

1880.
—
VICTORIA.

INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

REPORTS OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

TO THE

INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS OF VICTORIA,

WITH THE

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING THERETO.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

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INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—VISITING COMMITTEE.

The Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint—

JAMES HOWLIN GRAVES, Esq., M.P.,
ANTHONY COLLING BROWNLESS, Esq., M.D.,
EDWARD ELLIS MORRIS, Esq., M.A.,
GAVIN GIBB BROWN, Esq.,
ALFRED WOOLLEY, Esq.,

to be a Visiting Committee to the Industrial Schools at Royal Park and Sunbury.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 10th June 1879.

BRYAN O'LOGHLEN,
Acting Chief Secretary.

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Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 10th June 1879.

BRYAN O'LOGHLEN,
Acting Chief Secretary.

NOTE.—GEORGE DAVID LANGRIDGE, Esq., M.P., was afterwards appointed an additional Member of the above Visiting Committees.

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE VISITING COMMITTEES OF REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

1. The powers of the Committees are to be equal to those of Visiting Justices, excepting in regard to powers conferred on the said justices by Statute, and they are to be held sufficient to enable the members to make the most searching enquiry into every department of the school management.

2. The duties are to visit the Industrial and Reformatory Schools respectively, with the view of thoroughly investigating their condition and management, as well as the circumstances under which committals are made; and to report to the Chief Secretary from time to time what it may be considered advisable to have altered, with a view to their more economical and efficient working in the future.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

No. 1.

Visiting Committee to Chief Secretary.

To the Hon. the Chief Secretary.

Parliament House,
18th August 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose the Report of the Visiting Committee of the Industrial Schools, and also of the Reformatory Schools.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES,
M.P. for Delatite, Chairman.

[Enclosure.]

FIRST REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee to the Industrial Schools at the Royal Park and Sunbury, have the honor to present the First Report of our proceedings.

On the 2nd of August instant we visited the school at Geelong, to which the girls formerly at the Royal Park have been removed, as mentioned in your letter to Mr. Graves, dated the 12th ultimo.

On the 7th of August we visited the buildings at the Royal Park, which we found quite empty. We visited Sunbury on the 9th instant. In order that we might be able to compare a Government institution with a private establishment, we visited on the 10th of August the St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage at Emerald Hill, which is conducted by the Christian Brothers.

We recommend that the children now at Sunbury be removed to the Royal Park with the least possible delay. The buildings at the latter place are much better suited to the purpose than those at the former; not being so large, and being nearer to Melbourne, they are more convenient both for inspection and for working any plan that may be devised for disposing of the children. We are strongly of opinion that little or no expense should be, or need be, incurred in making the change above recommended.

The buildings have been lately occupied by the Girls' Industrial School. The girls, 125 in number, have been removed to Geelong.

We have inspected the buildings there, now occupied by them, and consider that the premises are well suited to the purpose for which they are being used.

We are now making enquiries into the working of the Industrial School system, and shall soon be in a position to make a more detailed Report.

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, }
ALFRED WOOLLEY, } Members.
EDWD. E. MORRIS, }
G. D. LANGRIDGE, }

Melbourne, 18th August 1879.

No. 2.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

Acknowledging No. 1. (*Vide* No. 19.)

Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools to Chief Secretary.

Remarks on Visiting Committee's First Report. (*Vide* No. 21.)

No. 3.

Visiting Committee to the Chief Secretary.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

32 Collins Street West, Melbourne,
25th September 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward herewith, by instruction of the Committee, the Second Report of the Visiting Committee of Industrial Schools in Victoria. I am also instructed to say that the Committee think a sum not exceeding four guineas per week, and travelling expenses, sufficient allowance for the temporary visiting agent, whose immediate employment they recommend.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) GAVIN G. BROWN,
Vice-Chairman.

[Enclosure.]

Industrial
Schools.

SECOND REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Industrial Schools in Victoria, have now the honor to present our Second Report.

In the course of our investigations we have visited the Government institutions at Royal Park, Geelong, and Sunbury, and also the institution at Abbotsford, where Industrial School children are received. We have also visited the orphanages at Emerald Hill and Brighton, gathering from these and other sources much information bearing on the subject of our investigation.

We find the Government schools generally to compare unfavorably in every respect with kindred institutions.

The system of management is bad, being at once inefficient and extravagant.

The divided authority which is the inevitable result of vesting supreme executive control of several establishments in an inspector is subversive of discipline, costly and clumsy in operation, and demoralizing in its effects on both children and officials. The system also leads to such a multiplication of returns, minutes, and correspondence, that a staff of nineteen adults and four boys is not sufficient to prevent the work at King street office from falling into arrear.

The internal state of the schools would admit of improvement. There is little training worthy of the name carried on, and the impression received from all we have seen and learnt is, that it has been too much the habit to consider the children as kept there for the benefit of the officials, and not the officials for the children. It will scarcely be credited that, after an expenditure of over £130,000 on buildings for the joint departments, we did not find any provision for gymnastic exercises among the boys, and but little care would seem to have been bestowed on the promotion of the ordinary games of children.

The expense of management seems to us extravagant. In one establishment there is an official for every 10 children, at a cost of about £10 per head per annum for each child in the school. By a return furnished to the Committee, it appears that there are now about (635) six hundred and thirty-five children in the Industrial and Reformatory Schools directly under the control of the departments, and the salaries of the joint departments for the present year, exclusive of rations, fuel, light, and water, amount to £10,830 15s. 11d. If we allow £1,000 for office work in connection with children outside of the schools, we have left the enormous sum of £9,830 15s. 11d. spent on officials, out of a gross estimated outlay for the children actually in the Government buildings of less than £20,000. We consider that, under proper management, less than one-half of the amount would be a liberal provision.

We have had the Report of the Inspector of 1878 under consideration, and think it desirable to call attention to the fact that the statement of cost per head made in the Report is not correct, and the comparison of cost for previous year with that at Brighton Orphanage and Abbotsford is calculated to mislead.

From the Acting Inspector's own data for 1878 the cost of children in the schools was not less than £25 10s. 11d. per head per annum, or 9s. 10d. per week; and, taking the present numbers in the schools with the estimates of the department for this year, it appears that the cost will be £31 8s. 1d. per head per annum, or 12s. 1d. per week.

It may be noted here that the rate allowed for boarded-out children (excepting at wet nurse) is 5s. per week, and £1 per annum for medical attendance. The rate allowed Sandhurst Benevolent Asylum is 6s. 6d. per week, and 10s. per annum for medical attendance; and the rate allowed Abbotsford is 5s. per week.

The proposal in the Report to spend so large an additional sum on buildings we regard as unnecessary.

The girls at Abbotsford are well lodged and well cared for, and are the subjects of much kindly sympathy and useful training.

We disapprove of the recent proposal made by the department to take children from Abbotsford for the purpose of boarding out.

We are pushing our enquiries into the working of the boarding-out system. Up to this point we find that the admirable work done by the Ladies' Committees requires to be crowned by a more effective supervision than is at present exercised through the visits of the Acting Inspector; that the rates recently adopted are not universally accepted as satisfactory; and that the minimum of thirty days' attendance at school per quarter, required by the Education Act, is not high enough for boarded-out children, and should be raised by agreement with foster-parents.

We think it is desirable to ascertain, by independent inspection, what is the present general condition of the boarded-out children.

With respect to licensed children: so far as we have been able to ascertain, the departmental arrangements for licensing, and for supervision after license, are very defective, and in some respects positively pernicious.

Notwithstanding the large staff of officers in the department, it is customary to call in the aid of the police to make enquiries before license, and supervise afterwards, a procedure which is offensive to many people and acts as a barrier to placing children in the best situations.

The delays in supplying the wants of applicants are at times simply intolerable and unnecessary, causing not unfrequently the loss of good situations.

The arrangements for protecting children from being defrauded of a portion of their wages are not satisfactory.

There is reason to believe that the Ladies' Committee visitation is not so effective in the case of "licensed," as it is in the case of "boarded" children. That of clergymen is only effective in isolated cases, while that of the police is positively hurtful. It is, however, impossible to ascertain the actual condition of licensed children without a door to door visitation, which we propose should be undertaken at once by a visiting agent, acting under and on behalf of the Visiting Committee, who could at the same time enquire into the condition of the boarded-out children without unduly prolonging the work.

The subject of committals to the schools has engaged our attention, and we are of opinion that the department should be represented as frequently as possible when children are to be dealt with by magistrates under the provision of "The Neglected and Criminal Children's Act."

We have not yet been able to visit Sandhurst, or overtake the work of examining the Accounts and Stores department of the schools. Industrial Schools.

We unanimously recommend—

The abolition of the office of Inspector;

The appointment of well qualified and efficient superintendents for each school, who shall be responsible (to a committee acting under the Chief Secretary or Governor in Council) for the entire management of their respective establishments; and

The appointment of one or more visiting agents, responsible directly to such committee; and we have to request authority to employ at once, temporarily, a trustworthy and intelligent agent to conduct the investigation into the present condition of "licensed" and "boarded-out children."

We have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, M.D.
G. D. LANGRIDGE.
EDWD. E. MORRIS.
ALFRED WOOLLEY.

Melbourne, 25th September 1879.

No. 4.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

SIR,

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 9th October 1879.

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to acknowledge the receipt of the Committee's Second Report, dated 25th ultimo,* and to state that it is receiving Mr. Berry's careful attention.

I have, &c.,

Gavin G. Brown, Esq.,
Vice-Chairman Visiting Committee
of Industrial Schools, &c., &c.

(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 5.

Under Secretary to Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools.

SIR,

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 17th October 1879.

I have the honor to forward, for your information, copies of the Reports on the Industrial and Reformatory Schools,† respectively furnished to the Chief Secretary on 25th ultimo, by the Visiting Committees.

I have, &c.,

The Acting Inspector of
Industrial and Reformatory Schools, &c., &c.

(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 6.

Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools to the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Melbourne, 21st October 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant,‡ forwarding copies of the Report of the Visiting Committee upon the Industrial and Reformatory Schools. In some respects, especially in the main feature of their Report, viz., that with regard to general management, the Committee deal with that aspect of our school system to which I have myself referred in my Report for 1878, and in letters previously submitted. But as I cannot endorse their recommendations, although most anxious to see matters placed on a better footing, I will as briefly as possible reply to the various remarks.

The Report appears to lay stress upon two main features, viz. :—1. The management of the schools by an inspector, and—2. The cost of the Inspector's office. I will therefore deal with those first.

