, also he was subject to epileptic fits. Everything was done for him that kindness and medical skill could do, and when Dr. McPhillips stated that there was no possibility of his recovering, but that in a few months he would pass away, I thought it wise to lay the matter before the Honourable the Attorney-General, who corresponded with the Honourable the Minister of Justice, with the result that he was liberated and given back to his own people, where he died a few months after leaving the school. We parted with little Augustine with regret. Although not able to speak a word of English when he came to the school, he was able to converse quite fluently when he left. He was a general favourite with the officials and every boy was at his service. When leaving, he said, in his childish way, "Mishey Donelson, after I go home and see my fader I want to come back and live with you all the time." He was a



---

devout Roman Catholic and exceedingly conscientious in regard to his religious duties, and I have no doubt but that he is now safe with Him who said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me."

Another very serious case was a boy with an abscess on the brain. He was operated on by Dr. McPhillips and Dr. Boucher, Bar Specialist. For many weeks he lay between life and death, with special night and day nurses attending him. He was affected on one side all the way from the ear to the great toe, having at one time no less than twenty-four open wounds. It looked as if there was no possibility of his recovering, but, under Providence, medical skill and careful nursing brought him through, and only a few days since I had a letter from him telling me how well he was getting along.

Also during the summer we had two cases of typhoid, which necessitated having a trained nurse for several weeks. Fearing that there might be some impurity in the water-supply, I had a specialist, Dr. McKee, visit the reservoir, but after testing the water he pronounced it absolutely pure. We then turned our attention to the sewer, and I have no doubt but that was the cause of our trouble, and made me conclude that if your present Superintendent is in office when any other sewers are put down he will be on the spot to watch that part of the work very closely.

During the year we installed two Ajax hand fire-engines, which have already proved a good investment. One of our chimneys on the main building took fire some months ago, and the red coals falling on the roof caused some woodwork to take fire. Our Boys' Fire Brigade ran out the chemical and in a few minutes all danger was past. It was anticipating some such occurrence that led me to recommend their purchase, knowing that the force from the reservoir was not sufficient to throw the water to the roof of the building.

We strive to make the institution a home and a school. From the time the boys get up in the morning, at 6.15 o'clock winter and summer, until they retire at night they are actively employed in some way either at school, at work, or taking healthful recreation in the way of athletic and physical exercises in the gymnasium, or amusing themselves at football, baseball, or some other popular pastime. At night the boys retire at 8 o'clock in winter and 8.30 in summer. They are nearly all fond of reading, and during the winter months the lights are kept burning for one hour to enable them to read in bed. Very often the Superintendent looks in on them without their knowledge, and it is quite an interesting sight to see from twenty-five to thirty boys in each dormitory giving their whole attention to the book or magazine that each boy is reading; or probably a very interesting and exciting story appears in *Chums*, *The Boys' Own Paper*, *Tip Tops*, or one of the monthly magazines; the best reader in the room is chosen to read it aloud, and the thirty boys are as still as mice and listening intently. Sometimes a boy who has read a book through will undertake to give a synopsis of the contents to the others. In the case of two of the boys I have been amazed in listening to them. One would almost think they had memorized the story. I consider this a well-spent hour.

The drill and physical exercises which the boys have in the gymnasium each day under a competent instructor are bound to play an important part in their development from boyhood into young manhood. Every boy is enrolled in school and spends nearly three hours each day in the regular public-school studies; one-half of the boys go in the forenoon and the other half in the afternoon. A lady teacher, Mrs. Brentnall, is in charge, and the work done in the school-room during the past year has been of a most satisfactory character. It is astonishing how boys who have been habitual truants apply themselves to school duties when they find that it is imperative for them to attend regularly. Some of the boys have had their



education sadly neglected ; three are in the First Primer class, four in the Second Primer, nine in the First Reader, nine in the Second Reader, fifteen in the Third Reader, and thirteen in the Fourth Reader.

The tailoring and shoemaking departments are under capable management, and the work turned out in both workshops has been very satisfactory ; a goodly number of the boys have made good progress in these branches.

In the carpenters' shop there has been a great deal of necessary work done during the year. Besides keeping the buildings in good repair, manufacturing wheelbarrows, tables, benches, etc., a number of the larger boys with the instructor built an up-to-date chicken-house, 30 by 10 feet, a double-decker, after the plan of those in use at the Experimental Farm, Ottawa. In fact, some of the boys are becoming very expert in the handling of tools. A large book-case in the Superintendent's office, which was greatly admired by the members of the Grand Jury when they visited the school recently, was built altogether by one of the senior boys. Another boy is building a library case to hold about 600 volumes, which we hope the Government will authorize us to purchase as a helpful pastime for the boys.

