

reason I have so largely used correspondence as a means of oversight of the young people when once placed out. If I write you, if I write any member of your Board, and ask plain questions, I receive plain and straightforward answers. The same rule of life governs respectable people and people of probity all the world over, and I have no more reason to suspect trickery from my Canadian than from my English correspondents, and a four, five, and even six years' correspondence, as mine has been in many cases in Canada about the children, should surely teach a woman of fair average intelligence who may, and who may not be trusted. Acting, then, on this trust, and on this experience, the method I pursued in obtaining the information about the children which I now lay before you, was to write simultaneously to the persons (over 1,100 in number) with whom I have from time to time placed the children, asking if there had been a general migration of the girls, of which I had not been informed, or if the young people were, as I believed, still where I had placed them. With a very few exceptions, the whole of these guardians answered my letters, and at their own expense, in 500 different instances, were good enough to have their boy or girl, as the case might be, photographed, that you, the Guardians of the various Unions, and the English public generally, might have an opportunity of comparing the appearance of these poor children, after a four or five years' residence in Canada, with that of the ordinary pauper young woman found in all our English workhouses.

I have now the pleasure of laying before you, for your inspection, these 500 photographs, together with an arranged copy of all my correspondence on the subject (all letters bearing date of 1875). As the expense of printing these letters would have been more than I could afford, and as the mass of information is very bulky, I have, for your greater convenience, and in order to be able to lay a copy of the same before all the unions (50 in number) who have entrusted children to my care, prepared a synopsis of all the English and Canadian information in my possession about these children; and I think there are few, if any institutions, even with a full staff of officers, that could offer you a similar six years' following up of their children, and certainly no institution that could show the same results.

I may have no set plans, no rules, and no sharply-defined policy about overlooking the children in Canada, but if I can tell you where they all are, what they are doing, and prove that the average of their doing is very largely well-doing, am I to be condemned and my working derided? Is that honest or wise?

Possibly you may have overlooked the last Report (1876) made to the Government on the Reformatory and Certified Industrial Schools of England—I quote from a recent notice in *The Times* *—by which it will be seen that over 900 † children have within the past 12 months absconded from these schools! and over 700 have died!—a remarkable easy way of accounting for 1,600 children. Yet on paper these schools are perfect, their rules faultless, their expense monstrous, their inspectors and officers numberless, their results—well, their results are *nil*! and that, I believe, owing in a very great degree, to the multiplication and to the elaboration of the rules that govern them; and my own impression is that we have succeeded in Canada simply because we have to a very large extent, if not entirely, thought out and dealt with each case separately and individually.

The great mass of the Canadian peoples with whom I have to deal are simple country folk, who have treated me exactly as though in some mysterious manner I had been the mother of the whole 1,100. I have been expected to rejoice in all the well-doings of the children, even to inspecting patterns of new dresses, sent on many a long mile by post, and certainly have had to bear more than my share of their shortcomings, and to be responsible for all their misdemeanours, for no one can carefully examine my synopsis of the work without seeing how thoroughly I have had to bear the burden of the children's sins, and probably I should never have ventured on the work had I known fully all that it involved.

My own impression, before practically dealing with this work, was, that if I took great precautions to secure really good homes for the girls, my labours for them

* 19th August 1876.

† The exact numbers are, 898 absconded, 719 dead, 1876, from Reformatories; 147 dead, 68 absconded, Certified Industrial Schools.