* No. 3.

† Nos. 3 and 23.

‡ No. 5.

1. If I rightly understand the suggestion offered, it is that the Inspector be replaced by a managing committee, the argument being used "that the divided authority which is the inevitable result of vesting supreme executive control of several establishments in an inspector is subversive of discipline, costly and clumsy in operation, and demoralizing in its effects on both children and officials." But I think it must be at once apparent that if it were the case that such a result had followed the subordination of the officers in charge of the different schools to one executive officer, who is responsible to and under the immediate control of the Government, it would be much more likely to occur were that subordination transferred to a central committee, which, from the fact of its members holding unpaid offices (for this I presume is intended), would be comparatively irresponsible. I have not before heard of there being a "divided authority," nor do I believe that it is the weak point of the management. All the superintendents and matrons know perfectly well that they are fully responsible for the conduct of the schools under their charge; and they are scarcely ever interfered with in regard to the internal management of their institutions. They frequently seek assistance and advice from the Inspector, and very often he has to step in and give them such help as only an executive officer of the Government can afford. Nor is the experience in this respect different here from other places, as in reports which are published by the schools in England and Ireland such help from the inspectors is often acknowledged. I by no means dispute the fact that honorary visitors may do the work of inspection or visiting instead of an inspector; but there are many things for which an executive officer, whatever be his title, is requisite, both in relation to the schools, to the Government, and to the public. Besides seeing that the will of the Government is carried into effect, he is the centre of communication with the boarding-out committees (I may say that scarcely a day passes but some of the committees have to seek advice and help), clerks of petty sessions, employers and children, all over the country, and very often questions of much difficulty requiring instant settlement have to be dealt with. Within my own experience I have had again and again, sometimes at my private residence, to arrange by telegram matters in different parts of the country, which, but for the existence of such executive authority for prompt reference, might have resulted in serious consequences to children; and Mr. Duncan's experience was the same. It is not too much to say that two-thirds of the Inspector's time is occupied with matters not pertaining to the internal management of the schools—matters which the Government could not and the public would not permit to remain unattended to. But I cannot help thinking that in advising the substitution of a central committee for an executive officer the Committee have overlooked the actual weakness of the present system. So far as the management of the schools is concerned the system is in reality advantageous, but it is weak because from the fact that management and inspection are united, the public do not place confidence in it, and often when action is necessary it is, through that want of confidence, delayed or stopped. The charitable institutions of the colony are under committees, and there is the strongest dissatisfaction with their management for the same reason, viz., that management and inspection are vested in the same authority. This I have previously pointed out is the evil of the present system, and here it is, I am persuaded, the remedy is needed. In my letter of 19th June 1878, I wrote thus:—"It appears to me an unfortunate circumstance that the English plan of establishing industrial schools has not been more freely followed in this colony, combining as that plan appears to me to do, the maximum of private benevolence with the minimum of State management. As, however, it has not been adopted by the benevolent public of Victoria, the next best thing is, I think, for the State to approximate as nearly thereto as practicable, and in doing so to provide for the possibility of that plan being hereafter more fully carried out." I have carefully studied this question for years, both in relation to the Industrial and Reformatory Schools and the other charitable institutions of the colony; and I have not any doubt that the true way to ensure success will be not to transfer the control from one central authority to another, but to place each school under the management of a local committee, and make the Inspector what his name indicates he should be, an officer acting on behalf of the Government, and reporting to it. Nor is the present an unfavorable time for offering a suggestion concerning which I have before spoken, viz., that the Industrial Schools and the other charitable institutions of the colony should in this respect be dealt with in the same manner and be under the inspection of the same department. I venture to predict a far greater saving and greater efficiency by this means than by the adoption of that suggested by the Committee.

2. The cost of the Inspector's office and the remark of the Committee that "The system also leads to such a multiplication of returns, minutes, and correspondence, that a staff of nineteen adults and four boys is not sufficient to prevent the work at King street office falling into arrear," may be dealt with together. I may point out, in the first place, that the department is under the Audit Act and the Treasury Regulations, rendering necessary the preparation of certain returns; and is required to be in readiness to supply at any time information to Parliament and the Government. No returns are obtained that are not required for these purposes. Here again I may admit that a good deal of the work could, as the Committee propose, be done at the schools, but if it were transferred to them, clerks would have to be employed to do it, and the ultimate cost would be heavier. It is, I think, unfortunate that the Committee did not visit the office, investigate the work done, and then point out the portions of it they consider unnecessary. It must be borne in mind in regard to this matter also that the work of the department now is much greater in relation to the children outside the schools than within them. For the schools themselves probably a couple of clerks would suffice. The boarding out and licensing constitute the bulk of the work. Besides the eight schools the office staff has to work for, there are 108 visiting committees in continuous correspondence with this office. For each of those in whose districts children are boarded out accounts have to be prepared and cheques or Post Office orders

sent monthly for payment of the 1,400 children boarded out, and the accounts again prepared for the Treasury. There are upwards of 1,100 children at service in different parts of the country, and daily there are matters relating to these which have to be dealt with as well as letters to be answered. The letter writing to the committees alone occupies fully the time of a quick letter writer. The correspondence of the office (of which that with the schools is but a comparatively small portion) amounts to over 700 letters per week. During this year, up to 30th September, 157 applications for the discharge of children were received and prepared for the decision of the Government, 516 applications for children on license were received, and 285 children sent out, and 280 applications for children under the boarding-out regulations were dealt with, and 306 children boarded out. These are facts which sufficiently indicate the necessity of a large staff if the work is to be done; and if any part of it had been left undone an outcry from some section of the public would soon have been heard. I attach a list showing the disposition of the clerks in this office, and the nature of the work allotted to each. Further, I need only say that every member of the staff is compelled to labor overtime to keep pace with his work. The Committee, I may point out, indicate that more and not less work should be done in regard to those matters which constitute now the chief cost of the office.

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3. "The internal state of the schools would admit of improvement. There is little training "worthy of the name," &c.

I must express the opinion that the remark is unfair to the officers in charge of the different schools. That the internal state of the schools will admit of improvement is of course quite correct; but a satisfactory state of affairs can hardly be expected during such a period of turmoil and unsettlement as has existed for some months past in every one of the schools. That real efforts are made to train the children is proved from the fact that, under the direction of the instructors and attendants, they do the work of the institutions and manufacture most of their own clothing, boots included. I beg, however, to refer to the reports attached from the officers themselves on this point.

4. "It will scarcely be credited that, after an expenditure of over £130,000 on buildings "for the joint departments, we did not find any provision for gymnastic exercises among the "boys," &c.

The Committee are wrong. There is a very good gymnasium at Sunbury, which will shortly be removed to the Royal Park. It is but a short time since the boys were transferred from Sunbury. The children are frequently supplied with bats, balls, tops, marbles, and such like things.

5. "The expense of management seems to us extravagant. In one establishment there is "an official for every ten children, at a cost of about £10 per head per annum for each child in "the schools. By a return furnished to the Committee, it appears that there are now 635 children "in the Industrial and Reformatory Schools directly under the control of the departments, and "the salaries of the joint departments for the present year, exclusive of rations, fuel, light, and "water, amount to £10,830 15s. 11d. If we allow £1,000 for office work in connection with "children outside the schools, we have left the enormous sum of £9,830 15s. 11d. spent on officials "out of a gross estimated outlay for the children actually in the Government buildings of less "than £20,000."

In this statement of expenditure the Committee include the cost of the office, and simply give credit for the children in the State schools. This is unfair, as the office has to work for the denominational schools and the boarded-out and licensed children as well as the State schools, the latter in fact being responsible for a very limited part of the expenditure. It is not shown where a reduction in the school staffs may be effected; but in the former part of the Report it is suggested that the superintendents shall have supreme control. Now I have proposed a reduction of the staffs of all the schools to the smallest number consistent, in the opinions of the officers in charge, with the efficient working of the institutions under their care. If that reduction is effected, the staffs will not be excessive, and the estimate of cost per head given in my Report will, I am glad to say, be probably rather over than under the mark, and will stand comparison with the cost in similar institutions either here or in England, although salaries and wages in this colony are higher than in the mother country. The Reformatory is, I presume, the institution referred to as costing £10 per head for supervision. I have proposed a reduced staff for that institution; but I do not think, even when the change to Ballarat is made, that the cost in this respect will be materially lessened.

6. "We have had the Report of the Acting Inspector for 1878 under consideration, and "think it desirable to call attention to the fact that the statement of cost per head made in the "Report is not correct, and the comparison of cost for previous years with that at Brighton "Orphanage and Abbotsford is calculated to mislead." "From the Acting Inspector's own data "for 1878 the cost of children in the schools was not less than £25 10s. 11d. per head per "annum, or 9s. 10d. per week, and taking the present numbers in the schools with the estimates "of the department for this year, it appears that the cost will be £31 8s. 1d. per head per annum, "or 12s. 1d. per week."

In making this computation the Committee appear to have taken the cost of the three schools, added thereto the cost of the office and of the outfits of children sent to service, and divided the result by the number of school inmates. In no other way can I arrive at the result they give of £25 10s. 11d. (or, as it should be, of £25 9s. 11d.). This, however, is unfair. In my Report I show the actual cost in each school separate, as well as the net cost to the State of all together. The average net cost per head, £17 19s. 9d. shown in Return No. 22, is arrived at by

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calculations involving the outlay on each of the schools. It can, however, be pretty accurately tested by a few figures :—

Total expenditure of the department	...	...	...	...	£45,952	16	3
Revenue paid into the Treasury	...	...	...	...	1,555	16	7
					£44,396	19	8
1,163 children, at £17 19s. 9d.	...	...	...	...	£20,919	9	3
1,220 do. boarded out at £15 4s. 4d.	...	...	...	...	19,174	6	8
Office expenditure	...	...	...	...	3,634	10	9
Outfits of children sent to service from State and denominational schools	...	...	...	...	654	13	8
					£44,383	0	4

showing a difference only of £13 19s. 4d., or about 1d. per child in the year. To add the office to the cost of the schools the expenditure thereon must in all fairness be divided among all the children under supervision, viz., upwards of 3,500, which gives a charge of about £1 per head per annum. In England it is never included in the cost of the schools. In comparing the cost of the Industrial Schools with the Orphanage, I took the same basis of calculation for the former as for the latter, viz., the amounts spent on the two State Industrial Schools and on the children boarded out, and I do not see how the comparison can be challenged. If anything, I think that the Orphanage still has the advantage, as I understand that in addition to the Education Department paying the teachers of that institution, the State also carries its children and attendants free of charge to their destination by railway, while the Industrial Schools are charged with this outlay.

