

On the occasions of my inspection of the school at Kohimarama I have found the buildings clean and tidy, and the boys generally as healthy in appearance as one could reasonably expect considering the previous history of most of them. The supply of water is now good, and the culinary appliances are much improved.

The site of the school is in some respects very suitable, but the buildings are not altogether desirable. In the event of a new lease being obtained I trust that many improvements will be made. At the time of my last quarterly inspection on the 30th March there were sixty boys on the list, of whom nine were away fishing; it was between 4 and 5 in the afternoon, and therefore during playtime. There are one or two boys at this school who are of weak intellect, and therefore would be better placed at an asylum for idiots than among the ordinary class of boys at an industrial school. I think it would also be desirable that boys of decidedly criminal habits should be sent to a reformatory, and not be allowed to live together with children who have been left to the care of the State because of the death or misfortune of their parents.

The home in Kent Street (known as Walmsley House), under the charge of Miss Jackson, is always in thorough order, and seems completely to answer the purpose for which it is maintained, namely, as a receiving-house for girls and young children for the time that may elapse from their committal until suitable homes can be found for them. Nothing can exceed the care and attention of the matron.

The boarding-out of the children has I think been attended with great success. As far as my observation enables me to judge, the children are well cared for, happy, and thriving. In cases where sickness has occurred I have no reason to complain of the nursing. In one case of severe illness I considered it desirable to have the little girl removed for a short time to Kent Street, and I have no doubt that the change accelerated her recovery.

I have, &c.,

A. G. PURCHAS, M.R.C.S. Eng.

The Secretary, Education Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Dr. PRINS'S REPORT ON BURNHAM SCHOOL.

SIR,—

Christchurch, May, 1886.

I have the honour to forward the following report on the industrial school at Burnham for the year ending the 30th April, 1886.

The number admitted from the 1st May, 1885, to the 30th April, 1886, was—boys, 71; girls 34. The number discharged was—boys, 35; girls, 20. One boy died in the Christchurch Hospital.

The institution has during the year been kept in a very clean and orderly condition, and the master has displayed a thorough knowledge of the duties required of him.

The health of the inmates has been generally good. I append a return of those treated in the Christchurch Hospital.

Since my last report the necessary additions and alterations to the buildings have been completed. A more complete and plentiful water-supply has also been provided. These improvements have added materially to the comfort of the inmates. For the purpose of guarding against the risk of fire a small manual fire-engine has been purchased.

The matron has been at considerable pains to make the different rooms as homely and comfortable as possible. The windows have been curtained, and the walls have been brightened by the addition of a number of fresh pictures. The matron has established an evening class for girls. The time is pleasantly and usefully spent in conversation and in examining and explaining the illustrated papers.

Those children who have been boarded-out with foster-parents have also been free from any serious illness. With reference to the boarding-out system I desire to remark that the more I see of it the more I feel convinced of its advantages. I have invariably advocated the boarding-out principle; and I feel myself justified, seeing how admirably it has worked up to the present, in strongly urging the authorities the importance of extending the system.

I am pleased to state that the master is endeavouring, by procuring an instructor, to bring the band into a state of efficiency again.

In conclusion, I can confidently bear testimony to the efficient manner in which the master, matron, and their assistants have fulfilled the duties intrusted to them. They are certainly to be commended for the very great pains they take to render the inmates comfortable and happy, and at the same time to cause them to conform strictly to the rules of the institution.

I have, &c.,

H. H. PRINS, M.R.C.S. Eng.

The Minister of Education, Wellington.