

And in every succeeding Annual Report I have been compelled to draw your attention to this long-standing complaint. So impressed were you with the necessity that exists for a prison wall, that in your Report for the year 1878, after your first visit to this institution, you wrote as follows:—

“It will be necessary to erect a boundary wall to enclose about twelve acres, including the Penitentiary and outbuildings; convict labor can be employed in the work. Stone fit for the purpose can be, I doubt not, quarried near the Penitentiary. Lime, also, may be conveniently procured. The principal outlay, therefore, will be for tools, blasting powder, wood for lime burning, and the salary of a Mason Instructor. The wall should be commenced early next spring.”

And this work you have advocated most strongly each year since. Indeed, in 1879 you so realized the great need of such a protection, that you did not hesitate to say that—

“The great necessity for a boundary wall is apparent. Stone for this purpose can be quarried by convict labor, which can also be employed in the building of the wall, under a skilled instructor. The Department of Public Works has been asked to provide, in the next Estimates, an amount for the purchase of wood for lime burning and for the tools and blasting powder that will be required in building and quarrying. I hope the requisite provision will be made to commence this work during the next spring, as in the present unprotected state of the prison, the safe custody of the convicts cannot be insured, nor can the Warden’s accountability therefor be very rigidly exacted.”

And in the same strain every year to date, and yet not the first move has been made in that direction.

EXTENSION OF BUILDING.

In my Report for year 1880-81, I brought under your notice that the enlargement of the prison was imperative. This you evidently realized, as from observations made by you at the time of your visit of inspection in March, you stated in your Report for that year that you considered the enlargement called for, was much required. Notwithstanding this and the fact that the convict strength since then has nearly doubled, the accommodation remains the same. Of this you had positive demonstration at the time of your last visit, when you will remember having seen that our cell accommodation was altogether insufficient, each corridor and passage being turned into a dormitory, resulting in the congregating of convicts, a feature of prison management condemned over a century ago by John Howard, the great authority on prison reform in Europe; also, in a recent report of the Portland prison, in which great stress was laid upon the old system of the “association wards, when, owing to the contamination which existed, convicts applied to be located separately.”

I again draw the attention of the Department to the existing state of things here, more from a sense of duty than from any hope that any speedy measure will be adopted until some grave crisis compels prompt intervention.

PUBLIC WORKS.

I find the following paragraph in your Annual Report for the year 1877-78:—

“I have observed that the directors of penal prisons in Ireland successfully agitated the disconnection of the Public Works from the institutions under their control, either as regards new buildings or repairs and improvements. If a radical change does not take place in the system which has been in operation under the Public Works since 1874, when the Joint Architects of Penitentiaries, Messrs. Painter and Adams, were dispensed with in that capacity, I apprehend the necessity will arise to advocate the same thing in Canada. It is hardly too much to say that all such works as are now performed under the Department of Public Works, in connection with Penitentiaries, were as well, as satisfactorily and, most assuredly, more expeditiously executed when directed by the Joint Architects, or the Architect who preceded them, under control of the old Boards of Inspectors and Directors.”