7. "The proposal in the Report to spend so large an additional sum on buildings is "unnecessary."

A similar remark occurs in the Report of the Committee respecting the reformatories. I am glad to have the opportunity of explaining that feature in my Report which has been the cause of much criticism. The expenditure I have recommended was all in the direction of economy. The removal of the boys and girls from the Jika reformatories was determined on. To build a new reformatory for boys would cost, I estimated, not less than £20,000. I therefore advised the exchange of Sunbury for Ballarat, and the principal item of expenditure requisite at the latter place is for the erection of a wall to enclose the refractory boys. The Committee, I understand, think this unnecessary. I am, however, of a different opinion, and believe that it will be a great mistake to send the boys to Ballarat unless this wall is erected. The second item of expenditure recommended is that for the girls' reformatory. This, however, is only requisite because the Penal Department wants the buildings the girls now occupy. So long as we can retain their present home, which is very suitable, this outlay is unnecessary. The third item is for the Geelong school. As I have reported verbally, this can stand over for a year or two; but the buildings now composing the school are all of wood, and will not last long. They are, besides, on a block of land which, it has been stated, would realise a considerable sum. The total expenditure suggested, excluding the £4,000 which the girls' reformatory would probably cost, would, it is estimated, be at the very least £9,000 below the cost of building a new reformatory for the boys.

8. "The girls at Abbotsford are well lodged and well cared for, and are the subjects of "much kindly sympathy and useful training." "We disapprove of the recent proposal made by "the department to take children from Abbotsford for the purpose of boarding out." The work that is being done at Abbotsford has always been acknowledged. It is not, however, a better managed school than the Government school for girls at Geelong, nor do the results show better training in the former than in the latter, although Abbotsford has a great advantage in not having inmates of opposite religions to deal with. My recent recommendation with regard to Abbotsford was made however on the following grounds:—I found the institution was getting to be a very large one, having grown from 159 in 1873 to 229 at the present time. It was overcrowded. Inmates of the Reformatory, the Industrial School, and what is called the Preservation Class were mixed together, and what struck me as still worse, there were infants there whose mothers were at the same time inmates of the Magdalen Asylum, which is part of the same establishment. The overcrowding and the mixing have since I found fault with the arrangement been partially met. But understanding the Government to object to the growth of the school system, I recommended that the children should be boarded out from Abbotsford as well as from the other schools.

9. "The work done by the ladies requires to be crowned by a more effective supervision," &c. I have not had time, consequent upon the difficulties of the past eighteen months, to visit as often as I should desire. Since I have had charge of the department I have visited upwards of 900 children in 500 homes, often travelling at night to enable me to overtake the work. The inspection I purposed carrying out when matters were settled was as follows,—country homes about once a year, and those in town and suburbs every six or nine months. That in my judgment is quite sufficient in addition to the continuous and efficient supervision maintained by the ladies.

10. "The minimum of 30 days' attendance at school per quarter required by the "Education Act is not high enough, and should be raised by agreement with foster-parents." In

this matter the Committee are under a misapprehension. Foster-parents are required to send their children, to school full time, that is, two sessions on five days in each week, except in the case of advanced children, for whom permission is sometimes given to stay at home, perhaps on the washing day or for some special cause, on the recommendation of a Ladies' Committee.

Industrial
Schools.

11. "The departmental arrangements for licensing are very defective and in some respects pernicious. Notwithstanding the large staff of officers it is customary to call in the aid of the police to make enquiries before license. The delays are at times simply intolerable and unnecessary, causing not unfrequently the loss of good situations."

I presume the Committee do not really suggest that a member of the office staff should institute enquiries instead of the police? If they did the expense would be enormous. I do not think that the police reporting causes many situations to be lost, but it is certainly the fact that such reports often prevent children going to unsuitable homes. It may seem objectionable but it is very useful and should not be lightly done away with. As to the delay I can only say that it is made as brief as possible, but so long as there are more applicants than there are children there will be a necessity for them to wait. I should, however, like the Committee to name the cases to which they refer, so that I may state the facts respecting each. Hereafter the ladies will provide situations for all the Industrial School girls.

12. "The arrangements for protecting children from being defrauded of a portion of their wages are not satisfactory."

Employers are required to send a portion of the children's wages to this office. With regard to this portion there are but few arrears. When children leave their situations the other part is seen to, and the committees are aware of what the children should periodically receive.

13. "There is reason to believe that the Ladies' Committee visitation is not so effective in the case of licensed as it is in the case of boarded-out children, that of clergymen is only effective in isolated cases, while that of the police is positively hurtful."

To this I may say (1st), I believe that, so far as the girls are concerned, the ladies as a rule exercise reasonably good supervision; (2nd), that many clergymen, if not all, look after the children by means of their Sunday school agencies; and (3rd) that the police supervision is in the bulk of the cases unseen and even unknown. I have nothing to say against further supervision, but it is just possible that "door to door" visitation would be unacceptable to that better class of employers the Committee refer to. So far as the boys are concerned, I cannot help thinking that the Committee overlook the fact that they are as a rule shrewd and well able to look after their own interests. They do not go out to service till they are over 14 years of age, and they understand the terms of their engagement.

In the foregoing remarks I have endeavored to deal with the school question on the broad ground of public policy, nor have I any wish that it should be disposed of on any other basis. But I should, I think, do myself an injustice did I not now say a few words respecting my own relation thereto. It is of course easy to find fault and easy to destroy. It is not so easy to repair mischief when done, or to build up again. The suggestions now put forth by the Committee would unmistakably destroy. They do not, however, show how they would repair the damage done, or by what means they would meet the public requirements. The reforms now in progress, which have been agreed to after months of consideration and criticism, and which will undoubtedly result in a very large saving to the Government, were devised and suggested by myself long before the Committee were called into existence. I have had the anxiety and work of administering the department during one of the most troubled periods of its unsettled existence, obtaining from yourself and the former Chief Secretary an acknowledgment of my efforts to assist the Government in its desire to economise. I have, by working almost night and day, discharged most of the duties of my former office in addition to those of Inspector. I do my predecessor, Mr. Duncan, no injustice in claiming to have worked hard with him in constructing and carrying out our boarding-out system, and he has acknowledged that I spared no effort to make it a success. It naturally, therefore, seems to me unjust that others should step in and reap the result of my labors (for this is what the recommendations practically amount to) just at the time when I have succeeded in bringing the department once again towards fair working order. It is easy to speak of economising; but the one or more travelling agents the Committee advise appointing would very quickly become higher paid officials, and it would also soon be found requisite again to appoint an executive officer to do the necessary Government work, and to supervise the boarding-out and licensing systems. The office clerks may be dispensed with, but, unless it can be shown that the work they are now doing may be left undone, that would only result ultimately in an increased cost, and it must be manifest that the work connected with the control, supervision, &c., of more than 3,500 children, scattered over all parts of the country, must be large, and yet must be transacted. The Committee have been mistaken, as I have shown, in supposing that the office staff as it exists is necessary for the management of the schools; and I feel assured they are also mistaken in supposing that their plan of substituting one central authority for another would tend either to economy or efficiency. The schools need frequent supervision, and the children need to be brought more into contact with the outside public than at present obtains. The plan I have suggested of giving local committees charge of the different schools, and maintaining Government inspection, will ensure both objects and tend to economy. The other plan will not.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

H. F. NEAL,
Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Industrial
Schools.

[Enclosure No. 1.]

Industrial School, Royal Park,
19th October 1879.

SIR,

In reply to the attached extract from Report of Official Visiting Committee, *re* training, I have the honor to state that, so far as Sunbury is concerned, the Committee could scarcely have had any opportunity of forming, from what they saw, a correct idea of the training, as they only visited the school once for about an hour and a half on what may be considered a half-holiday, Saturday afternoon, when all the trades work for the week was over, and the instructors had gone home, and when, consequently, the Committee had not the opportunity of seeing either the process or product of the children's training. The boys receive, I think, a suitable training in such occupations as can be advantageously taught in the institution. What evidence can there be to support the opinion "that it has been too much the habit to consider the children as kept there for the benefit of the officials, and not the officials for the benefit of the children," I am at a loss to understand. The officers of the school are, I believe, as much interested in their work as the officers of any department of the public service.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JNO. R. SCOTT,
Superintendent.

The Acting Inspector
Industrial and Reformatory Schools.

[Enclosure No. 2.]

Industrial School, Royal Park,
19th October 1879.

SIR,

In reply to the attached extract from Report of Official Visiting Committee, stating that the Committee did not find any provision for gymnastic exercises, I have the honor to state that there is a pretty well appointed gymnasium at Sunbury, with giant strides, and swings, about 20 feet high, which any one visiting the school could scarcely fail to observe, even if it were not pointed out, as it can be seen from every window and opening on the western side of the institution. Some of the gentlemen who visited looked where the gymnasium stood forming the most prominent feature of the foreground, and only about 100 yards away. In stating that, at the least, I am not merely expressing my own impression, but what is confirmed by others. Moreover, they could not have asked any person in the school whether we had a gymnasium or not without being informed that we had.

Besides the gymnasium the children had footballs and cricketing materials, &c. Sometimes matches were got up between the school and village children, a teacher going with them and taking part in their games. At the time when the Committee visited the footballs were out of order, having been injured in play a few days previously; but had it been otherwise, the children, having so many opportunities of play at other times, would probably, for the moment, not care to play, as they would be more interested in looking at the visitors, as in that rather out of the way place it was a pleasure to see strangers, far more rarely enjoyed than the pleasures of play; visitors would, therefore, be apt to form a wrong estimate of the opportunities for play and the interest taken in it.

I have, &c.,
JNO. R. SCOTT,
Superintendent.

The Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

[Enclosure No. 3.]

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Geelong School, 20 | 10 | 79.

Memo. 82 | 18667.

The only inspection made by the Visiting Committee was on a Saturday afternoon, when the Inspector is aware there is no school, and the laundry and workroom are closed, therefore the general training of the children could hardly be fairly judged by the Committee. With regard to the latter part of the extract, I have always used every endeavor to get the children licensed and boarded out as soon as possible. The Report entered by the Committee was favorable as to order, cleanliness, and also arrangements.

(Signed) E. S. NARRACOTT,
Matron.

(Copy.)