Ever since the school was opened we have had considerable trouble with our main sewer, and when typhoid made its appearance I decided to take up that part of it leading from the main building to the septic tank, nearly 200 feet. The excavating being from 12 to 15 feet deep, it meant quite a deal of hard work for the boys, but the practical experience received by the half-dozen boys who did the work, and did it well, will be very useful to them later on. We found the old sewer in bad shape, and so crooked and with so many sharp turns that it was impossible for it to work satisfactorily. I considered it wiser to open up and lay a new sewer, which we did, also building six large brick manholes, one every 30 feet, so that should a block occur again we can easily locate and rectify the trouble.

Farm and garden operations have been successfully carried on during the year by the farm instructor and the larger boys. As a result, we harvested 11 tons of potatoes, 8 tons of turnips, 6 tons of mangolds, 4 tons of parsnips, 2 tons of carrots, 6 tons of corn for feed, 6 crates of tomatoes, 5 crates of pumpkin and squash, 10 crates of strawberries, 800 heads of cabbage ; also all kinds of vegetables for use in season.

About 100 cords of firewood for heating the buildings were cut, split, and hauled from the bush.

In order to protect our roots and vegetables for the winter, we built a combination root-house and wagon and implement shed, 56 by 24 feet. This has been constructed of logs brought from the bush. Three sides of the root-house are practically underground. The house is covered with shakes and clap-boards, the rafters and beams are of poles ; therefore the material used has cost almost *nil*, and the labour was all done by the boys and the farm instructor.

During most of the year the boys have had a bountiful supply of fresh milk and also butter-milk. At present we have six cows, two heifers, one calf, seventy-five chickens, twelve pigs, and two horses, which, besides driving, do all the ploughing and farm work.

Our latest move is the formation in a modest way of a School Band, confining ourselves for a time to flutes ; almost every evening in the week about twenty boys, led by the carpenter instructor, practise for an hour, to the delight (or otherwise) of the inmates of the school. As an evidence of the familiar saying that "Music hath charms," one of the boys of the school, writing to his mother last week, said : "Mother, you said in your letter that you would see Judge Shaw and try and get me out, but you needn't mind, for we are getting up a band and I am one of the players."



The Superintendent is greatly indebted to the many friends who have helped him during the year, and by donations of reading-matter, games, fruit, candies, preserves, etc., made the world brighter for the boys than it would otherwise have been. At Christmas, Mr. J. C. Donald, the well-known broker, on behalf of himself and friends, sent the Superintendent a cheque for \$100 to be used for the boys' benefit and enjoyment; also Mr. J. S. Rankin and the members of the Vancouver Stock Exchange, and Mr. Torrey, spent another \$100 giving each boy a watch and chain, cricket and baseball sets, also subscribing for a number of publications, both weekly and monthly; while Mr. F. C. Wade never allows a Christmas to go by without sending his cheque, as does the Honourable the Attorney-General.

Principal Sparling gave his illustrated lecture on the Yellowstone Park, which was a great treat for the boys, and the Caple Bros. entertained them with a magic-lantern exhibition. The McLean Pipers Band, the Salvation Army Band, Mr. Geo. P. Hicks and his orchestra, Miss Macken and the young ladies of the Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church, and the Superintendent and scholars of St. Mark's Sunday School, all provided entertainments during the winter months, to the great delight of the boys. I am also greatly indebted to the pastors of the Sixth Avenue Methodist, the Kitsilano Presbyterian, St. Mark's (Anglican), Baptist, and Roman Catholic Churches for the hearty welcome always accorded the boys on Sunday mornings, when attending these various churches. Also to Major Phillips and staff of the Salvation Army, Mr. E. W. Leeson, Mrs. Macken, Mrs. Aiken, and Miss Trainery, for attending so faithfully and conducting services in the school each Sunday afternoon. Also for most interesting and instructive addresses given the boys by Chief Justice Howell, of Manitoba, Rev. Aubrey N. St. John Mildmay, M.A., Mr. John J. Banfield, foreman of the Grand Jury; Commissioners Rees and Lieut.-Colonel Pugmire, of Toronto.

Besides aiming to help the boys physically, mentally, and religiously, we do not forget the patriotic. We encourage them to be proud that they are young Canadians, and instil into them love and loyalty for the old flag and British institutions, and with that object in view I had them take part in the big parade on Coronation Day.

The following are the names of the present staff of officers:—

D. Donaldson—Superintendent.  
Mrs. C. Donaldson—Matron and Housekeeper.  
E. L. Woodruff—Farm Instructor.  
Wm. Forsyth—Tailor and First Assistant.  
Thomas Calbick—Second Assistant.  
Alexander McLean—Shoemaker and Third Assistant.  
C. Ogilvie—Carpenter and Fourth Assistant.  
S. Stevens—Cook and Baker.  
A. M. Evans—Nightwatchman.  
Mrs. Bretnall—School-teacher.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

D. DONALDSON,  
*Superintendent.*

*November 30th, 1911.*

---

VICTORIA, B.C.:

Printed by WILLIAM H. CULLIN, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

1912.