

connection with the Stoke School in exactly the same manner as those in connection with Government Industrial Schools.

73. One other question, Mr. Pope. Section 57 does not give the inmate any right to the earnings finally?—No; the account is "the earnings of"—

74. What is the practice of the Department in paying over part of the wages of the inmate?—The Manager of the school will apply to the Department on the required form for authority to withdraw a part of the inmate's earnings for special purposes. Say that the applicant has ceased to be an inmate, and that he may wish to establish himself in some business. He makes an application to the Manager, who is required to thoroughly investigate the application, and forward it to the Department with his recommendation. If the Department is satisfied that these earnings are going to be put to some use that will be to the permanent advantage of the inmate, authority is issued to the Manager to withdraw that amount from the Earnings Account, and to see that the money is to be applied to the purpose for which it is granted, and then handed over. When the Manager presents the application at the Post Office, the authorities there are required to see that it is countersigned by the Minister, or some one appointed by him, so that the Manager has no power whatever to touch a penny of the money without the authority of the Department.

75. *Mr. Wardell.*] Once he has paid it in he has no more control of it?—No.

76. The inmate has no right to it when he comes of age?—That is the department's reading of the section.

77. *Mr. Hogben.*] It may be paid over, when proper cause is shown, after the inmate is twenty-one?—It is sometimes done. It is not usual. It is not done unless the Department is satisfied that the person is a steady character. If he has taken a good place in society, or is well known, the Department has no hesitation whatever. If he applies to be allowed to take it out of the Bank and put it, say, into a bank account of his own, he would be allowed to do so. That is my experience of the decisions of the Department.

78. Are any deductions made?—The only case in which any portion is forfeited is when a former inmate has shown himself to be absolutely unworthy.

79. *Mr. Wardell.*] What is the proportion of such cases, do you think?—Not more than 3 per cent.

80. Then, I understand that these moneys do not absolutely belong to the inmate on discharge, or on reaching the age of twenty-one, but if the Minister is satisfied it should be done, it can be paid over either before or after the age of twenty-one?—Yes.

81. *Mr. Bush.*] You think that it is only in 3 per cent. of the cases that anything is forfeited?—I think 3 per cent. is high. I do not know of one case during the past year.

82. *Mr. Wardell.*] Have you any unclaimed balances?—Yes; there are many unclaimed amounts, some of them very small—1s., for instance. Everything else may have been paid out to the inmate.

83. *Mr. Hogben.*] In every case in which it is shown that the money would be used to the permanent advantage of the inmate it is paid over on application?—Yes. There are cases in which we retain the money on account of unworthy relatives, who would hang on to the inmate like wolves and help him to spend it.

84. *Mr. Wardell.*] What does the inmate himself get out of the earnings?—It varies according to the terms of the license, as provided by the second and third schedules of the license. [Schedules read.]

85. *Mr. Harley.*] I understand you, then, that the boys are not absolutely entitled to the money at the age of twenty-one?—That is according to section 57 of the Act. They are not absolutely entitled to it at all.

86. You say that perhaps 3 per cent. have money kept back altogether?—Yes. The amounts in such cases are paid into the Consolidated Fund, on account of the bad behaviour of the boys.

87. Is the age of twenty-one much exceeded before the boys receive their earnings, as a rule?—In the case of St. Mary's the payments are made, as a rule, under twenty-one.

88. Are many boys more than twenty-one before they are paid?—Yes; a great many.

89. What age do they go up to?—Thirty-five, perhaps; but not many so old as that. There are several twenty-five. It all depends when they apply for it. If they do not apply they do not get it.

90. Well, if they do apply?—The case is considered.

91. Do I understand that, owing to a want of dates, some of the earnings due to licensed-out inmates at Stoke could not be accurately determined?—Yes.

92. Is it the Department's reading, or is it clearly laid down in the Act, that the boys are not entitled to their money at the age of twenty-one?—The Department's reading is founded upon the opinion of the Solicitor-General.

93. *Mr. Fell.*] In fact, the matter is not one in which Dean Mahoney has any power one way or the other?—He has no power to touch a penny.

94. *Mr. Hogben.*] The boys kept at the schools by the State cost, in reality, a great deal more than their earnings?—Yes; and the Government, therefore, would be quite justified, if they chose, in making a deduction from the earnings on a basis of equity.

WILLIAM MOORE, examined on oath.

95. *Mr. Harley.*] How old are you?—Fifteen years and four months.

96. You are an Orphanage boy, and are at Dr. Mackie's now?—Yes; I went to Dr. Mackie's about three weeks ago.

97. *Mr. Wardell.*] You are licensed out at service?—Yes.

98. *Mr. Harley.*] Is this the first time you have been out of the Orphanage?—Yes.

99. Do you remember smoking in the dormitory?—Yes; about a month or two ago.

7—E. 3B.