[Sub-enclosure.]

August 2nd.

(Signed) A. C. BROWNLESS, M.D.

Very much pleased with the order, cleanliness, and excellent arrangements observed throughout the institution.

(Signed) EDWD. E. MORRIS,
ALFRED WOOLLEY,
JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman, } Visiting Committee.

[Enclosure No. 4.]

Industrial
Schools.RETURN showing the Number and Distribution of the Clerks employed in the Industrial and Reformatory Schools' Office, also a *Précis* of the Work Performed.

Branch.	No. of Clerks.	<i>Précis</i> of Work.
Accountant's branch ...	3	The senior accountant is at present doing a part of the work pertaining to the office of chief clerk. The proper business of the branch includes keeping an account in the prescribed books of all money received and paid, and preparing returns thereof for the Treasury and Audit Office. Besides the accounts, &c., connected with the payment of 1,400 children boarded out, upwards of 900 accounts are annually sent to the Treasury for payment. The departmental requisitions and orders are checked in this branch, and prepared for Ministerial approval.
Discharge, license, and boarding-out applications	2	Last year 1,463 applications were dealt with by these officers, and the various enquiries made that are connected therewith. 817 children were discharged, sent to service, or boarded out, many arrangements having to be effected to ensure their safety while travelling to their destination. These clerks also transact business with persons seeking children, &c.
Correspondence with 108 committees	1	It takes this officer, who is a quick writer, all his time to write the letters to the committees with which the office is in correspondence.
Register of children, mandates, transfers, &c.	2	These officers examine the mandates of all the children committed, make entries therefrom into the registers, institute enquiries concerning age, &c., of the children committed, the circumstances and character of the parents, and arrange for the authority of the Governor in Council being obtained to all transfers and discharges.
Supervision of children at service, collection of wages, &c.	2	The two officers employed at this work send to the committees, clergymen, and police, to exercise supervision when children have been placed out. They have to write many letters to employers respecting wages, and make enquiries into any complaints that are made by children. They also deal with the children's bank books. Their work is hard.
Maintenance accounts, and correspondence with parents and relatives	1	This officer writes to clerks of petty sessions when maintenance payments are in arrears, and also answers enquiries of relatives, besides entering in a book kept for that purpose the character, circumstances, and addresses of those who make enquiry.
Boarding-out books, checking visitors' and schoolmasters' returns, also assisting in preparing boarding-out accounts	1	This clerk keeps a book showing the children boarded out, the districts in which they are placed, and the transfers that take place. He also sees that the reports come to hand from committees and schoolmasters.
Registering, copying, and despatching correspondence	3	39,215 letters were received and forwarded during the past year. Many of these passed in and out several times. Press copying is resorted to as far as practicable, and copies of letters sent out are only taken in those cases in which after-reference may be requisite.
Summoning officer ...	1	This officer's work is almost entirely outside the office. He is often occupied out of doors at night as well as in the day.
Messenger and office boys ...	...	Act for the penal officers as well as for this department.
		NOTE.—In addition to the foregoing the annual returns for Parliament have to be prepared. This is a very heavy work.

No. 7.

NOTES BY THE VISITING COMMITTEE ON MR. NEAL'S ANSWER TO VISITING COMMITTEE'S REPORT NO. 2.

In the opening of his letter,* Mr. Neal states, "I cannot endorse their recommendations, although most anxious to see matters placed on a better footing." Near the close he says, "It naturally, therefore, seems to me unjust that others should step in and reap the result of my labors (for this is what the recommendations practically amount to) just at the time when I have succeeded in bringing the department once again towards fair working order." Similar inconsistencies occur throughout the letter, but we do not propose to notice them in detail. It appears to us that the very long letter is only at best a "darkening of counsel," to which the only effective answer is—that the department, *as now existing*, is a monument of the incapacity of those responsible for its management.

The letter advances nothing to alter the judgment already formed by the Committee, but affords ample proof of the administrative blindness of its writer.

Paragraph No. 1.—The Management.

Mr. Neal admits that the existing system of management is an evil requiring remedy which he claims to have suggested, but he cannot endorse the recommendations of the Committee. Mr. Neal does not appear to rightly understand the suggestions offered by the Committee.

We do not propose to "replace the inspector by a managing committee;" we do not propose any subordination of the officers "to a central committee." There is, in fact, no *inspection* of the State schools at present, no check on mismanagement—the Inspector being, *de facto*, manager. We would sweep away entirely the office of Inspector as at present existing and exercised, and would invest superintendents with supreme authority and entire responsibility of management. We would provide for the inspection of schools and houses by an independent officer not possessing executive powers, and would provide a committee of adjustment and general supervision, which could also interpose when necessary between the department and the public, as well as between the department and the political head.

* No. 6.

As to whether a separate officer is required to perform certain secretarial duties relating "to the schools, to the Government, and to the public," the Committee have not yet expressed any opinion.

Mr. Neal does not appear to have any difficulty in finding how a committee can be of use without *replacing* an inspector, or *exercising executive powers*, when the proposal comes from himself.

Mr. Neal substantially admits the charge of the Visiting Committee against the present system, but differs with their verbal description of the cause. What exists, he says, is bad, but then it is *combined*, not *divided*, authority that is to blame.

Unquestionably Mr. Neal's report for 1878 proves how completely the *Inspector* dominates and controls the whole management; he interferes with everything where the exercise of any judgment is required, and the most minute details of the slightest departure from soulless routine have to be communicated to King street. But then the "divided authority" of which Mr. Neal says he had "not before heard" is apparent at the very outset of any observation or enquiry, and is specifically admitted by Mr. Neal himself in this letter when he states that the weakness of the present system results from the fact that "management and inspection are united" in the same officer, and yet claims that "superintendents and matrons are scarcely ever interfered with in regard to the internal management of their institutions."

The fact is, *nominally* superintendents and matrons are in charge of and responsible for the management of their several establishments, but *actually* they dare not do anything for which there is not a regulation provided without the authority of the Inspector, and individual responsibility evaporates, because the duty of an officer terminates with the transmission of a return or memorandum to King street, where the finishing touches must be given to everything.

The practical result is, that the officials in charge of schools have no separate or individual judgment of any sort in ordinary matters, and no resources in any emergency. They become mere puppets in the hands of the all-powerful Inspector, who can make or mar them.

The attempt to provide a regulation for everything is synonymous with keeping officers in leading strings, and is responsible for the perpetration and perpetuation of many wrongs.

Paragraph No. 2.—Cost of Inspector's Office.

With regard to the King street office, Mr. Neal has not advanced anything new. The Committee have never lost sight of the fact that there is work to be done there for those children outside of the schools (as is shown by our deducting £1,000 on that account from cost of office chargeable to schools), but the whole matter is in a nutshell.

The usurpation by the Acting Inspector of absolute control and regulation of the minutest details causes more than half the work. The unnecessary work given in connection with schools, boarding out, and license by present arrangement, is enormous. A readjustment of responsibilities would greatly reduce the work.

Paragraph No. 3.—Internal state of School Training.

The answer only proves that neither Mr. Neal nor his subordinate officers know anything of the scope of "training," as applied to children.

Paragraph No. 4.—Gymnasium Amusements.

The gymnasium was not shown to us when visiting Sunbury, though repeated enquiry was made with respect to the children's amusements, &c. We believe that further enquiry will tend to show—

That it was placed in an improper position.

That it was not kept in good order.

That no time was set apart for its use.

That no officer was appointed to teach the boys gymnastic exercises.

That it was not regularly in use, and was not, in fact, valued by either officials or children as a means of training or source of amusement.

That its proposed removal to Royal Park was an after-thought. It is now *about ten weeks* since the boys were removed, and it is as yet only a proposal.

It will be quite easy to prove that the children are not systematically or steadily encouraged in their amusements.

If the children are frequently "supplied with bats, balls, tops, marbles, and such like things," they are, we believe, more frequently *not* so supplied. There can be no doubt that the most culpable negligence has prevailed with respect to the amusements of the children.

Paragraph No. 5.—Expense of Management.

The answer demonstrates Mr. Neal's inability to deal with the necessary reduction of expenditure.

Paragraph No. 6.—Cost per Head.

The answer is just a repetition of the juggle with figures, of which the Committee complained.

In the first place: In estimating the cost of the management of State schools Mr. Neal improperly deducts £1,555 16s. 7d. from the total expenditure, and also neglects to add the value of produce consumed at rates for which it could have been sold. *In the second place:* No account is taken of any portion of the cost of office management. *In the third place:* The varying costs in

separate schools *not* under State management are mixed up with the cost of State schools so as to further affect the average, thus (taking Mr. Neal's own figures, though not correct)—

	£	s.	d.	per head,	£	s.	d.
200 at Abbotsford, at	12	8	2	2,481	13	4	
27 at St. Joseph's „	12	11	4	364	8	8	
86 at Sandhurst „	17	3	1	1,475	5	2	
396 at Sunbury „	18	7	7	7,278	3	0	
258 at Melbourne „	19	15	10	5,119	3	0	
194 at Jika „	21	12	11	4,199	5	10	
					£20,917	19	0

say £17 19s. 9d. per head all round.

Now, properly stated, the cost of management for past year, without adding the value of produce consumed, and without making any allowance for cost of housing the children, including interest on original expenditure on schools, and the sums annually expended on repairs and alterations, which never appear in the accounts of the department—both of which would, as far as the State is concerned, properly enter into any comparison with the cost of children boarded out or lodged in outside institutions, stands thus—

Expenditure of vote	...	...	...	£45,952	16	3
<i>Deduct—</i>							
Boarding-out expenditure	...	£19,104	1	4			
Maintenance of separate schools	...	4,456	16	10			
Clothing boarded children	...	628	5	3			
Transport	„	105	18	1			
Clothing licensed	„	654	13	8			
Transport, Sandhurst	...	33	19	3			
				24,983	14	5	
				20,969	1	10	
Deduct on account of office expenses for outside children				1,000	0	0	
			Leaving	...	£19,969	1	10

for the management and support of 848 children in school at Melbourne, Sunbury and Jika, or £23 11s. per annum, or 9s. 0½d. per week, as compared with—

	£	s.	d.	per annum, or	s.	d.	
Abbotsford	13	0	0	5	0		per week
St. Joseph	13	0	0	5	0		„
Boarding out	14	12	0	5	0		„ and doctors' fees, &c.
Sandhurst	17	16	0	6	6		„ „ „

the latter only having an allowance of £180 for rent.

