

(No. 65.)



1873.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH ADMINISTRATOR OF PUBLIC
GRANTS.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be
printed, July 11, 1873.



Colonial Secretary's Office, 2nd April, 1873.

THE Colonial Secretary will feel obliged if the Administrator of Charitable Grants will, as early as possible, furnish for his perusal all Reports which have been made during the last six months, ending 31st ultimo, with respect to every child "boarded out:" as to the food and clothing supplied; the school attended, with their attendance and educational attainments; their religious instruction; and generally the care bestowed upon them.

(Signed) J. R. SCOTT.

The Administrator Charitable Grants.

Queen's Asylum, New Town, 6th January, 1873.

SIR,

As a few details connected with the expenditure of this Institution may not be without their value at this present moment, I have the honor to direct your attention to the following particulars:—

1. Taking the cost of provisions and clothing for a child, calculated upon the Report for 1871, it will be seen that the amount was about £8 5s., or 3s. 2d. per week.

2. If from this sum the amount on account of provisions raised at the Farm and charged in that item be deducted, the result will be £6 5s. per annum, or 2s. 5d. per week.

3. The *cash* expenditure, therefore, to the Government was really only 2s. 5d. per week per child, as the produce of the Farm made a return double in amount to its expenses.

4. In specifying the items provisions and clothing, it is on the ground that they only would form the increase of cost of a child admitted into the Asylum, that, with its present staff and conveniences, could accommodate one-third more inmates than have been within its walls for twelve months back.

5. The result, as a consequence, has been a greatly increased expenditure, whilst the interests of the Institution have more or less been jeopardised.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. COVERDALE, *Principal.*

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 4th April, 1873.

SIR,

I BEG to forward for your perusal a letter from the Principal of the Queen's Asylum, of 6th January last, showing that the increased cost to the Colony of each child added to the number of the present inmates, up to such an extent as would not require an addition to the staff, is about two shillings and five-pence per week, and that there are vacancies for nearly a hundred children.

It is suggested that, unless special reasons exist for a larger allowance, money payments above, say, two shillings and sixpence per week (which have assumed a permanent character) on account of destitute children should be reduced, as the Government is in a position to offer the alternative of their maintenance and education at that Institution.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

JAMES R. SCOTT.

The Administrator Charitable Grants.

Hobart Town, 31st May, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th ult., adverting to a communication addressed to you by the Principal of the Queen's Asylum, and suggesting that, unless special reasons exist for a larger allowance, all money payments for destitute children above 2s. 6d. per week should be reduced, as the Government is in a position to offer the alternative of their maintenance and education at that Institution; and, as I conceive that there are special reasons of the utmost importance why this proposal should not be carried into effect, I consider it my duty to bring these under your consideration before it is finally decided on.

It is desirable that, in the first place, I should point out what the effect of the suggested reduction would be.

The children on whose account payments of a permanent character above 2s. 6d. per week are now made are as follows:—

In the Boys' Home	26 boys
In the Female Industrial School	23 girls
Boarded out in Hobart Town	40 boys and girls
Ditto, Launceston	2 girls
Ditto, Country Districts	2 boy and girl
	—
Total	93
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It is certain that neither in the Boys' Home nor in the Female School could these children be maintained at the reduced rate. The annual income at the disposal of the Governors of them is at present barely sufficient to meet the expenditure; and the deprivation of half the allowance received from the Treasury would simply occasion the collapse of both Institutions. Nor can it be expected that private persons entrusted with the care of children can afford to take charge of them at a smaller rate than establishments receiving considerable extraneous aid. It follows, therefore, that the inevitable result of the proposed reduction would be to sweep the whole of these boys and girls into the Queen's Asylum; and I admit that, if their disposal were merely a matter of money, if the question were only how their material wants could be supplied at the cheapest possible cost, this would be the most economical course; but the subject is one which unfortunately cannot be so summarily and simply disposed of. When the Government consents to take charge of these destitute children, it assumes, beyond the mere duty of feeding and clothing them, a moral obligation of a far higher character. As their guardian, acting *in loco parentis*, it is bound to promote, so far as it can, the happiness of their young lives; to supply them with the best religious and moral education in its power; and, generally, so to train them up that they shall have at least a fair chance of becoming hereafter useful and respectable members of society. And, bearing in mind what a fruitful source of gain or loss to the community these children will be, as they may grow up to be members either of the industrial or criminal classes, and how thus a wise present liberality must in that light be regarded as the truest economy, it appears to me that all mere questions of expense should be strictly subordinated to the main consideration how the responsibilities the State has undertaken towards them (and, it may also be said, towards the public in regard to them) can be most effectively fulfilled. Setting aside, therefore, the financial aspect of the subject as of secondary importance, the true question raised by the Colonial Secretary's proposal is—Where will the children affected by it have the best chance of being trained up into good men and women—under their present treatment or in the Queen's Asylum? In making the comparisons which this inquiry necessitates it will be well, beforehand, to lay down some standard by which a right judgment may be arrived at. As it will be conceded that early training in a well-ordered home, where all the affections and sympathies of human nature are encouraged and called forth, affords the best prospect of bringing children up to become good and virtuous members of society, so it follows that whatever system of treating those unhappily deprived of this advantage most nearly assimilates to it must be the most successful. It is this test which I propose to apply in determining the merits of the different methods we have to consider.

