

small measure to the tactful and efficient manner in which the disciplinary officer handled the class of sometimes over fifty men, enabling me to get the work done with practically no friction.

I find that interesting discussions and talks on current events and topics of local interest appeal to the men, and keep them thinking while discussing them with each other, instead of drifting to more sordid matters, will do them good now apart from anything they may learn, and will I hope eventually broaden their outlook, and lead them to recognize their responsibilities as good citizens.

#### POINT HALSWELL BORSTAL INSTITUTION FOR YOUNG WOMEN.

(Superintendent, Miss G. WATKIN.)

At the beginning of the year there were 42 inmates in the Borstal, and 12 in the Reformatory; at the close there were 43 in the Borstal, and 6 in the Reformatory.

The general health of the inmates has been good, but we did not escape the influenza epidemic in July.

*Aims and Purposes.*—Throughout all the activities of the institution, whether these be industrial, educational, or recreational, one fundamental idea exists, which is that out of these girls, who come in as wasters and are frequently dangers to society, we have to make good citizens who will be assets to the Dominion. Keeping this object in mind, it will be obvious that our industries cannot be as financially successful as might be the case in other institutions. We should probably get better returns from our laundry or our workrooms if a girl went into one or the other and was employed there during the whole of her stay here. But, as our object is the mental, moral, and physical training of the inmates, they are constantly moved round in order to avoid that dulling of the whole nature which is a danger in institution life. Considering what I have said above, I think that very great credit is due to the officers in charge of the various departments for the good work which is turned out. The girls also owe very much to the officers for the interest shown in their individual well-being and development, and to the help given them in that way.

*Activities.*—During the year a new departure has been made. It was thought desirable to introduce a more actively educational aspect of the work, and with that end in view two teachers were appointed for school, drill, and games. All the girls turn out for twenty minutes of brisk physical exercises first thing in the morning, and on Saturday afternoons there are games of basketball, &c., the object of these being not merely physical development, but also the increase of the team spirit, and the inculcation of the idea of "playing the game" both on the playing-field and in life. In school the result sought after is not that of "passing standards" or obtaining Proficiency Certificates, but the cultivation of a right attitude towards life. To attain that end the classes frequently take the form of discussions on current events, or of great happenings or great people in history.

Another new feature has been the formation of a certain number of garden-plots, each of which is allotted to an individual inmate. These they are allowed to cultivate (within reasonable limits) as they please, with the advice of the gardening teacher. The produce of the plots is their own property, and it is pleasing to note the unselfishness frequently shown in giving this to others less fortunate than themselves.

*Visitors.*—Our grateful thanks are due to the various visitors who have come from time to time to assist us in the training of the girls. Among these I should like to mention Dr. Platts-Mills, who, with the assistance of Mrs. Gaby and Mrs. Preston, gave the inmates a course of lessons in home nursing, at the close of which quite a number of certificates were granted. The knowledge thus gained should be most useful in the future. Mrs. Coventry also came regularly and held a class in knitting, in which some of the girls became quite expert; and Mrs. John Hannah trained half a dozen girls in a short play, which was later given before a most appreciative audience.

*Borstal Association.*—In August a Borstal Association was formed, under the presidency of Her Excellency Lady Alice Fergusson, to work as a welfare organization in connection with this institution. This association is giving very valuable assistance in two directions. Some of its members come out every Thursday evening, bringing other friends with them, in order to give the girls an evening's entertainment. This takes various forms: sometimes it is a concert, or it may be a play, or community singing, &c.; but it always affords great pleasure to the girls, and is a delightful break in their regular routine. The other branch of work undertaken by the association is the after-care work for the girls. Its members undertake the responsibility of placing the inmates when they are released on parole, and of providing each with a real friend to guide, help, and encourage them during the first difficult months of freedom. It is hard to overestimate the value of this work, when it is remembered how few of these girls have any home influences or friends likely to help them when they make their fresh start in the outer world. On the 30th September Her Excellency and the other ladies of the association visited the institution in the afternoon for an inaugural meeting, when they were welcomed by the Controller General. During the afternoon each girl had the privilege of a few words with the President.

*Other Entertainments.*—In April Mrs. Henderson, with some friends, gave the girls a party which was much enjoyed, while at Christmas Her Excellency Lady Alice Fergusson and a number of other ladies sent us presents of good things for our dinner and tea-tables. Christmas parties were given by Mrs. Glover, of the Salvation Army, and the Justices of the Peace Association, on both of which occasions the inmates spent a very happy time, and much gratitude was expressed to the donors for their kind thought of us.