The above shows more favorably for State schools than the statement made in the Visiting Committee's report, because in former calculations £1,555 16s. 7d. was added to expenditure of vote (no statement being made in the Inspector's reports as to its payment into the Treasury), and transport charges were not deducted.

The misleading nature of the comparison instituted between the State schools and Brighton Orphanage is this :—

The orphanage calculation includes office expenses, and excludes maintenance money collected, and the orphanage pays almost exactly the same amount for boarded-out children as it costs to maintain a child in the institution, so that for purposes of comparison the inclusion of boarded-out children does not materially affect the average; *whereas*, Mr. Neal excludes office expenses and includes maintenance money collected, and further erroneously reduces the cost by including in the average, boarded-out children and children in other schools who form the larger number and cost the State about two-thirds only of the cost per head for children in the State schools.

The saving effected at the orphanage on education is only a further proof of the superiority of the arrangements and management.

Paragraph No. 7.—Expenditure on Buildings.

The attempt to justify the recommendation of an expenditure of £15,000 on buildings, on the ground that it “was all in the direction of economy,” is too preposterous to require any comment. It may, however, be noted that the proposed expenditure is in nearly every case unnecessary. It is true that provision must be made for the inmates of the Reformatory, but that can be done at a much cheaper rate. It is also true that some expenditure will be necessary at Ballarat, but neither to the extent of £4,000 nor in the direction of an encircling wall.

Paragraph No. 8.—Abbotsford.

Our Supplementary Report (No. 4) on this institution answers the paragraph. It may, however, be noted here that the Superioress complains that Mr. Neal has attempted to interfere very harshly and unnecessarily with details in the management of this institution, and has harassed the sisters by his numerous memoranda and by delays in consenting to the settlement of licensed children.

Paragraph No. 9.—Visitation of Boarded Children by an Official.

Mr. Neal concurs in the necessity for this, and admits that it has not been done "as often as he should desire."

We do not concur in Mr. Neal's judgment as to periodical visitation at wide intervals.

Paragraph No. 10.—Circular 7, 28/1/79—Breach of Regulation.—Attendance of Boarded-out Children at School.

There is no trace in any of the documents forwarded to the Committee of any agreement with foster-parents for a closer attendance at school than is required by the Education Act; clauses 3 and 13 of schedule No. 1 of regulations refer to this matter.

Paragraphs Nos. 11, 12 and 13.—Licensing, Supervision, and Protection of Wages.

We must only reiterate our objections to the departmental arrangements, and, if necessary, can substantiate our statements.

Concluding Paragraph.

Whatever may have been the difficulties inherent in the task of managing these schools, they have been greatly aggravated by incompetency and misrule; and the Visiting Committee are quite prepared, if necessary, to undertake the responsibility of remodelling the department in accordance with their recommendations, without destroying anything but a gigantic evil which has grown up in our midst.

(Signed)

GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.

18th Nov. 1879.

No. 8.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 21st October 1879.

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to inform you that after the 31st instant, or earlier if necessary, the services of Mr. Thomas Millar, at present storekeeper at Geelong, will be placed at the disposal of the Committee as visiting agent for carrying out their views, as expressed in the Report of 25th September.*

The Visiting Committee of the
Industrial Schools, &c., &c.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 9.

Under Secretary to Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools.

SIR,

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 21st October 1879.

Referring to the Visiting Committee's Report on the Industrial Schools, dated 25th September,* of which a copy was forwarded to you on the 17th instant, I am directed to inform you that the Chief Secretary has approved of the services of Mr. Thomas Millar, at present storekeeper at Geelong, being placed at the disposal of the Committee as visiting agent, from the 1st proximo, or earlier if found necessary; and that Mr. Robertson, who will cease to be superintendent at Jika after the 31st instant, may be employed temporarily at Geelong during Mr. Millar's absence, each officer retaining his own salary.

The Acting Inspector
Industrial and Reformatory Schools, &c., &c.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 10.

Acting Visiting Agent to the Chairman of the Visiting Committee.

SIR,

Treasury, Melbourne,
17th December 1879.

I have the honor to request that you will kindly recommend my being granted a travelling allowance while acting as visiting agent to the Industrial School Visiting Committee.

J. H. Graves, Esq., M.P.,
Chairman Visiting Committee.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) THOS. M. MILLAR,
Acting Visiting Agent.

*Minutes on foregoing Letter.*Industrial
Schools.

I beg to recommend this to the favorable consideration of the Hon. Chief Secretary.—
(Sd.) JAMES H. GRAVES, M.P., Delatite, Chairman of Visiting Committee I. & R. Schools,
Dec. 17/79.

Ordinary travelling allowances while actually engaged.—(Intd.) G.B.

Mr. Neal to note.—I learn that the Committee will not require Mr. Millar's services after
31st instant.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 30/12/79.

Noted and returned.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector I. & R. S., 2/2/80.

No. 11.

MEMO.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

Will the Vice-Chairman of the Industrial Schools Visiting Committee be so good as to
inform the Chief Secretary when the Committee will be able to dispense with Mr. Millar's services
as visiting agent.

(Signed) W. H. ODGERS,
18/12/79.

The Vice-Chairman Industrial Schools Visiting Committee.

No. 12.

Visiting Committee to the Under Secretary.

W. H. Odgers, Esq., Under Secretary.

DEAR SIR,

Melbourne, 31st December 1879.

Referring to your memo. of 18th current,* and our subsequent personal interview, I beg to
state that the Visiting Committee will dispense with Mr. Millar's services as temporary visiting
agent from this date.

(Signed) I am, &c.,
GAVIN G. BROWN,
Vice-Chairman.

No. 13.

Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools to the Chief Secretary.

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Melbourne, 3/9/79.

SIR,

I have the honor to report for your information that, at a visit of inspection to the Abbots-
ford Industrial and Reformatory Schools, which I made at the end of July last, the accommo-
dation provided for the children appeared to me to be getting too crowded; and there was a mixing
together of the inmates of the two institutions, and of these with the young people of the
Preservation Class, in an undesirable manner. In addition to this I ascertained that a number of
infant inmates were the offspring of women who are in what is termed the Magdalen Asylum, a
portion of the same establishment. I therefore wrote to the Reverend Mother on the subject of
the crowding and mixing of the inmates, and at her request postponed making an official report
until I made a further inspection and saw the changes she effected to ensure separation. This
inspection I made yesterday, and found that certain arrangements have been made which, if
carried out, will ensure the separation of the young people of the Preservation Class from the
school children, and the comparative separation of the Industrial School from the Reformatory
inmates. The latter, however, is not so complete as in my opinion is desirable, as the children will
have to frequent the same kitchen, laundry, and bakehouse, though at different times of the day.

This state of affairs would induce me to advise the removal of the Reformatory from
Abbotsford, there being only nine inmates, but for the fact that the influence of the nuns upon the
girls could not be replaced in any available institution; and if the girls are to be reclaimed at all
that influence should be best calculated to effect the purpose. It is in contemplation, I am
informed, to erect a separate building for the Reformatory girls, and, under the circumstances of
the case, I can only suggest that the convent authorities be desired as early as possible to
provide separate and suitable premises for the Reformatory children. The other matters to which
I have referred—the growth of the institution, and the fact that mothers and children are inmates
of what is virtually the one extensive establishment—it appears to me to be my duty to bring
especially under your notice. By the late change of arrangements actual overcrowding is avoided,

* No. 11.

Industrial
Schools.

their being 254 beds available; but I may point out that the industrial school has grown from 159 in 1873—the year boarding out began—to 229 at the present time. If, as I understand, it is the desire of the Government to avoid having large schools, that principle should be applied to all alike, and a limit should be fixed for the Abbotsford institution. The best remedies, however, for both the possible evils under notice would be, I think, to require that the boarding-out system should have effect with regard to the Abbotsford children as well as to those of the other Industrial Schools, and to limit the admissions to children over two years of age.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) H. F. NEAL,
Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Minutes on foregoing Letter.

Approved.—(Intd.) G. B.

Noted and returned. I beg to suggest that the Law Department be asked to make known to the different Benches the wish of the Government that committals to Abbotsford be confined to children over two years of age.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, 16/9/79.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Referred to the Secretary to the Law Department.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 18/9/79.

Copy circular memo. (embodying suggestion of the Acting Inspector of the Industrial and Reformatory Schools) issued to the various Benches of Magistrates this day is enclosed herewith for the Under Secretary's information.—(Sd.) B. C. HARRIMAN, Secretary, Crown Law Offices, 9/10/79.

Circular referred to in above Minute of Secretary to Law Department.

Crown Law Offices,
Melbourne, 9th October 1879.

Circular Memo. No. 43.

Herewith is forwarded copy of a request made to the Minister of Justice, and the attention of Justices is invited to the same.

B. C. HARRIMAN,
Secretary to the Law Department.

The Bench of Magistrates,

[Enclosure.]

I beg to suggest that the Law Department be asked to make known to the different Benches the wish of the Government that committals to Abbotsford be confined to children over two years of age.—H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

For the Acting Inspector's information.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 13 Oct. 1879.

Noted and returned.—H. F. NEAL, 17/10/79.

No. 14.

Chief Secretary to Under Secretary.

Mr. Odgers,

DEAR SIR,

Parliament House, Melbourne.

I promised the Committee that I would hold my hand with respect to boarding out the children from Abbotsford until they report on the subject.*

I am, &c.,
(Signed) GRAHAM BERRY.

Minutes on above Letter.

Referred to the Acting Inspector of Industrial Schools to note.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, C. S. Office, 24/10/79.

Noted and returned.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, 29/10/79.
The Under Secretary.

No. 15.

Under Secretary to Secretary to Law Department.

Minute.

The Chief Secretary would be glad if the operation of the circular† were suspended for the present.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 27/10/79.

* For report *vide* No. 16.

† *Vide* Minute on No. 13 (Circular No. 43).

Noted. I presume, however, Mr. Odger's minute was intended for the Crown Law Industrial Schools.
 Dept.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, 30/10/79.
 The Under Secretary.

Yes.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 30/12/79.

I enclose a copy of a circular memo. issued yesterday to the various Benches of Magistrates suspending the operation of Circular No. 43 in reference to committals to Abbotsford Reformatory.
 —(Sd.) B. C. HARRIMAN, Secretary, Crown Law Offices, 3/1/80.

Circular referred to in above Minute of Secretary to Law Department.

Circular Memo. No. 48 Crown Law Offices,
Melbourne, 2nd January 1880.