The Queen's Asylum.

I feel compelled to say that, in my opinion, the training in the Queen's Asylum is that which least fulfils the required conditions, and least approaches home life. I distinctly disclaim all desire to convey censure upon those whose duty it is to carry out the system there established: it is the system itself I desire to attack, as one under which it is hopeless to expect any good results.

Massed together in large numbers, under a small and inadequate staff of officials, who cannot pretend to take any individual care of or interest in the children under them, the inmates of the Asylum grow up deprived not only of all parental love, but of even the smallest semblance of regard or sympathy from anyone about them. Receiving no industrial training calculated to interest and awaken their intelligence, passing a dull monotonous life of discipline, devoid alike of the elements

either of happiness or intellectual progress, what wonder is it if they pass out into the world dull, stupid, and unamiable, and eventually become useless and vicious members of society. For, how is it possible to expect that a dreary and loveless childhood of this kind, wherein all the finer instincts, all the most wholesome affections are suppressed, can develop itself into a healthy manhood? Truly I fear there is but small hope that children so brought up will become, in the words of the Report of the Royal Commission, "law-obeying, decent, and well-conducted members of society." If they do, it will be in spite of their training in the Asylum, and only owing to their falling into kind and benevolent hands in after-life, under whose considerate treatment their better feelings may be fostered and brought out. No: the Queen's Asylum will not stand the test: it is an overgrown unwieldy machine, wherein nothing approaching to home training, no touch of human love and sympathy, not even useful industrial education, is to be found. I advisedly repeat the opinion I expressed in my evidence before the Royal Commission—that I should have much better hope of a child brought up in a home where the parents are not altogether as they ought to be, but where, in spite of errors and misconduct, the ties of family affection are felt and acknowledged, than of one trained in the stagnant atmosphere of the Queen's Asylum as it is now conducted.

The Boys' Home.

No Institution can really in all things be an adequate substitute for a true domestic home, but in this establishment every endeavour is made to supply its place. The limited number of the inmates renders the individual training of each of them comparatively easy, and the prevailing principle of management may be likened to that of a large family. The radical defect which underlies the whole system of the Queen's Asylum is here not visible. Under the daily and hourly supervision of intelligent and kind-hearted teachers, and constantly visited by the benevolent founders and the other Governors of the Institution, each boy is made to feel that he is the object of a watchful and unceasing care, and that an earnest interest is taken in his welfare; the bitter and benumbing sense of isolation and desertion is dispelled, and the grand principle of gratitude and human love is promoted and allowed room for healthy growth and development. To a sufficient education in elementary subjects, in which the progress made is very satisfactory, is added training, under an experienced gardener, in garden work, in the tending and milking of cows, in cooking, and the whole of the indoor work of the establishment. The boys are thus taught habits of industry, of cleanliness, and order, which cannot fail to be of essential service to them in after life. The appearance of the inmates is strikingly indicative of the kindly nature of their treatment, the expression of their faces is bright and cheerful, no trace of slavish fear is to be seen; and it is evident from their manner that they regard their excellent Master and Mistress with feelings of loving respect, and that they are happy and contented with their position. The Home has not been long enough established to enable its merits to be tested to any considerable extent by results, but so far as they have extended they have not been unsatisfactory, the more especially when it is remembered that the boys first received into it were of the vagrant class, and had been running neglected about the streets for years before their admission. Out of 10 who have been apprenticed out 2 only have misconducted themselves, and of the remainder the reports received from their employers are very favourable and encouraging. In short, I regard the Boys' Home as an excellent Institution, doing good work, and I should deprecate exceedingly any course of action which might have the effect of closing it.

The Female Industrial School.

A very recent inspection has satisfied me that the observations I have applied to the Boys' Home are equally merited by the sister Institution at the Barracks. The premises in which the work of the School is now carried on are commodious, and in a healthy and cheerful position. The girls are in small and easily managed numbers, and are presided over by a sensible and kind Matron, under whose judicious and motherly treatment they appear to be happy and well conducted. Industrial training in useful pursuits, such as washing, cooking, needlework, &c. is daily carried on, not only with much advantage to the finances of the establishment, but with reasonable hope that the inmates will thus be formed into good domestic servants. Both secular and religious teaching is afforded, and above all, the system of rule has the grand merit of addressing itself to the individual mind and heart of each girl, drawing forth her good feelings and healthier affections and repressing her bad qualities. I am informed that very favourable reports have been received of the conduct of the girls who have been apprenticed out; and there is every reason, I think, to regard the Institution as a highly valuable one which it would be exceedingly unwise to disturb.

Boarding Out.

