

Catholic priests paid 202 visits, while the Protestant ministers only made thirty-seven visits. In 1877 the Rev. Mr. Davis, then a student of theology, commenced his visits, and about the same time other Protestant clergymen began to pay regular weekly visits, taking it each in turn. Mr. Davis, however, at this time declined to have his name placed on the same list as the others, and for a time, to suit Mr. Davis's wishes, he was accommodated separately on the same day of the week as the others. This proving to interfere with the routine of the school, the master appointed Saturday evening for Mr. Davis to attend, and this course was continued up to October, 1879, when the Thursday was again reverted to, as the master wished the Saturday evening in summer to be devoted to the recreation of the children. In April last Mr. Davis seems to have become sick, and unable to attend the institution for some considerable time. On resuming his visits to the institution the master informed him that it was now necessary that he should take his turn with the other Protestant clergymen, as he could not be accommodated with a separate room, as now only the two schoolrooms were at the disposal of the clergy on Thursday. The one was occupied by the Roman Catholic priest and the other by the Protestant clergymen, including two of the Church of England, in their turns. Mr. Davis again refused to take his turn, and discontinued his visits. It came out in the course of our inquiry that the master had seen fit to call Mr. Davis's attention to some remarks that he (Mr. Davis) had made to the children on denominationalism, which the master considered injudicious. Under the circumstances it is quite possible that the master may have allowed this to influence him a little in not being over-anxious to provide Mr. Davis with separate accommodation, although we are satisfied that, with the accommodation at his disposal, it would be impossible, without disorganization, to afford ministers of every denomination separate apartments, or to do more in that direction than is done at present—namely, giving up the two schoolrooms on Thursday, one to the Roman Catholic priest and the other to a Protestant clergyman.

The Rev. Mr. Davis contends that, inasmuch as, upon the committal of the child to the institution, it forms part of the Magistrate's order that the child should be brought up in a certain faith, it would be impossible satisfactorily to teach the tenets of the Church of England without having a separate room. By "The Neglected and Criminal Children Act, 1867," section 17, it would appear that the Magistrate, when committing a child to the institution, is compelled even to state the denomination to which, in his opinion, the child belongs; and the Government make no provision for carrying out the terms of it, but depend on the voluntary services of ministers of all denominations. Bearing in mind this clause, and the fact of no provision being made, we are of opinion that the only course open to adopt with regard to the religious instruction of the children, with a view of interfering as little as possible with their secular education, and seeing that the children in the institution may be said to be divided into three classes—Roman Catholics, Church of England, and Presbyterians—the latter embracing all other Protestant children, would be to set apart one hour in one day of the week for a minister of each of those denominations to attend and give religious instruction to their children respectively. The master ought, therefore, to be directed to make arrangements accordingly. On this subject we would desire to state our views. We deem it very desirable that the Act should be amended in the direction of either abolishing clause 17 altogether, or only recognizing two classes—Roman Catholics and Protestants—in connection with the persuasion, creed, or denomination to which the children are supposed to belong. If this were done it would become comparatively a simple matter to provide for the religious instruction of the children, which could be carried out in a similar way to the system adopted in gaols and many kindred institutions—namely, by a Protestant chaplain and a Roman Catholic priest. The division into two classes suggested by us is, we think, a far preferable course than that at present prevailing, of the Magistrate, in almost every case, having in an arbitrary way to say to what denomination a child belongs, the parents being of no religion.

Generally, we would express our great satisfaction with the management of the institution, and the suitability and zeal of the master and matron. The buildings are, however, for the most part only of a very temporary order, and afford only scant accommodation for the number of children at present in the institution. We would specially bring under your notice a statement of the master to the effect that if the Government would set apart 250 acres of really good land to be farmed by the inmates of the institution, that he (the master) was confident that the institution would require no further pecuniary aid from the State. This idea we consider thoroughly practicable, and, if a piece of good land could be found in a convenient situation, we would recommend the suggestion being carried into effect.

We have, &c.,

A. CHETHAM STRODE.

W. MAURICE SIMPSON.

The Hon. the Minister of Education, Wellington.

NOTES of Inquiry made at the Industrial School, Caversham, on 6th August, 1880.

Elijah Titchener, master of the Industrial School, states that all the children whose names appear in the return of the children licensed-out laid upon the table of the Legislative Council, with the exception of the first six, were licensed-out by me as master, under warrants. The first warrant, that of Alice L—, purports to be issued by His Honor the Superintendent of the Province of Otago; but I observe now it is not signed. I received the warrant from the then Provincial Solicitor through the post, and until now I did not observe that it was unsigned. The warrants in the case of Elizabeth W—, No. 8, and Charles D—, No. 9, are signed respectively by the Deputy-Superintendent and the Superintendent of the Province of Otago. No. 10, the warrant for Morris A—, is signed by Mr. George McLean, Executive Officer for Otago. No. 22, the warrant in William P—'s case, is signed by the Superintendent of Otago, as likewise from No. 1 to No. 6 inclusive. The warrants for 21, 26, 34, 40, 43, 52, 99, and 100 I am unable to produce, although I am satisfied that in every case of a child being licensed-out the necessary warrant was made out by me and sent to Wellington for the necessary signature. All the warrants for the other children named in the list are signed by the Governor of the colony, and are now produced. I have never in any one instance taken upon myself