At the request of the Honorable the Chief Secretary, the operation of Circular No. 43 is suspended for the present.

The Bench of Magistrates, (By direction) B. C. HARRIMAN,
Secretary to the Law Department.

Bring up again when report of Board on this subject is received.—(Intd.) G. B.

No. 16.

THIRD REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Industrial Schools of Victoria, have the honor to submit our Third Report.

In accordance with your verbal request we have again visited the Industrial School at Abbotsford, for the purpose of enquiring into the statement that the school was overcrowded, and have to report that the school is not overcrowded.

The number of children in the school has not at any time during the present year exceeded 230, while the beds provided number 254. At the time of our visit there were 226 children in the school, leaving 28 beds unoccupied. The dormitories contain from 18 to 51 beds, and are not in any instance overcrowded, the cubical contents of the various wards giving from 307 to 650 feet for each occupant, as shown by accompanying detailed statement. The space provided for the children is in excess of the requirements of the Board of Health, and the condition of the children proves conclusively that there is no ground for any anxiety on the score of overcrowding. The accommodation is not only sufficient, but is of an excellent kind, the ventilation being remarkably good.

The Committee are confirmed in the opinion, already expressed, that the children at Abbotsford are well placed and carefully tended.

We have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
 GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-chairman.
 EDWD. E. MORRIS.
 G. D. LANGRIDGE.
 A. C. BROWNLESS.
 ALFRED WOOLLEY.

Melbourne, 6th November 1879.

[Enclosures.]

RETURN of the Amount of Accommodation, &c., &c., in the Abbotsford Industrial School, 24th October 1879.

Dormitories.	Cubic Feet.	Beds.	Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Ages from	Space for Beds provided.	Space for Beds occupied.
St. Euphrasia's ...	22,950	44	41	3	4 to 7	521 ²⁶	559 ²¹
St. Mary's ...	28,917	51	48	3	8 to 13	567	602 ²¹
St. Joseph's ...	27,999	49	48	1	7 to 10	571 ²⁰	583 ¹³
St. Michael's ...	12,240	29	27	2	13 to 15	422 ²	453 ⁹
St. Theresa's ...	6,757	22	15	7	8 to 12	307 ³	450 ⁷
St. Vincent's ...	7,803	21	21	Nil	2 to 4	371 ¹²	371 ¹²
Hospital ...	10,080	20	13	7	All ages	504	775 ⁵
Hospital ...	10,080	18	13	5	All ages	560	775 ⁵

(Signed) MARY C. CURTAIN, Superioress.

RETURN of Amount of Accommodation, &c., &c., in the Abbotsford Reformatory School,
24th October 1879.

Dormitory.	Cubic Feet.	Beds.	Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Ages.	Space for Beds provided.	Space for Beds occupied.
Holy Angels... ..	7,803	12	9	3	13 to 16	650 ³	867

(Signed)

MARY C. CURTAIN, Superioress.

Melbourne, 24th October 1879.

At the request of the Nuns of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford, I have taken the measurement of the several dormitories for the children. Results are as follows, viz. :—

	ft.	in.	ft.	in.	ft.	cubic feet.		ft.	in.	ft.	in.	ft.	cubic feet.						
St. Euphrasia's ...	50	0	×	25	6	×	18	...	22,950	St. Theresa ...	26	6	×	25	6	×	10	...	6,757
St. Mary's ...	63	0	×	25	6	×	18	...	28,917	St. Vincent's ...	25	6	×	25	6	×	12	...	7,803
St. Joseph's ...	61	0	×	25	6	×	18	...	27,999	Hospital ...	60	0	×	14	0	×	12	...	10,080
St. Michael's ...	40	0	×	25	6	×	12	...	12,240	Hospital ...	60	0	×	14	0	×	12	...	10,080
Holy Angels ...	26	6	×	25	6	×	12	...	7,803										

(Signed)

PATRICK HEALY, Builder.

Minute on above Report.

For Mr. Neal's perusal.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 17/11/79.

Noted and returned. I may point out that my letter of 3/9/79* in this file stated that "by the late change of arrangements actual overcrowding is avoided, there being 254 beds available" for the 229 inmates.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector, 20/11/79.
The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

No. 17.

FOURTH REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Industrial Schools in Victoria, have the honor to submit our Fourth Report.

From observation and enquiry we are convinced that it is not desirable to continue the attempt to communicate industrial training to neglected children in large Government institutions.

We therefore recommend—

1st. That the "boarding-out" system be extended to all neglected children up to the age at which they may become eligible for license.

2nd. That, in lieu of the outfit now supplied to "boarded-out" children, an allowance be made for kit, to be supplied by foster-parents, to the satisfaction of ladies' committees or visiting agents.

3rd. That an efficiently managed depôt be maintained in the neighborhood of Melbourne, to facilitate the management of "boarding out" and "license" of both boys and girls.

We have, &c.,

(Signed)

GAVIN G. BROWN, Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, M.D.
EDWD. E. MORRIS, M.A.
ALFRED WOOLLEY.

Melbourne, 13th April 1880.

Minutes on above Report.

To Mr. Neal.—He will remember that the within Report was read at the interview yesterday, and that it was decided to adopt the suggestion (a little modified) as regards a money allowance in lieu of outfit.—(Sd.) W. H. ODGERS, 20/4/80.

Noted and returned.—(Signed) H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector, 12/5/80.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

No. 18.

FIRST REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee to the Reformatory Schools at Jika Jika, have the honor to present the First Report of our proceedings.

On the 30th July ultimo we visited the Boys' and Girls' reformatories at Jika. On the 12th August we inspected the Industrial School at Ballarat, now partially occupied as a lunatic asylum. The object of this visit was to see whether the buildings would serve the purposes of a reformatory school.

In considering the subject referred to us we have borne in mind the conclusions arrived at by the Board appointed to enquire into the outbreak which occurred at the Jika Reformatory on the 13th of March 1878. The members of the Board were Mr. James, M.L.A., Mr. Macgregor, M.L.A., and Mr. Marcus Clarke. They recommended—

1. That the Reformatory at Jika be broken up as soon as possible.
2. That the Reformatory be placed under control other than that of the Penal Department.
3. That a convenient place in the country be selected, where a trial of the family system may be had.
4. That a commission be appointed to fully enquire into the general condition of the Reformatory and Industrial Schools of Victoria, with a view to recommending some detailed scheme by which such institutions can be governed to the best advantage and at the least cost, apart from either the State schools or the Penal Department.

We regard our own appointment as the carrying out by the Government of the fourth recommendation, understanding that the Government think it better to entrust the matter to a permanent committee rather than to a commission which would be but temporary in its nature.

By the removal of the Industrial Schools from Mr. Duncan's supervision, and by the appointment of Mr. Neal as Acting Inspector, the second recommendation has been nominally carried out, but it is very evident that the change is not such as was contemplated by the Board.

We unanimously recommend "that the Reformatory at Jika be broken up as soon as Jika. possible." We do this on two grounds:—

1st. The situation is most objectionable. It is within the precincts of the prison, and has situation: the surroundings of a prison in every particular.

2nd. The buildings are equally unsuited for the purposes of a reformatory with the situation. Buildings.

The building at Ballarat, now used as a lunatic asylum, affords facilities for the classification of children, though we doubt whether it be exactly suited to what the Jika Board calls the "family system." It is very much better fitted for a reformatory than are the buildings at Jika.

Two hundred acres of land belong to it, which are now practically useless, but would prove very valuable in the working of a reformatory school. We therefore recommend that the Reformatory be removed from Jika to Ballarat with the least possible delay.

The committee of management consider that many things at Jika are faulty, besides the buildings and the situation, and that removal to a new building will be of little use without a thorough reorganization of the management.

The move to Ballarat would imply certain changes, but those will not be sufficient without a change of the management as well. We observed a great want of cleanliness, and great cruelty in the punishments. No language can be too strong to condemn the want of civilizing and reforming influences amongst the boys. In our opinion total abolition of the Reformatory would be preferable to continuing the present management.

We are strongly of opinion that a very small expenditure would suffice to make the building at Ballarat useful for the purpose now recommended.

The Committee have visited the Girls' Reformatory at Jika, and upon it we have to report that the building is suitable, and the management admirable. We wish to record a cordial tribute of praise to Mrs. Bloxham, to whom the success of the management is due.

(Signed)

JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
 GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
 A. C. BROWNLESS,
 ALFRED WOOLLEY, } Members.
 EDWD. E. MORRIS,
 G. D. LANGRIDGE, }

Melbourne, 18th August 1879.

No. 19.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

SIR,

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 29th August 1879.

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 18th instant,* covering reports of the Visiting Committees on the Industrial and Reformatory Schools respectively, and to thank you and your colleagues for your services in connection with those important public institutions.

Adverting particularly to the Report of the Committee on the reformatories, Mr. Berry had already determined upon, and given instructions for, the removal of the boys to Ballarat, being satisfied of the utter unsuitableness of the buildings at present occupied by them.

With reference to yesterday's interview I am to state that, while the Chief Secretary deeply regrets to learn that such a deplorable state of things as was explained to him should exist at the Jika School, he is much obliged to the Committee for promptly bringing the matter under his notice.

A change in the management is beyond doubt imperatively called for, and the transfer of the boys to Ballarat will afford a convenient opportunity for carrying it into effect.

Mr. Berry will be glad if, in the meantime, the Committee will take such steps as they may deem desirable with a view to select for appointment as superintendent some person possessing the special and exceptional qualifications which are essentially necessary for the office, and which can alone afford reasonable assurance to the Government of satisfactory results.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

James H. Graves, Esq., M.P., Chairman
Visiting Committee Industrial and Reformatory Schools.

No. 20.

Superintendent Jika Reformatory to the Chief Secretary.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

Jika Reformatory, Coburg, 1/9/79.

I have been informed by the Acting Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools that it is your intention, on the recommendation of the Visiting Committee, to remove the boys at present in this institution to Ballarat, and in so doing to appoint another superintendent. From this I infer that my services are to be dispensed with. I therefore hereby most respectfully request that I may be informed of the reasons for this step being taken. Attached to the above-mentioned notification I have received an extract from the Report of the Visiting Committee, containing a wholesale condemnation of the management of the Reformatory. I beg to point out that from the few cursory glances the Committee had of the institution they could not possibly know the difficulties to be contended with in managing such a number of criminal youths in an institution possessing so few facilities for doing so.