There can be no doubt that this mode of dealing with children, if carried out under proper conditions, most nearly approaches ordinary home life, and affords the best substitute for true parental training. If entrusted at an early age to the care of kind and well-conducted persons, children will soon regard them in the light of parents; whilst the latter, on the other hand, performing constantly towards the children all the offices of a parent, learn to take a warm interest in them, and thus a bond of mutual affection springs up which goes far to replace the want of real parental love. In the free atmosphere of a respectable household, where there is no daily round of depressing monotonous discipline, but where unrestricted association of brothers and sisters, and friendly intercourse with

schoolfellows and neighbours are permitted, the healthy growth of natural ties and domestic affections is promoted, and the children are surrounded by humanising influences of infinite value which can not be brought to bear upon them under any other system or in any Institution. Nor am I speaking merely theoretically, for I am happy to say that, so far as the experiment has been tried in Hobart Town, the practical working of it has been very encouraging. On the 22nd ultimo I made a personal inspection at the respective homes of the children, 40 in number, who are thus provided for. My visit was made without the slightest previous warning of my intention, and I therefore saw everything in its usual every-day aspect. I found the children established in every instance in comfortable dwellings situated in the more quiet and retired streets of the Town. The women in charge of them seemed to be cheerful kindly motherly persons, taking an evident interest and pride in the appearance of their wards, whilst the children on their part appeared to be on familiar and affectionate terms with them. In no single instance could I detect the smallest indication of harshness or severity of treatment; the children were smiling and cheerful, and apparently happy and contented: had I not known their position I should have judged them to have been the younger members of a well-conducted family of the lower classes. Their conduct was reported to me to be generally very good; and I was somewhat amused to learn that if any of them evinced any intractability, a threat from the Inspecting Officer of removing them to the Queen's Asylum or Cascades was sufficient to reduce them to a state of tearful and abject submission. The children are all sent regularly to school on week-days, and to the Sunday Schools of their various denominations on Sundays; the payment indeed of the allowance for their maintenance being withheld until a certificate as to their attendance is produced from their respective Schoolmasters. They are thus receiving the benefit of teaching under the best Masters of the Board of Education. Their material wants seemed to be well cared for. A close examination showed me that they were in every case amply supplied with good clothing and sufficient bedding. Visiting at their dinner hour I found many of them at their meals, or about to sit down to them, and I had an opportunity of observing that the food supplied them was ample in quantity and good in quality. The result in short of an inspection, which was certainly not made "in a perfunctory manner," satisfied me that in no other way could the happiness, the moral training, and the material comfort of these children have been so well secured. I cannot, therefore, but think that their removal to the Queen's Asylum would be a grievous mistake; and I very earnestly deprecate the hasty abandonment of a system which so far appears to work exceedingly well, and which there are no other grounds for condemning than those suggested by a doubtful economy.

Having thus, Sir, completed the review of the different modes of dealing with these unfortunate children, and applied to each of them the test which I proposed to institute; having plainly expressed my sincere convictions in regard to their respective merits; and having placed on record my unqualified dissent from the course of action proposed in your communication, I can now only leave the determination of the question, and the heavy responsibility which attaches to its decision, in your hands, in the earnest hope that before any changes in the direction suggested by Dr. Coverdale are finally resolved on, the whole subject will receive at the hands of the Government the deliberate consideration which its importance demands.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. TARLETON,
Administrator of Charitable Grants.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 16th June, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, which I note is dated 31st May, but which did not reach me till the 12th instant, in reply to my letter of 4th April last.

Your remark with reference to the Boys' Home and Girls' Industrial School, *that you would deprecate any course of action which might have the effect of closing them*, is evidently based upon an erroneous impression as to the scope of my letter, which was intended to apply to Out-door relief, and not to Institutions. Your mistake may have been caused by the general terms used by me, and I do not regret the result, which has led you to report, in very forcible language, upon those two Establishments,—the Queen's Asylum, and the farming-out of children as practised by you,—drawing comparisons between the systems.

I take the opportunity to confirm, to the best of my knowledge, your eulogiums upon the Boys' Home and Girls' Industrial School, and to express my appreciation of the benefits conferred upon the community by those benevolent individuals who have founded, and who support, these and kindred Institutions. Their number I would gladly see increased.

Before the Government give such consideration to the subject-matter of your letter as its importance demands, I would desire to be furnished with precise information of your practical acquaintance with the several questions involved, so that I may understand how far your statements are based upon personal knowledge and how far upon report.

The emphatic condemnation by one in your responsible position of the Queen's Asylum, *as it is now conducted*, calls for tangible proof, and necessitates fuller information in detail, so as to enable the Government to make improvements where practicable.

I should be pleased, therefore, to receive from you a definite statement of the nature and extent of your knowledge, from personal observation and inspection, of the several Institutions, together with their respective systems and results, between which you have drawn comparisons.

Without at present questioning the accuracy of your observations, I feel bound to state, for your information, that my own frequent visits to the Queen's Asylum, and my opportunities during the last six years of seeing the children, have not led me to the conclusions arrived at by you; whereas your evidence before the Royal Commission, to which you allude, impressed me with the belief that you were at that time in ignorance of the routine of that Establishment; and although you were entrusted, as Administrator of Charitable Grants, with the decision of applications for the admission of children, you did not exercise such an inspection over its training as enabled you to speak of its results with authority. I am desirous of giving you the opportunity of disabusing me of what may be an erroneous impression.

With respect to the children boarded or farmed out, I beg to remind you that I have received no reply to my letter of the 2nd April asking for the reports as to their general condition and school attendance,—a request which I made after a perusal of the papers connected with each case, as I found the *documentary* evidence, especially as to the latter point, defective. Will you also inform me if your visit of inspection on the 22nd ultimo was the first and only systematic visit you have made; or if you are generally guided by the reports received through the Police and Relieving Officer?

I shall feel obliged if you will furnish the above information with as little delay as possible. I have no doubt, from the emphatic language in which your opinions are expressed, that they are founded upon exact information readily available.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAMES R. SCOTT.

