

*Stoke Branch (Boys).*

[The school was reorganised from the 15th October, 1900, and it was thought expedient to allow an interval of time for the new staff to accommodate itself to the altered conditions before making another inspection.]

Unannounced visit paid by Mr. R. H. Pope, on the 22nd and 23rd January, 1901: The bedding was clean and in good condition. There are proper fire-escapes. No nightshirts are provided. The dormitory for boys who have urinary weakness was in good condition. The boys were suitably clad for summer-time. The underclothing is changed weekly after a warm bath. There are now six good baths, with hot and cold water; the lavatory arrangements are also satisfactory. The food is now properly prepared and is varied. There is a plentiful supply of milk, and a good vegetable-garden. A new range and hot-water apparatus have been fixed in the kitchen. The water-supply is good. The drains should be ventilated. The playground is in a most unsatisfactory condition. It consists merely of rough, bare clay. There is but little industrial training. Several boys learn milking, and there are one or two in the tailor's shop. The punishments are now of the mildest description. There are no cells at the institution. There are three domesticated women on the staff. Speaking generally, there is a great change for the better.

Visited by the Inspector-General, 30th April, 1901. A great improvement is visible in most respects, but there are still many things needing attention. Some of the bedding might have been cleaner, and the boys were not so tidy as one would desire to see them. The outhouses and the other old buildings in the yard should be replaced by healthier and more slightly erections; and the playground itself should be made more even—it would be better still if it were levelled; it should be asphalted or covered with gravel. In damp weather the clay adheres to the boys' boots and clothes, and is carried indoors, making everything dirty; the dust is almost as bad in dry weather. There should be definite industrial training provided for all boys. The master in charge seems anxious to make all the necessary improvements; but in all these institutions the official manager should live on the premises, and not relegate his authority or responsibility to any one else.

Visited by Mr. R. H. Pope, Assistant Inspector, 17th and 18th July (unannounced). The bedding in the "wet" dormitory was only fairly clean; other dormitories, very satisfactory. The blankets were clean; there were many new blankets and mattresses; the dormitories have been newly painted. The day-school was working satisfactorily. The outside of the main building was being repainted. A playground for the younger boys is being formed; the main playground is in the unsatisfactory state previously reported; asphaltting is needed at the back of the buildings. The outside closets were dirty, the water system not working properly. The drill was very fair; twenty-six of the elder boys had model rifles. There is no fire-drill. A good dinner was provided. The boys' underclothing was warm and good; all have flannel undershirts. The outer clothing was not so satisfactory; several were ragged, some had ill-fitting garments, the suits of some were dirty, some had no garters; there were hats of all kinds, some of them much the worse for wear. Nightshirts should be provided. The boots should be cleaned. Each boy now has clothing reserved for his own use. A large order for suits has been given. All boys were seen in the baths. Their appearance was a credit to the institution, as they were evidently remarkably healthy. The medical officer makes a monthly inspection. Discipline is maintained practically without corporal punishment; absconding is rare. There are now five women on the staff. The behaviour of the boys in the playground is not so uncouth as it was; there is better supervision, and altogether the tone of the school has much improved. The manager undertook to make the suggested improvements, and favoured the formation of a gymnasium. The brass band has made good progress. The wages accounts showed several sums outstanding from employers of boys at service; but unavoidable circumstances had interfered with the office-work, and, except for their not being up-to-date, the accounts seem to have been faithfully kept. Pressure of work in the Head Office did not allow a sufficiently long stay to be made for a complete audit on this occasion, but this is to take place before the end of this year. A comparison of the present state of the school with that shown in the report of the Inspector-General of Schools, made on a visit immediately prior to the setting-up of the Commission last year, will show that a marked change for the better has taken place. In a few months the school should be a credit to those concerned in the management of it.

*RECEIVING-HOME, CHRISTCHURCH (GIRLS AND YOUNG BOYS).*

Visited in November, 1900, by the Inspector-General of Schools.

On the 7th May, 1901, Mr. R. H. Pope, Assistant Inspector, visited the Home. He found it clean and in good order. There were in residence two little boys who were recently committed, and two elder girls waiting situations. The building is not quite satisfactory for the purpose, and the site is too small.

*TE ORANGA HOME (GIRLS' REFORMATORY).*

Visited by the Inspector-General of Schools on the 9th and 10th November, 1900. The means of controlling refractory girls are very limited, and the opportunities for absconding very great. It is necessary that additions to the buildings should be made immediately. The drainage is unsatisfactory. Mrs. Branting, the manager, is doing her best with the means at her disposal.

Visited by Mr. R. H. Pope, Assistant Inspector, on the 10th and 18th May, 1901. The school is neat and clean, and the inmates cheerful and healthy. The girls are regularly drilled in physical exercises. The system of monetary rewards for good conduct is working well. A gymnasium should be erected. The drainage outfall is very unsatisfactory.

*BURNHAM (BOYS' REFORMATORY).*

Mr. R. H. Pope, Assistant Inspector, visited this reformatory on the 8th May, and remained there till the 10th. He found the institution neat and clean, the bedding satisfactory, the food of sufficient quantity, of good quality, and well prepared. The industrial workshops for the training of the boys were being erected. Industrial training was being carried on in unsuitable buildings,