It is important for you to know that there are three or four of the members of the Committee whom, so far as I know, I have never yet seen, and that as a whole Committee they paid only one visit to the establishment, on which occasion I happened to be absent. Their Report states that they observed "a great want of cleanliness, and great cruelty in punishments." The want of cleanliness was never brought under my notice by the Committee either personally or through any of my officers, as I think would have been only fair before a complaint was made. I admit that just at the time of the visit of the Committee, owing to repairs and alterations to buildings being carried on, the place was so crowded and hampered that it was impossible to preserve the usual cleanliness and order and at the same time carry on the ordinary routine of work and school. As to the personal cleanliness of the boys, unless in the case of perhaps one or two of exceptionally dirty habits, I do not fear to challenge comparison with any other school where only one suit of clothes is worn throughout the week by each boy, as is the case here. Such a thing as vermin is never seen except on new boys on their admission. With regard to cruelty in punishments, the only case spoken of by the Committee at the time of their visit was that of the isolation of two boys in cells after being punished for a violent assault (the third committed by them), and for the first two of which they had been sentenced to one month and three months respectively, in separate confinement, on low diet, in Pentridge. They were getting full diet and exercise daily, and I certainly thought I was carrying out the Acting Inspector's orders so as to prevent any repetition of the offence. As to punishments generally, I heard neither enquiry nor complaint from the Committee. It must not be forgotten that in this place the resources for punishing are very limited, and at the same time the necessity for it is infinitely greater than it would be with proper and effectual classification. I most respectfully submit that I have had no opportunity of showing better results, and have done the best I could, according to my judgment and experience, under the circumstances.

In a few written remarks, which I handed to the Board of Enquiry of 1878, I pointed out the necessity for classification. No accommodation has been given for it. For the first five years

of the history of the institution the discipline and order were highly satisfactory, and the demeanour of the boys was civil and respectful, even if the work of the reformation was not so successful as is desirable. But the result of the investigation by the Board referred to has been (among the really criminal class of the boys) the ruin of necessary discipline and good order, and the growth of insolence, insubordination, and violence, which could not fail to affect also the better class. The immunity from punishment of the ringleaders in the disturbance, and the interference with that discipline which under the unfavorable circumstances was necessary to the preservation of order, has done infinitely more harm than all the alleged evils existing before.

The mark system, the originating and working out of which has caused me an immense amount of labor, was instituted as affording a means of encouragement as well as a milder plan of punishment, but was treated by the bad and reckless among the boys with contempt; and the officers administering it have been subjected to the most degrading insults, which showed that kindness and leniency were utterly out of place with that portion of the inmates. Some thirty or forty thorough young criminals, who have passed through the Industrial Schools, the *Nelson*, and the gaol, have rendered the task of reformation in this institution an impossibility in anything like a satisfactory degree. If the superintendent had the power to recommend the removal of such youths to gaol, or that they be discharged as incorrigible, and, on the other hand, the drafting out of the improved boys to an open reformatory or industrial school, the present reformatory could be made a really useful institution; and by taking possession of some of the contiguous buildings all the accommodation for classification and officers' residences would be obtained with little or no expense. The removal of the boys to an open school at present will be but another mistake.

In conclusion, I think respectfully that I have been condemned unheard, and even without knowing of what I was accused. I have worked hard to overcome insurmountable difficulties, and have endeavored to do my duty faithfully, conscientiously, and according to the best of my ability. I am less concerned about the loss of the position, which has always been an irksome one, than the slur thrown upon me.

I do not ask the Government for any favor, but simply justice, in requesting that you will kindly reconsider your decision, or favor me with the evidence on which it is founded, my plea being that the facts do not justify the cancellation of my appointment.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JOHN ROBERTSON,
Superintendent.

Minutes on above Letter.

MEMO.

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Jika Reformatory, 1/9/79.

Will the Inspector be so good as to forward the attached letter to the Chief Secretary with as little delay as possible.—JOHN ROBERTSON, Superintendent.

The Inspector I. and R. Schools.

Submitted to the Honorable the Chief Secretary. As I have dealt with this case in my letter of this day's date,* I need only add here that I believe Mr. Robertson has endeavored conscientiously to discharge his duties in the face of difficulties of no ordinary nature.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector, 4/9/79.

No. 21.

Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools to the Chief Secretary.

SIR,
Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Melbourne, 4/9/79.

I have the honor to return herewith the reports of the Visiting Committee upon the Industrial and Reformatory Schools.† I also forward the explanation of Mr. Robertson, the Superintendent of the Jika reformatories, concerning the state of the boys' school at the time of the Committee's visit.

I observe that the Committee simply make the same recommendations for the future disposal of the children as those I had previously offered, and of which you have approved. Their condemnation of the Jika Reformatory buildings also corroborates the reports I have submitted on the subject; and in my Report on the department for 1878 I have expressed an opinion that a reorganization of the Reformatory staff is necessary. I need, therefore, make no comments upon those portions of the reports. I must observe, however, with all respect to the opinion of the Committee, that they have scarcely made due allowance for the difficulties of Mr. Robertson's position, and the special circumstances of the Reformatory at the time of their visit. I would repeat what I have said elsewhere, that an almost impossible task was given the superintendent to discharge, and he should scarcely be condemned under the circumstances for having failed to produce the results that are desired. The lack of cleanliness observed (with the one exception of the boy in hospital with dirty legs, which cannot be excused, but may have been the result of accidental

* No. 21.

† Nos. 1 and 18.

Reformatory
Schools.

oversight), if I rightly understand the complaint, was not surprising, considering the upset of the ordinary routine, through the only room that is available as a dining and school room being in the hands of the contractors. In consequence of this, one of the wards had to be used as a schoolroom, and a corridor for the boys to take their meals in. This fact will probably account for the evidences of uncleanness which the Committee saw. I must say for Mr. Robertson that, up to the time the flooring of the messroom began, I have always found the Reformatory quite clean. I examined the whole of the boys from head to foot: some of them had dirty feet, the result evidently of garden work, but except for this they were quite clean. With regard to punishments, I will only say that in such premises, and under existing circumstances, it is most difficult to prevent their being severe, if discipline is to be maintained. It should also be borne in mind that the sharper punishments are only administered (unless in exceptional cases) to the lower division of bad boys. These facts should, I think, be taken into account, when the failure of the Reformatory at Jika and Mr. Robertson's connection therewith are being considered.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. F. NEAL,
Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

[Enclosure No. 1.]

Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools to the Superintendent Jika Reformatory.

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Inspector's Office, King street, 1/9/79.

MEMO.

The accompanying extract from the Report of the Visiting Committee is forwarded for Mr. Robertson's information.

(Signed) H. F. NEAL.

[Extract.]

Jika. We unanimously recommend that the Reformatory at Jika be broken up as soon as possible. We do this on two grounds:—

Situation. 1st. The situation is most objectionable. It is within the precincts of the prison and has surroundings of a prison in every particular.

Buildings. 2nd. The buildings are equally unsuited for the purposes of a reformatory with the situation. The building at Ballarat, now used as a lunatic asylum, affords facilities for the classification of children, though we doubt whether it be exactly suited to what the Jika Board calls the "family system." It is very much better fitted for a reformatory than are the buildings at Jika. Two hundred acres of land belong to it which are now particularly useless but would prove very valuable in the working of a reformatory school. We therefore recommend that the Reformatory be removed from Jika to Ballarat with the least possible delay. The Committee consider that many things at Jika are faulty beside the buildings and the situation, and that removal to a new building will be of little use without a thorough reorganization of the management. The move to Ballarat would imply certain changes, but those will not be sufficient without a change of the management as well. We observed a great want of cleanliness and great cruelty in the punishments. No language can be too strong to condemn the want of civilizing and reforming influences amongst the boys. In our opinion, total abolition of the Reformatory would be preferable to continuing the present management. We are strongly of opinion that a very small expenditure would suffice to make the building at Ballarat useful for the purpose now recommended. The committee have visited the Girls' Reformatory at Jika, and upon it we have to report that the building is suitable and the management admirable. We wish to record a cordial tribute of praise to Mrs. Bloxham, to whom the success of the management is due.

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, }
ALFRED WOOLLEY, } Members.
EDWD. E. MORRIS, }
G. D. LANGRIDGE, }

Noted and returned with remarks attached.—(Sd.) JNO. ROBERTSON, Supt., 3/9/79.

[Remarks on above extract.]

Superintendent Jika Reformatory to the Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

SIR,

Jika Reformatory, Coburg, 3/9/79.

With regard to the statement of the Visiting Committee in the attached extract from their Report, viz. :—"That they observed a great want of cleanliness in this school," I have to point out that at the time of the visit of the members of the Committee the institution appeared to a great disadvantage on account of the building which had up to that time been used as a schoolroom and messroom for the boys undergoing repairs, and consequently not being available for use. The only accommodation for messing purposes was the narrow corridor of the large dormitory building, in which the tables were very close together, and in preparing the meals the boys were necessarily so much in each other's way that it was very difficult to do the work in a cleanly manner. One of the wards adjoining the place had to be used as a schoolroom. The cleaning up of the mess had always to be done before school commenced, so as not to interfere with

