

Perfect classification possible.

If these two hopeless classes are removed from Burnham, I see no difficulty in carrying out in the existing institution an almost perfect system of classification, with most excellent results. There will be no necessity for any detention-yard, and this space will be available for a purpose far more beneficial to the institution, such as a gymnasium or other improvement.

Age-limit for State control.

In connection with the disposal of these two classes referred to, it must not be lost sight of that the control of the State over these boys ceases at the age of twenty-one. At the present time most of them are between sixteen and nineteen. It is from these classes that so many Burnham boys qualify for long sentences in gaol. It will become a serious question as to whether the State, admitting its failure to reform these boys, will be prepared to undertake the responsibility of turning them loose upon society when they arrive at the age of twenty-one. It is not in any way necessary for me to discuss this aspect here.

Cottage homes. Burnham cottage homes ineffective.

In connection with the question of improved classification, there naturally arises the consideration of the result of the cottage-home system. I do not consider that this system is made use of at Burnham to the extent that it might be, with great advantage to the inmates. There are two so-called cottage homes there, to one of which there are five boys attached, and to the other three boys. These boys go to the home every evening at about 7 o'clock, go to bed at 8, get up at 6 next morning and return to the institution. They eat no meals in the home, and practically breathe nothing of that atmosphere of home-life, which, to my mind, is so essential to the proper upbringing of dependent children. I know of no direction in which so much valuable work might be done in reclaiming certain boys of the type of many of the present boys at Burnham, than by establishing a proper system of cottage homes. The expense would not be great, and the results would be invaluable. The only difficulty would be the obtaining of suitable persons to take charge. On the discretion shown in the selection of these would depend the entire success of the system.

Boys' Training-farm at Levin.

I have had an opportunity of visiting and of thoroughly inspecting the Boys' Training Farm at Levin. This is an industrial school recently established by the Department in furtherance of the scheme entered upon some years ago for classification of the industrial-school children throughout the colony. To my mind it is a great and inspiring advance in the interests of those children, and reflects credit upon all concerned in its establishment. It is not a reformatory, and, therefore, of course, cannot be judged as to its results by the same standard that one would apply to Burnham; for at Burnham there are the picked bad boys from all the industrial schools, public and private, throughout the colony, besides the boys directly committed by the Magistrates. But at Levin the cottage-home system is an important part of the general training, and with excellent results so far. Three more cottage homes are in process of erection, so that every possible opportunity is to be given of testing the value of the system. The boys appreciate the homes, and this is the best warranty of value.

Burnham might be equally successful.

Admirable as the work is that is being done at Levin under the enlightened and sympathetic management of Mr. Burlinson, assisted and helped forward as it is by the generous treatment of the Department, and admitting that the material upon which Mr. Burlinson has to work, as regards the boys' natures, is very different there from what it is at Burnham, yet I can see no sound reason why Burnham, with the removal of the incorrigibles and defectives, and improved classification of the remainder by the establishment of cottage homes, and in a few other directions, should not, in a way, prove just as successful a factor as Levin in dealing with those children whose care the State has to assume.

THE MANAGER AND MATRON.

Baseless statements.

It will, of course, be expected that I should express my opinion of Mr. and Mrs. Archey in relation to their duties at Burnham, and to the manner in which they discharge them. A great many wild and baseless statements have been made about both of them, and I have already dealt with the general aspect of these as applied to the staff and the inmates.

Charge of intemperance untrue.

It has been attempted to prove habits of intemperance against Mr. Archey. I have thoroughly sifted this, and am of the opinion that there is no foundation in fact for such an allegation. The evidence against the allegation is overpowering.

Little real fault.

Looking to the material with which the Manager has to deal, to the extreme difficulties of his position, to the want of sympathy and help in his work, and to the lack of up-to-date arrangements in the buildings and consequent facilities for the proper carrying-out of his duties, I am astonished, as the result of this long and searching inquiry, that there is so little real fault to be found with the institution and its management. I consider that it constitutes a great record for Mr. Archey. It would, of course, be quite easy to find fault with many small details, and the effect of these