

Formal acknowledgment preferable. Manager's efforts *re* staff. Confinement to Burnham.

It would, of course, have been very much better, and would have saved a great deal of unpleasantness and misunderstanding, if Mr. Archey had promptly, on the receipt of the attendants' letter of the 17th March, formally acknowledged it. He did not, however, do so, and certain of the attendants took great offence at the omission; and this feeling was probably accentuated by the tone of the Manager's letter quoted above, which can scarcely be considered as of a conciliatory nature. It is only fair, however, to Mr. Archey to state that he had spoken to some of the attendants who had signed the original document, and discussed the position with them, and had given them to understand that he would send the matter on to Wellington, with certain recommendations. He evidently thought that this would be all that the attendants would expect of him at that stage, as they must know that the decision on all such matters must rest ultimately with the Department. However, the mischief was done, and the simmering discontent was intensified, and relations between the attendants and the Manager became very much more strained in consequence. The correspondence between the Manager and the Department proves conclusively that for a long time past Mr. Archey had been doing his best to get the position of the attendants improved in the matter of quarters, pay, hours of service, holidays, and general conditions. It is equally clear that, as the result of his persistent representations, many very important and valuable concessions had been granted, and these, too, not in any way as the result of agitation on the part of the attendants. And since this last misunderstanding—for such merely I consider it to have been—the conditions of service have been still further improved, until at the present time the great majority of the attendants profess themselves perfectly satisfied with their position, with the one exception of the demand for increased holidays. This demand, as I have already said, I consider reasonable, and almost an absolute necessity in the best interests of the institution. The lack of opportunity for the attendants to get to town, and so get lifted out of the dull daily routine, the tendency to become so imbued with the atmosphere of their narrow surroundings as to imagine that these constitute the one important feature of their lives, and the inevitable inducement to magnify insignificant troubles and difficulties, must always, I think, militate against the spirit of contentment amongst the attendants, unless their conditions are altered to the extent suggested.

Attendants generally satisfied. Manager's treatment of staff. Attendants' antagonism to one another. Need for remedy. Unity of aim.

Most of the attendants have expressed themselves as quite satisfied with their positions and with their treatment by the Manager and Matron. Even in those cases where discontent has been shown, and a tendency been exhibited to show up the management in the worst possible light, there has been very little evidence indeed of anything personal to Mr. and Mrs. Archey. The post of manager of a reformatory such as Burnham is one of very great difficulty, and it is almost inevitable that at times there should be little causes of friction arising between the staff and the Manager. Speaking generally, I believe that the Manager has been imbued with a desire to do the very best possible for his staff, to improve their positions, and to make them happy and comfortable, and so make them the better qualified to render efficient service to the institution under his control. When Mr. Archey was first appointed Manager in March, 1899, he was given absolute control over the appointment and dismissal of his staff. There is no evidence that he has ever abused this power. He must have felt at times that some members of the staff were not altogether loyal to him, and that things were happening which might seriously affect the discipline of the school, and that, on that ground alone, he might fairly effect certain changes; but still he held his hand—and I am not prepared to say quite wisely. It is very evident that, apart altogether from the relations between the staff and the Manager, a somewhat bitter feeling of antagonism and distrust has grown up between certain of the attendants towards themselves. It is impossible that this can be allowed to continue, for the effect of it is bound to react on the boys. And, in fact, there is evidence that this is now actually the case. Things must be put now on a different footing, and the Manager should adopt drastic measures to insure this being done. The interests of the inmates should be his first consideration. Many of the attendants show a very high appreciation of their duties and responsibilities, and are clearly capable of rendering very valuable services. The air has now been cleared, and all should work together with one common end in view—to carry out to the fullest extent the objects of the institution. It is perfectly useless to make a grievance of such minor matters as whether the male and female attendants should have their meals together, or as to whether certain punishments should be inflicted on certain boys. On matters such as these the judgment of the Manager must rule, and in neither instance can I see any just ground for criticising his action.

Unsatisfactory accommodation, &c.

A very real cause of complaint has existed among the members of the staff in the matter of insufficient and uncomfortable accommodation, and the absence of any means of recreation. All this may very easily be remedied when the scheme of rebuilding is entered upon, such as I believe is now a necessity.

RESULTS OF THE REFORMATORY.

Valuable departmental records.

It is, of course, very difficult to accurately state under this heading the details of the many cases which might fairly form the subject of remark and theory; but I have gone to very considerable trouble in tracing the after-life of a number of inmates of all classes and descriptions—those who became inmates from their own inherently vicious tendencies, and those who are victims of environment or heredity. A most complete and valuable record is kept by the Education Department of the history of every boy who passes through Burnham, where such can possibly be obtained.