

Modern invention has brought within reach an agency especially adapted to Borstal. Wireless affords a wide choice of entertainment at hours suitable to our purpose. The Visiting Committee generously undertook to provide, free of cost to the Department, a wireless outfit for the institution: we hope soon to be in possession of it. In the meantime, a loaned set has demonstrated that radio offers a very acceptable amenity.

The vital importance of religious influences among these youths is recognized, and services have been maintained regularly throughout the year. For this good work we are greatly indebted to the ministers of the various denominations and to the City Missionary. Mr. McLean, assisted on occasions by visiting clergy, has also conducted services at the Ranch every Sunday afternoon.

In September last the dining arrangements were entirely altered; the old system of serving meals in the cubicles was done away with. A commodious dining-room has been prepared, its furniture having been made on the premises by the boys themselves under the direction of an officer instructor. The bringing of the lads together to partake of their meals in a sociable way, cannot but have a humanizing, refining influence upon them. It is gratifying to be able to record that their conduct under these conditions has been all that could be desired.

Open-air games and physical culture are invaluable here, as they are in any public school. The gymnastic and drill classes under Mr. Page have maintained their efficiency, and whenever called upon have presented a performance creditable alike to themselves and to their instructor.

Manual, technical, and vocational forms of education hold the largest promise for Borstal pupils, and the demand for a more adequate equipment in this field is imperative. The carpenters' and bricklayers' classes have continued their work to good purpose, and during the year a signwriters and painters' class was established under one of our instructors.

One more new departure claims notice. The association class, it may be premised, upholds its good reputation, and the ambition to attain the privileges of the wearers of the grey suits is a strong incentive among the rest. The ambition will be accentuated by the success of the camping outing enjoyed by members of the class at Christmas and New Year. On the lines of a Y.M.C.A. Summer Camp, forty lads of the association class went under canvas for ten days of the holiday period at an attractive spot with beach and bush near at hand. These lads unanimously rose to the confidence reposed in them and entered into the spirit of the occasion. A visitor chancing upon them—for example, at the sports which they themselves organized and carried through, or at their sing-song round the evening camp-fires—would hardly suspect that these young fellows, jolly as any other picknicking company, came from the Borstal, unless, indeed, the uniform attire suggested something of the kind. If, as I understand, this camp is the first of its kind in New Zealand, I feel sure it will not be the last. It acted as a moral tonic on the boys, enabling them to realize more clearly the purposes and the hopes animating all the efforts on their behalf: it conveyed better than any words a quiet appeal to their better nature. To the officers in charge new possibilities were opened up. We gained an insight not otherwise afforded into the individual character of those with whom we had to deal, and got into better touch with them.

Viewing as a whole the experiences of the year, one recognizes that the system as we have it represents a transition stage in which the older retributive treatment of young lawbreakers is being gradually replaced by reformative methods and aims. As in the case of a residential secondary public school, the government and the tone must be based as little as possible on coercive measures, as much as possible on the interested co-operation of the boys in their own training. But to transform into skilled workers and good citizens youths drifting towards the ranks of wasters and criminals is a delicate and continued process which must find (or miss) its completion beyond the Borstal precincts. The "fair chance" which, under the new system, we proffer to youths eager to redeem their past slips includes a chance to take their equal place with honest workers in decent society. This may involve a call on the larger charity, but public support and sympathy have been most encouraging.

We tender our grateful acknowledgments to those who made Christmas and New Year within our Borstal a festive season. For the bountiful supply of good things that loaded the tables we are indebted to the Patients and Prisoners Aid Society, to the Rotary Club, the ladies of Invercargill, and parents and friends living at a distance.

A remarkable feature of Borstal in England is the amount of voluntary assistance which reinforces the efforts of the regular staff. There are those in this community also whose unpaid services require only to be known in order to be appreciated. To all the excellent help already acknowledged in this report must be added the establishment of two new classes—one in economics under Mr. F. C. Lopdell, M.A., and one in agriculture under Mr. T. Matthews, Agricultural Instructor to the Southland Education Board. These two gentlemen are giving their voluntary services with assiduity which ensures response on the part of their pupils.

The Visiting Committee, which now meets regularly every month, is deserving of our best thanks for giving time and consideration in ungrudging measure to the interests of the youths under our care. I desire personally to express my obligations to the members of the Visiting Committee for the help and encouragement I have consistently received from them.

I have pleasure in acknowledging the assistance given by the members of the staff, who have loyally supported me in all the undertakings.

Institution Farm Report.

Dairy-farming, which is our principal industry, has been further extended. The continued development of the institution farm and leasehold properties, resulting in largely increased crops for winter feed, made it possible to carry a greater number of milk-cows.

An additional number of cowbails were erected and concrete floors put down in the south half of the cow-shed. There is now housing-accommodation for 80 cows in the winter time. Hand milking