its working, and could not be done thoroughly in the time, and there was no time during the day in which the schoolroom could be properly cleaned. Added to this was the fact that the excavation of the earth from the floor of the building being repaired, the soil being placed in the yard and the weather wet, kept the yard in a dirty state with mud and sludge, insomuch that mats were useless among so many boys with muddy boots, and consequently the passages and rooms presented an unsatisfactory appearance. The Report does not specify as to whether the want of cleanliness existed among the boys personally, but, unless the Committee may have noticed some exceptional cases of this kind, I know of no reason for the complaint. The institution has never before, to my knowledge, been blamed for uncleanness but, on the contrary, has been spoken of as being "painfully clean." Next, as regards cruelty in punishment:—I am not aware that the Committee asked for any information with respect to punishment generally. The only case coming under their observation was that of two boys, who had been awarded 25 strokes on the bare breech, with a birch rod, under the new special regulation, for a cowardly and brutal assault on one of their companions. They had each committed two somewhat similar assaults previously, for which they received first one month, and next three months' imprisonment in separate confinement in Pentridge. The Acting Inspector directed that, after the infliction of the birching, they should be kept isolated from the other boys, so as to prevent a repetition of their violence, not as a punishment, as in addition to the fact stated above they had threatened to give any boy who would give evidence against them "a killing." As I had no means of effectually separating them at all times from the other boys, except by keeping them locked up in their cells, that course was followed.* They were allowed full rations and an hour's exercise daily. The cells being rather dark, I ordered windows to be put into the doors, so that the boys could see to do some work (shoemaking and tailoring) and this order was in course of progress at the time the members of the Committee found the boys in the cells eight (8) days after the birching took place. What would have been looked upon as severe treatment to ordinary boys is treated with comparative indifference by these lads. As showing the character of the boys, it may be pointed out that one of these two boys, while serving his last sentence of three months' imprisonment in Pentridge, incurred an intensification of his punishment to the extent of fifteen or sixteen days solitary confinement, on bread and water, for misconduct at different times. Speaking of punishments generally: with the refractory and incorrigible part of the boys, of whom the two above referred to are a sample, unless punishment is severe it is absolutely useless even as a deterrent. And it must also be borne in mind that severe punishment is resorted to only when milder measures, such as bad marks or slight correction, are unheeded or contemned. The extreme language with regard to the want of good influences is, in my opinion, not justified by the circumstances. Under the new regulation, by which a boy can by good behavior render himself eligible for service or discharge in eight or nine months, no matter how long his sentence may be. With the restraining influence of proper discipline, the educating agencies of useful labor and schooling, the inculcation of cleanly, regular, and orderly habits, and the kindness and Christian teaching of their Sabbath school teachers, together with a reasonable amount of recreation, they have a favorable opportunity of receiving such impressions as will be a guide to them in the future, if they will but yield to them. The Committee condemn the management without apparently recognising the difficulties to be contended against, and overlooking the fact that it was almost hopeless to expect any better results under the circumstances of the place. The management have ever had the want of proper means as a barrier to their progress, and each unfavorable notice taken in the public press of the institution and every word of blame, coming as they do to the ears of the inmates, act merely as incentives to insubordination and contempt of good government on the part of the refractory class of them who have caused all the trouble. The transfer of these boys to Ballarat will not transform their natures, and it will be found that the adoption of an entirely open institution if tried for a reformatory is, as yet, a premature step as regards this community.

The Inspector I. and R. Schools.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JNO. ROBERTSON,
Superintendent.

No. 22.

Superintendent of Jika Reformatory to Acting Inspector of I. and R. Schools.

To the Inspector Industrial and Reformatory Schools.

SIR,

Jika Reformatory, Coburg, 5/9/79.

In reply to your memorandum of the 1st instant, informing me of the decision of the Hon. the Chief Secretary, "on the transfer of the boys to Ballarat, to place the institution under the charge of another superintendent," I have the honor to request that you will kindly furnish me with the reasons for my being superseded, and also inform me if my services are to be dispensed with, and, if so, at what time; if not, what position it is intended I shall occupy.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JNO. ROBERTSON,
Superintendent.

Minutes on above Letter.

Industrial and Reformatory Schools Department,
Jika Reformatory, 8/9/79.

MEMO.

Will the Inspector please forward the attached letter to the Hon. the Chief Secretary at once.—(Sd.) JNO. ROBERTSON, Superintendent.

The Inspector I. and R. Schools.

* With regard to this case, it is right I should say that Mr. Robertson misinterpreted my instruction, as I pointed out to him directly the matter came under my notice. In view of the threat made by the boys and their former violence, I directed that, for the protection of the others, they should be isolated, explaining to the superintendent at the time that, if at work with other boys, an instructor should be between them and the others so as to prevent violence, a similar precaution to be taken at other times. It was in my opinion a mistake to keep them in confinement.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, 4/9/79.

Submitted to the Hon. the Chief Secretary.—(Sd.) H. F. NEAL, Acting Inspector, 9/9/79.

Adverse Report of the Board and the general unsatisfactory state of the Reformatory, and both with respect to general management and the higher objects of the institution.—(Sd.) G. B., 12/9.

No. 23.

SECOND REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE TO REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Reformatory Schools in Victoria, have the honor to present our Second Report.

We are of opinion that the superintendents of reformatory schools should have full authority and entire responsibility in their respective establishments, and we unanimously recommend—

- 1st. The abolition of the office of Inspector.
- 2nd. Placing the Superintendent, whose appointment is now pending, in a position of supreme authority and entire responsibility for the management of the Reformatory at Ballarat, under a committee appointed by the Chief Secretary, or Governor in Council.

We disapprove of the proposal to expend large additional sums on buildings for the Reformatory children.

(Signed)

JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, M.D.
G. D. LANGRIDGE.
EDWD. E. MORRIS.
ALFRED WOOLLEY.

Melbourne, 25th September 1879.

No. 24.

Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools to Chief Secretary.

Remarks on Visiting Committee's Second Report. (*Vide* No. 6.)

No. 25.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 9th October 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to acknowledge the receipt of the Committee's Second Report, dated 25th ultimo,* and to state that it is receiving the Chief Secretary's careful consideration.

Mr. Berry would be glad to know if the Committee is in a position to submit to him the name of any person qualified to fill the position of Superintendent of the school at Ballarat.

I have, &c.,

The Vice-Chairman
Visiting Committee of Reformatory Schools,
&c., &c.

(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 26.

Visiting Committee to Chief Secretary.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

32 Collins Street West,
Melbourne, 10th October 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of yesterday's date† and to state that the Visiting Committee is not yet in a position to submit the name of any person qualified to fill the position of Superintendent of the Reformatory School at Ballarat.

Seventy-five applications were received, and from these, after careful sifting, a few have been selected for further examination and personal interview with applicants.

No time will be lost in communicating the name of the successful applicant when the Committee has arrived at a decision.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) GAVIN G. BROWN,
Vice-Chairman.

* No. 23.

† No. 25.

No. 27.

Reformatory
Schools.

THIRD REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Reformatory Schools in Victoria, have the honor to present our Third Report.

In conformity with your request, conveyed verbally and by letter of the Under Secretary, dated 29th August last,* we took steps for the selection of a superintendent, and have now to report that after full enquiry and consideration we have unanimously agreed to nominate Commander James Evans, R.N., for appointment as Superintendent of the Reformatory School (now at Jika, but to be removed to Ballarat), at a salary of Four hundred and twenty-five pounds per annum, with quarters, fuel, light and water.

We have further to report that we have also unanimously agreed to recommend that Mr. E. Charles Connor be appointed as Schoolmaster and second officer in charge, at a salary of Two hundred and eighty pounds per annum, with quarters, fuel, light and water.

We have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman.
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman.
A. C. BROWNLESS, M.D.
ALFRED WOOLLEY.
EDWD. E. MORRIS.

Melbourne, 20th October 1879.

No. 28.

Under Secretary to Visiting Committee.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 21st October 1879.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to acknowledge the receipt of your ^{20th October.} Third Report on the Reformatory Schools,† and to inform you that the gentleman nominated by you (as per margin) for the office of Superintendent of the Reformatory School for boys will be appointed accordingly, Mr. E. Charles Connor being at the same time appointed Schoolmaster and second officer in charge. The appointments will date from the 1st proximo, at the respective salaries recommended in the Report, subject to the approval of Parliament.

Commander
James Evans,
R.N.

The Visiting Committee of the
Reformatory Schools, &c., &c.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 29.

Under Secretary to the Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 21st October 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor, by direction of the Chief Secretary, to forward for your information a copy of the Third Report, dated 20th instant,† of the Visiting Committee of the Reformatory Schools, and to inform you that the Chief Secretary has approved of the recommendations of the Committee being carried into effect from the 1st proximo.

The Acting Inspector
Reformatory and Industrial Schools,
&c., &c.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 30.

Under Secretary to Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 27th November 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you that the Governor in Council has been pleased to appoint Commander James Evans, R.N., to the office of Superintendent of the Reformatory School for boys, in the Chief Secretary's Department, at the salary of £425 per annum, from the 1st of November 1879.

The Acting Inspector of Industrial Schools.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

No. 31.

*Under Secretary to Acting Inspector I. and R. Schools.*Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 27th November 1879.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you that the Governor in Council has been pleased to appoint E. C. Connor to the office of Schoolmaster and second officer in charge of the Reformatory School for boys, in the Chief Secretary's Department, at the salary of £280 per annum, from the 1st November 1879.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. H. ODGERS.

The Acting Inspector of Industrial Schools.

No. 32.

FOURTH REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE TO REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

We, the Visiting Committee of the Reformatory Schools of Victoria, have the honor to submit our Fourth Report.

We have to report that we find the position of the Reformatory children at Abbotsford in all respects satisfactory; and that, in accordance with the requirements of the department, the girls are kept entirely separate from those of the Industrial School.

We found only nine inmates, and were informed by the Superioress that if the number was increased to about twenty, then new, separate, and specially suitable buildings would be erected for their accommodation without cost to the State.

We have, &c.,
(Signed) JAMES H. GRAVES, Chairman,
GAVIN G. BROWN, Vice-Chairman,
ALFRED WOOLLEY,
EDWD. E. MORRIS,
A. C. BROWNLESS,
G. D. LANGRIDGE.

No. 33.

Visiting Committee to the Chief Secretary.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

We, the undersigned members of the Visiting Committee, paid a visit to the Reformatory on Saturday, May 29.

We found everything going on very well, though the work in connection with the building of the Superintendent's house and the alterations for the reception of the Refractory Division are not yet completed.

A few days ago a vague charge of cruel punishment at the Reformatory was inserted in one of the local (Ballarat) papers. We made it our business especially to enquire into this matter, and we are of opinion that it is wholly without foundation.

When we consider the character and purpose of the Reformatory we are satisfied that the amount of punishment of any kind inflicted there is very small, and that punishment by means of extra work (fatigue) has, with advantage, taken the place of much corporal punishment; and, lastly, that when corporal punishment is inflicted it is hedged round with every advisable precaution against abuse.

The system pursued of careful classification, of trust and confidence in those boys who prove that they deserve it, and of introducing various means of softening and civilizing the boys, has our warmest approval. Improvement is manifest in their very looks.

With respect to the inmates running away, we would report that when the boys were removed from Jika, where the building was surrounded with a high wall, to the comparative freedom of the building at Wendouree, it was to be expected that escapes would at first be attempted. It will be found that as time has gone on, and the boys became more accustomed to their new surroundings, that the escapes have been less frequent.

When Captain Evans was selected for the position of Superintendent the Committee formed strong hopes of the good that would arise. The good actually effected exceeds our hopes. The future effects of the present method of treatment cannot fail to be for the public benefit.

(Signed) EDWD. E. MORRIS,
ALFRED WOOLLEY.

Melbourne, 2nd June 1880.