WM. TARLETON, *Esq., Administrator Charitable Grants.*

Public Buildings, 8th July, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 16th ultimo, in reply to mine of the 31st May last, in which you request me to furnish you with a definite statement of the nature and extent of my knowledge from personal observation and inspection of the several Institutions, together with their respective systems and results between which I have drawn comparisons, in order that you may understand how far my statements are based upon personal knowledge, and how far upon personal report.

An unusual amount of Magisterial and Coroner's duty, and a heavy pressure of work in completing the arrangements necessary to effect the change of system in the administration of out-door relief from the payment of money allowances to the issue of rations, have prevented me from complying with your wishes at an earlier date,—but I now beg to furnish you with the following reply.

Boys' Home and Female Industrial School.

I have been one of the Governors of the Boys' Home from its establishment, and in that authoritative capacity have frequently visited it. As the boys have been each admitted under my sanction as Administrator of Charitable Grants, so also an opportunity has been afforded me as a Governor of watching their progress through the Institution, and of obtaining authentic information as to their conduct after they have been apprenticed out.

Of the Girls' Industrial School I have not had such an extended personal knowledge, but, as I stated in my former communication, I recently visited it, and on that occasion I was able at once to recognise the fact that the system of management was based upon the same principle as that at the Boys' Home; and in this view I was confirmed, not only by the statements of the Matron and the Official Reports, but by information supplied to me by Mr. R. A. Mather, who accompanied me on my inspection, and who, as a Governor of both Establishments, is thoroughly acquainted with each.

But as you, Sir, concur in the favourable opinions I expressed in reference to these two Establishments, it is not necessary that I should say more in regard to them. I need only stay to point out that my "eulogiums" were distinctly based upon the *individual* character of the training of the inmates; and to express my satisfaction that, in approving of the management of these Institutions, you endorse my views in this respect.

The Queen's Asylum.

I have not recently visited the Queen's Asylum. The anomalous position in which I was placed in regard to that Institution caused me purposely to refrain from doing so. I felt that whilst on the one hand my visits could hardly have been divested of a *quasi* official character, and might have been regarded by the Principal as an unauthorised and undue interference with his rule, they, on the other hand, would have been made without any real power of inspection, or any recognised authority to examine and question the children, or to demand explanations and information from those in charge of them. And I here take the opportunity of saying that I attach very little value to mere cursory visits made without authority to a large Institution of this kind. It appears to me that there is but small hope of seeing anything below the surface in this way, and that the personal acquaintance of the system of management acquired in this fashion is more calculated to mislead than to instruct. But, although I freely acknowledge that I have not paid any visits of this character to the Queen's Asylum, I by no means admit that I am destitute of the knowledge required to enable me to form an accurate judgment of the principles on which it is administered.

At different intervals within the last few years I have presided over two lengthy and protracted Boards of Inquiry held at the Institution, one of them being under the rule of the present Principal, and I have thus had opportunities afforded me of forming a judgment on the system then in force.

In the physical treatment of the inmates there may have been some little amelioration, but in all moral respects the method of training has not since been altered or improved, and remains the same. I have further had before me the Reports of the two Commissions of Inquiry, held within the last six years, on the management of the Institution, and have had the benefit of perusing the evidence taken on those occasions. As Administrator of Charitable Grants I have had official knowledge of the circumstances connected with the admissions and frequent re-admissions of children, and as Police Magistrate I have held peculiar facilities for ascertaining the conduct in after life of those whose early years have been passed in the Asylum.

Having, moreover, as Administrator of Charitable Grants, the duty assigned to me of deciding upon the disposal of the destitute children brought under my notice, and feeling very strongly the serious weight of the responsibility thus thrown upon me, I have been forced to think deeply and constantly on the subject of their training, and compelled to form a judgment as to the best mode of treating them; and, after giving very earnest and anxious consideration to the various sources of information which I have above indicated as open to me, I have arrived at the conclusions in regard to the Queen's Asylum which are contained in my letter of the 31st May. Nor can I admit that the decided views I then expressed are in any measure inconsistent with the evidence I gave to the Royal Commission. The words I then used were, that I was not "*thoroughly* acquainted with the nature of the training carried on therein;" meaning, as is indeed apparent from the after part of my evidence, to refer to mere details: for it will be seen that immediately afterwards I speak of the system, and proceed to condemn it upon precisely the same grounds as those I insist upon in my letter of the 31st May. "In the Asylum a child grows up a mere unit amongst a large number, destitute of every kindly home influence, and feeling that no one has any individual affection for him; he, on his part, loves no one, and thus the best part of his nature is not drawn out." Again I say, "It is infinitely better to train them up by farming out than by placing them in an Institution where it is utterly impossible that individual care can be taken of any boy or girl."

But, Sir, I submit that after all it is of very little consequence how or in what way I derived the information upon which my condemnation of the system of training at the Asylum is based. To refuse to listen to my opinions upon such grounds, is to turn the decision of the matter off into a mere collateral and inconclusive issue. The real question is, are the statements I made true, and are they supported by facts? 1st. Is it true that the children are "massed together in large numbers under a small and inadequate staff of officers who cannot pretend to take any individual care of or interest in them?"

