

the girls' department are not suitable, and more seats are required.* The bath-rooms are now properly divided, and very complete in their appointments.

The last allusion naturally leads me to call your particular attention to the question of an adequate water supply. Although there is a windmill to raise water from the well, also a large concrete tank on the premises in which the rain water is collected, the supply is frequently deficient, and recourse has to be made to carting water from the river Selwyn, distant four miles from the institution. In an establishment of such size and importance, a good, ample, and unfailing water supply is a desideratum. I would therefore recommend the Government to instruct their Engineer to furnish an early report on the feasibility of directing into the grounds of the institution a branch from the Malvern Water-race, which, it is reported, may soon be brought within two or three miles of the school. I may further remark that, besides being desirable for fire extinction and other purposes, the water might be utilized in irrigating the land, which, as I have before intimated, is poor and light.

There are now 200 acres laid down in grass, 100 acres in turnips; the live stock consists of 550 sheep, thirteen cows, and five horses for farming purposes. It would be undoubtedly a move in the right direction for the Government to encourage the laying down in grass of as much land as possible, (while teaching the elder boys,) to render the institution more self-supporting.

The children are making good progress in their education. When an efficient schoolmistress is appointed, there would be little more to be desired in this direction.† Music is taught; a bandmaster attends twice a week, and is forming a brass band, with considerable success. Religious services are held on Thursdays and Sundays. The only addition to the teaching staff that might be deemed desirable would be the appointment of an efficient sewing-mistress,‡ so as to enable the institution to keep a proper supply of new clothing in stock, while the old clothes could be repaired; and instructions might be given with advantage in knitting socks and stockings, and articles of a similar nature.

The children, excepting the younger ones, who are suffering from chilblains, are in good health, and seem to be happy and well cared for. Taking into consideration the period during which the institution has been in existence, and the condition of the majority of the children when admitted, there is reason for congratulation in the fact that two deaths only have occurred—namely, Sarah Way, aged three years, who died on the 27th October, 1877, and William Smith, aged six years, who died on the 3rd December, 1879. The first was a very delicate child, suffering from curvature of the spine and rickets, and in a very poor condition. The latter died from croup, after one day's illness, and before I could be summoned to attend him. I have invariably taken the precaution to remove at an early stage, into the Christchurch Hospital, any cases indicating febrile or enteric symptoms, as a preventive against contagion, and also on the ground of economy.

The rations that I inspected I found to be of good quality. The master informed me that the only instance of any complaint was on one occasion when the bread was insufficiently baked, and this breach was very readily rectified by the contractor.

I trust I may not be considered presumptuous in drawing the attention of the Government to the serious consequences that may arise from the inmates of both sexes being kept in the same institution to the advanced age of sixteen or seventeen years. Notwithstanding the utmost vigilance, care, and attention, any immorality occurring would be a stain on the management of the institution, and seriously impair its usefulness. Taking into consideration character, early education, and hereditary tendency, it appears to me a question that ought to be answered as to whether the two sexes ought not to be placed in separate establishments. The present place might be maintained for the boys, for teaching them farming, trades, &c.; while one for the girls might be located nearer Christchurch, a large area of land being unnecessary. While learning cooking, house and needlework, &c., the girls might frequently be visited by ladies, a practice that does not now obtain, but which would tend to impart a higher tone of feeling and character. Any girls wishing to be instructed in dairy work could be apprenticed out to farmers.

In conclusion, I must pay a tribute of praise to the whole staff of servants, who appear to be particularly painstaking, and doing all in their power to make the management of the institution effective and creditable. Generally, I am happy to be able to inform you that I was very favourably impressed with the result of my inspection.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I have, &c..

H. H. PRINS.

No. 12.

CAVERSHAM INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

1. *The Master of the School to the Secretary for Education.*

SIR,—

Industrial School, Caversham, 7th February, 1881.

In accordance with the request contained in your letter (of the number and date No. 68, 6th January, 1881,) I have the honor to state that the institution was founded in the year 1867. At that time there was assembled in Dunedin a class of people from the neighbouring colonies, many of whom were leading an irregular and dissipated life, whose children were likely to become pests to society. The late Mr. Branigan, then Commissioner of Police, Mr. Macandrew, then Superintendent of the Province, Sir Julius Vogel, then Provincial Treasurer, and Mr. Hislop, then Secretary to the Education Board, saw that it was absolutely necessary to pass some measure whereby they might provide a home for those children, whose parents were leading such lives that it became dangerous to the future well-being of their children and society for the children to remain under their control.

On referring to the record-book I find that, during the first year after the establishment of the institution, nearly the whole of the boys and girls who were committed were taken from brothels, and their parents described by the police as being of the lowest class. This institution, therefore, was

* This has now been attended to.—July, 1881.

† The vacancy has since been filled.

‡ A sewing-mistress has now been appointed.