

BRITISH COLUMBIA PENITENTIARY.

JULY, 2nd, 1883.

SIR.—I have the honor to submit my Fifth Annual Report on the management of this Penitentiary, with the usual returns, for the fiscal year ended June 30th, 1883.

There remained in this Penitentiary on June 30th, 1882, fifty-two convicts; received since from common gaols, thirty-nine; total, ninety-one. Discharged during the year by expiration of sentence, twelve; by death, two; by pardon, two; escaped one; which left remaining at midnight, on June, 30th, 1883, seventy-four convicts.

The workshops are about completed. The carpenter and blacksmith shops I have had in use for some time. One of the other shops has been used as a drying room for convicts clothing during last winter and spring, the place set apart in the Penitentiary building for that purpose being much too small considering the number of inmates. I have every reason to think that agricultural industry can be most profitably carried on by convicts of this Penitentiary for some years to come; therefore, in view of an increasing population here, which will undoubtedly add to our number of convicts, I would recommend, that all the land on the north side of the ravine be inclosed—in fact it cannot be done so soon. There are only about ten acres inclosed.

Two or three years ago a bakery was spoken of as being necessary. I think at the present time, it would make a great difference in the expenditure of the institution, to have the convicts bread made inside; but in the present building there is no place that I can recommend as being suitable for the purpose.

Government House is still in possession of the Canadian Pacific Railway Engineers. According to instructions received from the Honorable Mr. Trutch, I have had the garden fenced off, as it was of no use to the engineers, and being left open, as it has been for the last eight or nine years, was only an attraction for stray cattle: many of the fine trees are nearly destroyed and all the handsome shrubs and choice plants have long since disappeared, although, since the Penitentiary was opened, I have done all that I could, under existing circumstances, to preserve the place.

In May, 1832, I wrote to you concerning the rifle range, used by New Westminster volunteers. Where the butts are situated is directly opposite the Penitentiary grounds, on the west side of the ravine, and while rifle practice is going on, it is not safe for officers or convicts to be at work on that portion of the land. Again, in June, 1832, I wrote to you on the same subject; still, up to the present time, nothing has been done to alter the situation of the butts. Both last season and this several times the work has had to be stopped, as we never know when they go to practice until we hear the firing or see the danger signals. I am sure you will see the necessity of putting a stop to this. Another matter I wish to bring to your attention, is the situation of the powder magazine. All the ground in front, down to the fence, is cleared and under cultivation, the road or drive from the large gate up to the door of the Penitentiary, is well gravelled and in good condition. From a smaller gate, there is a straight path leading direct to the building; in fact the place is looking better than I had expected to see it for some years to come; and really the powder magazine, where it stands, just about midway between the gate and the front door, detracts from, rather than adds to the beauty of the place. I am sure when you see what a blot it looks, you will desire to have it removed.

Last March I began to give the convicts their meals in their cells. Up to that time the corridor was used for that purpose, but the number increased to such an extent that they could no longer be safely guarded while sitting there. About the same time I learned that some of the convicts had it in contemplation to make an attack on the guards during the dinner hour, and seize the arms; what more was intended I can only imagine. Since giving the meals in their cells I have had no unusual trouble with them. At meal times, after washing in the morning,