The returns I receive of the numbers of the children in the Institution and the estimates of the present year supply the answer. By the last return there were 174 boys in the Asylum, of which possibly 24 may be in the Infant Establishment. To take charge of the remaining 150, after setting aside the storekeeper, the carpenter, the organist, and the cook, who have their own duties to perform, and have no charge of the children, there remain to look after them but two schoolmasters, whose business I apprehend is simply scholastic, and one out-door inspector. Even presuming that all three are in constant attendance on the boys, each man has 50 boys to take care of! On the girls' side there are 153; of which, if we say that the odd 23 are in the infants' building, there will remain 130 to be looked after. To effect this, when those who have special duties to attend to in

the Hospital, Laundry, and Infant School are deducted, there appears to be two matrons and two schoolmistresses remaining, one person to 32 girls! Is it possible that under these circumstances the attendants can take any individual care of or interest in the children? They may probably have some knowledge of the respective names and faces of the children under them; but it is utterly vain to hope that there can exist between them any bond of mutual regard, any ties of kindly sympathy on the one side and grateful respect on the other. I verily believe that, if the children were themselves examined on this point, it would be found that, with perhaps a few favoured exceptions, the greater number pass on from month to month without a word of encouragement or of affection being addressed to them by any person.

2nd. Is it true that the children receive no industrial training calculated to interest and awaken their intelligence? To find an answer to this question I need only advert to the evidence given before the Royal Commission by the Principal. "What trades are now taught in the schools?" he is asked, to which he replies, "None." "One-third of the boys are employed under the Out-door Inspector in *weeding, wheeling ashes, and odd jobs*. None of the boys dig. The men groom the horses:" in short, the only approach to industrial training we hear of is, "We employ boys of 12 and upwards on the farm milking," and the girls in "the afternoon are employed in needlework." But it is useless to waste time in insisting upon a defect which has been the subject of animadversion and universal condemnation for years past.

3rd. Is it true that the children trained up in the Asylum pass out into the world stupid and unamiable? If this be not so, to what are we to attribute the constant complaints we hear of misconduct as apprentices, the frequent appeals to the Guardians to be relieved of them, the shuffling of them off by transfer to other parties, the general sense of dissatisfaction with the service they render which undoubtedly prevails? Public opinion seldom goes very far wrong in these questions, and it is useless to deny that the general impression is that apprentices from the Asylum *are* useless and unamiable. So much indeed has this feeling spread that few of the higher ranks will now take any of them into their households, and they have consequently to be apprenticed amongst the poorer and lower classes, to whom their gratuitous labor is an object, and in whose hands I much fear they receive in many cases treatment but too well calculated still further to harden and deteriorate their moral perceptions and mental qualities. But the question is one of easy solution: let a Circular with certain prepared questions be sent to all those who have had apprentices in their employ during the past five years, and the answers gathered in by the police of the various districts. It will then be seen whether the language I used was justified or not.

4th. Is it true that children trained in the Asylum become in many instances vicious members of society?

In his evidence before the Royal Commission the Principal said, "With solitary exceptions the girls turn out well,—I only know of one bad case at present;" a statement which I have no doubt was made in perfect good faith, but which I am sorry to say is sadly contradicted by facts. I hold in my hands unquestionable evidence that there are at this present moment *twenty-nine* girls from the Queen's Asylum who are well-known to the Police of this town as common prostitutes. Five of these are now actually under sentence in the Cascades as disorderly characters, and the remainder have all been convicted of the like description of offence, some of them indeed repeatedly, within the last two or three years. I have the list of their names; and although I do not think it right to append it to a paper which may possibly be made public, I am prepared, should you desire it, to submit it to you privately for examination.

I am further informed that there are a number of others plying the same miserable vocation in Melbourne, and some in Launceston, but of this I am of course unable to obtain the same absolute proof. To what then are we to attribute this deplorable list of wrecked lives? Is it unfair to impute the depravity of these girls to the effects of their early training in the Asylum? Do we find the same reckless wholesale departure from modesty and virtue amongst those brought up in homes, humble though they may be? How far the system of the Queen's Asylum is responsible, may be a matter of opinion; but at all events it is certain that many of the children trained therein *have* become vicious members of society, and the facts therefore fully justified the use of the expression in my last letter.

Children boarded out.

The visit I mentioned in my last communication is the only one I have made personally to these children. My other avocations render it quite impossible for me to undertake the duty of frequent visitation, but the Inquiring Officer has special instructions to keep a constant watch over them. I am in daily communication with him; and he has his orders to report, without delay, anything that he may observe in regard to them which may appear to call for interference. It is my intention also to furnish the Clergymen of the Parishes they live in with their names and abodes, in order that they also may have an opportunity of visiting them. As I explained in my last letter that the education of these children is well taken care of, and that the persons in charge of them are not paid for their maintenance unless they can produce a certificate that they have attended school regularly during the week, I am unable to afford you any further information on that subject.

It only remains for me in concluding, as I trust, this correspondence, to point out to you that the expression of my opinion in regard to the Queen's Asylum was, in a measure, forced upon me by the proposal contained in your letter of the 4th April; and to assure you that in the views I have stated, and the language I have used, I have been actuated by no prejudice or personal feeling of any kind, but have merely fulfilled a very disagreeable duty to the best of my ability, and in accordance with my sincere and conscientious convictions.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. TARLETON,
Administrator of Charitable Grants.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 11th July, 1873.

