

Public Institutions of Ontario

Mr. Stratton in connection with the foregoing address also furnished some very interesting information respecting the nature of the work of maintaining our Public Institutions and their internal working. After referring to the expenditure of about a million of dollars a year by the department of which he is Minister, and the fact of the inmates being maintained at a lower per capita cost than the inmates of any similar institution in the world, he said:

Central Prison and Mercer Reformatory.

To most of the people of the Province the Central Prison and the Mercer Reformatory are but names, which convey no idea of the important industries carried on in them, especially the Central Prison. This is a penal institution such as is maintained in no other Province of the Dominion. The other Provinces have penitentiaries maintained by the Dominion Government. The Central Prison is a penal institution and as such is literally a "terror to evildoers." The average criminal prefers a term in the Penitentiary double the length of a term in the Central Prison, for at the latter, punishment more largely takes the form of work instead of preying on society and living upon the labour of others, which as criminals at large they would do, the prisoners are employed in productive labour, made to earn not only their own living but to contribute to the maintenance of others in the care of the Province.

The average yearly number of prisoners is 380 and the average yearly cost of maintenance per head is \$1.60, a total cost for maintenance of \$60,000 per year. The value of the average yearly output of product is \$108,000. Seventy-six per cent. of the prisoners employed in productive

industry, make a yearly average of net earnings of \$22,500. The remaining 24 per cent. are employed in domestic work, sick in hospital or confined by day in the cells.

The industries carried on by the prisoners at the Central Prison consist of broom making, binder twine and rope making, blacksmithing, iron finishing, iron bedstead making, woollen mill, tailoring, shoemaking, carpentering, woodworking, painting, steam fitting, engineering and masonry. There are about 130 dozen brooms and whisks turned out a day, furnishing supplies of these articles for the Public Institutions, while the balance is supplied to the export trade. In the blacksmithing and iron finishing department are made the ironwork required in the construction or repair of lockups in unorganized districts, public buildings and repairs to prison machinery, etc. In the iron bedstead department are made these articles for all the public institutions as well as for the public hospitals and jails of the Province. In the woollen mills are made the cloth, flannels and blankets for the Prison and for the Public Institutions as well as yarns for knitting. The tailoring department supplies clothing for guards and attendants of the Prison and for the prisoners in the jails of the Province. The shoe shop turns out the shoes for guards, attendants and prisoners and for attendants in some of the Public Institutions. The carpentering and woodwork department is thoroughly equipped and produces broom handles, wash boards, croquet sets, etc., clothes horses, stepadders, children's sleighs, wagons and toy carts by the tens of thousands and other small lines of wooden ware. The painting of these products is done in the painting department. The tin-smithing department turns out a full line of household tinware and