SIR,

I BEG to forward a correspondence with the Administrator of Charitable Grants resulting from your letter of 6th January last, with a request that you will favor me with your remarks on the portions which refer to the Institution under your charge.

I have no desire that you should enter into any controversy upon theoretical points, but, as far as possible, confine your remarks to the accuracy of the facts stated or implied as to the training at the Queen's Asylum and its results.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES R. SCOTT.

The Principal, Queen's Asylum.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 11th July, 1873.

SIR,

I REGRET that the length of your communication of the 8th instant compels me, in order to prevent any misapprehension, to again address you on the subject; as the statement of facts which I wished to obtain from you is so mixed with abstract theories, upon many of which I agree with you, but which I will not discuss at present.

I gather from your letter that, on the 31st May last, you were enabled to speak with authority of the four systems mentioned by you from the following data:—

1. As to the Boys' Home, that you have been one of the Governors from its establishment, and are in a position to admit children and ascertain their future career.

2. As to the Girls' Industrial School and the Queen's Asylum, that you consider yourself in an "anomalous" position in regard to them by having no defined control; but that you have recently inspected the former, while you have purposely refrained from any inspection of the latter.

3. That your condemnation of "The Queen's Asylum as it is now conducted" is made in ignorance of the details of the training imparted there; but your unfavourable impressions are based upon cases which have come before you in your magisterial capacity, and from information from the Police that a certain number of the prostitutes in Hobart Town have been inmates of that Institution. That the system of training at the Queen's Asylum is answerable for these results, and is still unchanged.

4. As to children farmed or boarded out, that you have not sufficient time to spare from your other avocations to pay frequent visits of inspection, and that with the exception of one visit to those in Hobart Town on the 22nd April last, during their dinner hour, you have been guided by the reports of the Relieving Officer.

5. That no payment is made for their maintenance unless a certificate is produced showing that they have attended school regularly during the week.

If I am in error in the foregoing points you can correct me.

I have no desire to see the names of the women you allude to; but it would be interesting to know the circumstances under which they became inmates of the Queen's Asylum, and were discharged or apprenticed therefrom, to ascertain whether they were trained there from their early years or were placed there at an advanced age for the purpose of being apprenticed, as has not unfrequently been the case. The antecedents, character, and position of their parents would also

be required before any inference can be drawn, as well as their proportion to the number of persons in that unfortunate position who have not been educated at the Asylum. It would also be necessary, before coming to any conclusions, to know whether the results of other systems and home training can be equally well ascertained, and have had a corresponding test.

I have no wish to attribute to you "personal feeling of any kind" in recording your conscientious convictions. As to "prejudice," however, your letters induce me to suspect that you have adopted certain views upon the best mode of bringing up destitute children without taking the trouble to ascertain in an impartial manner whether these views can be carried into practical effect in this Colony. I agree with you that the *truth* of the statements made by you would be an important point in any consideration of this question by the Government; and as out of the three Institutions mentioned you have selected the Queen's Asylum (of which I am led to believe that you know least) for unfavourable comment, I have referred your letter to the Principal to ascertain the correctness of the statements made or implied by you respecting that establishment.

The Administrator of Charitable Grants.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JAMES R. SCOTT.

Public Buildings, 12th July, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date; and although I have no desire to prolong a correspondence which has already reached a length which I did not anticipate, yet there are some remarks in your communication which I feel bound to notice.

I must confess that I am surprised that you should have regarded my letter of the 8th instant as unduly "mixed with abstract theories." I had been under the impression that I had dealt therein with hard facts. The only theory I am conscious of having propounded is that which has run through the whole of my two previous communications, namely, that if you hope to rear up children to be of any service to themselves and those around them in after life, you must treat them as individual sentient beings possessed of human feelings and affections, and not as mere units and component parts of a large machine.

In regard to the data which you have gathered from my letter, whilst I demur to some of your conclusions, and more especially to that in which you imply that my unfavorable impressions of the Queen's Asylum are based solely upon cases which have come before me in my Magisterial capacity, &c. I think it wholly unnecessary to make any remark. My letters are there,—they are written as I hope in plain and unambiguous language, and will speak for themselves.

The particulars which you would like to ascertain in respect to the girls alluded to by me ought, I imagine, to be easily obtainable from the records of the Queen's Asylum, but I have not the means of supplying them. Nor can I at this moment afford you any information as to the number of prostitutes in the town who have not been trained in the Asylum, although I am inclined to believe that an approximate estimate of these might possibly be obtained.

Whilst I regret that you should suspect me of "having adopted certain views upon the mode of bringing up destitute children without taking the trouble to ascertain in an impartial manner whether those views can be carried into effect in this Colony," I must express my inability to understand the grounds upon which your suspicion is based. What are the impracticable views I entertain? Have I recommended or urged that the Queen's Asylum should be broken up and the children therein farmed out? By no means. I have never held any such opinion; on the contrary, whilst I believe that radical changes are required in the system of management of that Institution, I have always maintained that it cannot at present be dispensed with. Have I even urged that all the children hereafter thrown upon the State should be boarded out? No such suggestion is contained in any line of my letters. I believe that, under proper conditions and adequate supervision, the Boarding-out system is the best mode of treating children; and I further believe that it will not be impossible so to extend the operation of this system throughout the Country, as eventually to absorb the whole of the deserted children that may annually be cast upon the public for support: but I am well aware that any change in this direction must be a work of time, and must be effected gradually with great care and caution; nor have I ever concealed from myself that there may be practical difficulties in the establishment of this method of training children on a large scale, which it will require the exercise of much prudence to overcome. I do not, therefore, desire to do anything hastily or rashly, but I do desire to see the attempt made to "carry into practical effect in this Colony" a system which, so far as it has been yet tried, appears to be working successfully, which I believe to be a vast improvement upon the method of treatment now in operation at the Queen's Asylum, and which I am of opinion can be with due care and judgment beneficially extended. Farther than this I have never gone; and with all due deference I submit that in holding these opinions I do not deserve the imputation you would cast upon me of rashly adopting views without sufficient consideration, and without "taking the trouble" to inform myself impartially upon the merits of the question.

I can have no possible objection to my letters being referred to the Principal of the Queen's Asylum, or any one else the Government may think fit to submit them to.

As I observe that the correspondence has been laid before Parliament, and ordered to be printed, I shall feel obliged if you will cause this letter to be added to the others.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. TARLETON, *Administrator Charitable Grants.*

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Queen's Asylum, New Town, 14th July, 1873.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 11th instant, covering a correspondence with the Administrator of Charitable Grants, resulting from my communication of 6th January last, and requesting that I will favor you with my remarks, confining them as much as possible to the training at the Queen's Asylum and its results.

In reply, I feel that I shall be relieved of some embarrassment in the observations I may make from the ready admission of the Administrator,—“I have not recently visited the Asylum.”

I should not have thought it necessary, perhaps, to have more than simply noticed the fact, had not Mr. Tarleton gone on to state that he had upon two occasions,—once during my rule,—presided at Boards of Inquiry at the Institution, and from which he was led to form an opinion as to the general character of the establishment.

However much this may have been the case from the meetings, of a protracted nature, of the first Board, I cannot admit that at the meetings of the second, which were not of so protracted a nature, any insight whatever could have been obtained as to any details of the system in force at the Institution even at that time, which was about six years and a half ago.

I can but express my regret, therefore, that Mr. Tarleton should have “purposely refrained” from subsequently visiting the Institution; and the more so as he believes any interest he may have shown towards it would have partaken of a quasi-official act on his part, and been considered an interference on mine. Certainly had I done so, I should not have directed the usual circular of invitation to him for attendance at the annual distribution of prizes.

I come now to the points raised: and first,—“Are the children massed together in large numbers under a small staff of officials, who cannot pretend to take any individual care of or interest in them?”

In support of this view certain figures are given. They have apparently been taken from a return of some kind, but not from my Report for last year, which shows that the numbers were at end of that period, 130 boys, 116 girls, and 95 infants. But taking a total average of 350 for the whole establishment, and comparing it with 15 as the staff actually employed, leaves 1 official to every 24 children.

Independently of this supervision and control, I have to place my own frequent intercourse with the children generally; and I feel that it is not too much to say that my daily presence amongst them, and the care and attention shown them by those under me, must go far to dispel the sweeping denunciation that no “individual care of or interest is taken in them.”

2ndly. Do the children receive any industrial training calculated to interest and awaken their intelligence?

This is answered by quoting from my evidence given before the Royal Commission, and the absence of digging and garden work is specially referred to. By a reference to my further evidence, p. 101, it will be found, however, that I accounted for the fact by stating “the boys were too small to use a spade.”

In discussing the question of industrial training, it would be well that the character and objects of the Queen's Asylum should be taken into consideration. They are unquestionably of a twofold nature; for whilst the Institution affords a “home” for destitute and orphan children, where they are taught, fed, and clothed, and every effort made to impart secular and religious learning, no endeavour is spared at the same time to inculcate habits of industry.

To this end the washing, ironing, and mangling of clothes,—the cleaning, scouring, and scrubbing of floors,—the cooking and needlework required to be done in so large an establishment must inevitably tend. But where children are sent into the Asylum at all ages, and leave it regardless of the time they have been there, being eligible for apprenticeship, it follows that some may have received two, some three or more years' instruction, according to circumstances; and thus the imperfect teaching and training in their cases is brought as a blot against the Institution.

3rdly. Do the children trained up in the Asylum pass out into the world stupid and unamiable?

I can only reply by supplying the following data:—From 1865 to 1872, both years inclusive, 289 boys and 220 girls have been apprenticed from the Asylum. A few of these may have been re-apprenticeships, but taking 500 as sufficiently approximate, what proportion, I would ask, do the complaints of misconduct bear to that number? Assuredly the quotient would be too small to justify wholesale condemnation of the training imparted.

Let information be obtained as to how long, *as a rule*, domestic and other servants remain in one service, and that upon wages, and I believe the secret of many of the complaints will be found to arise from the lengthened period apprentices are bound for, and from other reasons to which it is unnecessary that I should now refer.

4thly. Do the children trained up in the Asylum become in many instances vicious members of society?

It is necessary I should hesitate in answering this query, as my statement before the Commission that "I only know of one bad case at present" is challenged, although credit is given me of having said so in good faith, and then 29 instances of girls, said to have been brought up in the Queen's Asylum, are given as being known to the Police as common prostitutes, five of whom are at the present in the Cascades undergoing punishment as disorderly characters.

Not being in possession of the names of these women, I am unable to state how many of them were apprenticed, how many discharged to parents or friends, how long severally they were in the Institution, and how long they have left it.

I have before stated that during the past eight years 220 girls were sent out as apprentices; and if to that number is added 157 as discharged, it is but fair that a reasonable margin should be allowed for delinquencies, without the finger of scorn being pointed to the early training of those lives wrecked in after life, and when fighting its great battle, without a fostering hand to guide them through difficulties, or a warning voice to check their downfall.

In order to prove the disadvantages under which the Queen's Asylum has laboured in the admission of children to it, I beg particularly to call attention to the copy of a correspondence, attached, in reference to the desired removal of a girl from the Industrial School in Hobart Town. Although the Guardians upon that occasion successfully resisted the application, still instances have occurred where girls 13 and 14 years of age have been sent into the Institution for immediate apprenticeship, and who have unfortunately almost always turned out badly.

Time will not allow me to prolong my observations upon one of the most difficult topics of the day; but I cannot close my remarks without directing special notice to the case of a boy, particulars of which are appended. I believe very many instances of the sort will occur in the course of two or three years upon the present "farming out" principle of providing for children.

I would be understood as offering no opposition to a really proper trial of a system,—beautiful in theory, difficult in practice,—notwithstanding the eulogiums passed upon it by the Administrator of Charitable Grants, that would tend to relieve the country from a heavy pressure; but, knowing how much more easy it is to manage children under the age of 10 or 11 than it is to do so after that age, and before they can become really useful, I can have little hesitation in asserting that the "farming out" of to-day must utterly fail, and that the difficulties of to-morrow will be as much increased.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. COVERDALE, *Principal.*

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Hobart Town, 22nd February, 1871.

SIR,

I WOULD beg respectfully to lay before you on behalf of the Ladies' Committee of the Girls' Industrial School, Murray-street, the case of a girl named Harriet Maria Brady Davis, who was sentenced last week at the Police Court to 21 days imprisonment for absconding from said school.

She was thrice previously before the Bench; about (4) four weeks prior to receiving her present sentence she was convicted and received the like punishment. Her conduct is felt to be so prejudicial to the order of the School that the Ladies' Committee beg that she may not be returned to the school, but that you will be pleased to lay the case before His Excellency the Governor with a view to his kindly ordering her removal from the Industrial School in Murray-street to the Queen's Asylum, from which she would be immediately eligible for service.

I remain, respectfully,

W. TARLETON, *Esq.*

(Signed) R. ANDREW MATHER.

THIS girl's further retention in the Female Industrial School would clearly be mischievous, and I would therefore recommend that the authority of the Governor may be given for her discharge, in order that she may be sent to the Queen's Asylum for the purpose of being at once apprenticed out in some country district.

(Signed) W. TARLETON.
23. 2. 71.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

THE Governor orders the discharge of this child from the school.

The girl in question may be admitted into the Queen's Asylum, provided the "Guardians" can apprentice her forthwith.

(Signed) J. M. WILSON.

TRANSMITTED for the information of the Guardians of the Queen's Asylum. It might perhaps be desirable to provide a place of service for this girl, so that she may not be required to do more than merely pass through the Asylum.

(Signed) W. TARLETON.
25. 2. 71.

THE Guardians strongly object to making the Queen's Asylum the outlet to service for such girls as cannot be managed in the Reformatory, the more particularly as that Institution is believed to have the power of providing for its own inmates.

Mr. Mather must be altogether unacquainted with the character of the Asylum to expect the Guardians to be a party to apprenticing the girl referred to under the circumstances narrated, and must at the same time be equally unconscious of the great mischief the admission of such a character into the establishment would entail.

(Signed) J. COVERDALE, *Principal.*
2. 3. 71.

W. TARLETON, *Esq.*

SIR,

Pontville, September 8th, 1868.

I HAVE the honor to inform you that the boy Edwards is likely to go wrong, without some protection and support. And I have to-day arranged with one Edward Thwaites (subject to your approval) to keep him at 6s. per week: the boy to go to school in the forenoon and to learn the trade of a shoemaker so far in the afternoon. Period as a trial to 31st December next.

The Colonial Secretary.

(Signed) A. FINLAY, *Warden.*

THE Governor approves of the arrangement proposed by the Warden to continue to the end of the year, and a fresh report to be then sent in.

(Signed) R. DRY.
11 September, 1868.

I REGRET that Thwaites declines to take the boy any longer at any price. The boy has been under my notice for some time, and I am now convinced that close surveillance and strict discipline are essentially required to keep him from wrong. He deliberately started a fire on Tuesday, which, but for the desperate efforts of the Township people, would have destroyed one of our best buildings, and he is strongly suspected of having set fire to a haystack last year. Under all the circumstances, I feel constrained to apply for his admission into the Queen's Asylum.

(Signed) A. FINLAY.
Dec. 31, 1868.

THE admission of this boy to the Queen's Asylum is authorised. The Warden to report the last payment on his account to Thwaites.

(Signed) W. TARLETON.
2. 1. 69.

MEMORANDUM.

AN allowance was made to this boy of 5s. per week from 1st July, 1864, and continued to 7th July, 1865. It was then increased to 6s. per week, and continued so until 30th June, 1868.

The boy was afterwards admitted to the Queen's Asylum on 7th January, 1869, age ten years and six months.