

# Dorchester Penitentiary



THIS institution is so named from the town where it has been located, being the shire-town of the County of Westmoreland, in the Province of New Brunswick. It is sometimes called the "Maritime Penitentiary," from the circumstance that

under the B.N.A. Act of 1867, it is the Dominion Penal Institution for the Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The prison was opened in the month of July, 1880, on the 14th day of which month 58 convicts were transferred from the old St. John Penitentiary to their new home, and on the 16th, sixty-one were received from the Halifax Penitentiary, whilst the Prince Edward Island contribution, six in number, was received on October 12 of the same year.

The work of transference was one of very considerable delicacy, but it was accomplished without the least hitch, under the personal superintendence of the inspector.

The site of the institution is admirable for elevation, healthfulness, and convenient supply of water. It stands on a ridge of fertile upland that runs parallel with the Memramcook River. It commands a magnificent view of the surrounding country, and of the head waters of the Bay of Fundy.

The immediate precincts consist of eighteen acres, and are enclosed within a solid and well built stockade, which is nineteen feet high, and within this enclosure are the main buildings, which are well built of stone found in the neighbourhood, together with all other buildings necessary to such an institution, as the hospital, bakery, blacksmiths', tailors' and shoemakers' shops, barns, mills and machine shops.

Near to the immediate precincts is the Warden's lodge, and on the lower side of the main Post Road are the guards' houses, consisting of fifteen uniform double cottages. The houses are fairly convenient as regards their general arrangement, each being supplied with water; and notwithstanding the radical error of the local architect in placing them on the lower, instead of the upper side of the road, the general effect is good.

In addition to the eighteen acres within the stockade, the institution owns one hundred and twenty acres of valuable marsh, about ninety acres of well cultivated upland, and four hundred and seventy acres of woodland, forming altogether a magnificent property, the entire value of which, land and buildings, is about \$420,000.

Standing on its own grounds, the institution has a large and a smaller reservoir, which are supplied from living springs of the purest water, the former with a capacity of 216 000 gallons, and the latter of 10,000. The source of the springs is so elevated that a stream of water can easily be thrown above the cupola, and the general provision for the prison and the offices, as well for consumption as for protection from fire, is admirable. And if only the clear-headed counsel of building the reservoir of stone and cement, instead of wood, had prevailed, this feature of the institution would have been unrivalled.

The number confined within the prison on Monday, April 6—being the Dominion census day—was one hundred and sixty-nine male convicts; and as this, with the exception of five female convicts at Kingston, represents the criminal population of the three Maritime Provinces, it is a showing, when compared with the total population, that is highly honourable to the general morality and law-abiding character of the people.

As far as is practicable, all prisoners are kept at some useful occupation or productive industry; anything like competition with outside industries being, as far as possible, avoided. Only unreasoning self-interest could advocate that a large body of men of the character of convicts should be kept in enforced and unproductive idleness. No responsible public man, conversant with the facts, could recommend such a fatuity; and yet, confessedly, manufacturers and striving mechanics should not be substantially injured or interfered with. It must, therefore, be entirely satisfactory to the Dominion taxpayer to know that if our criminal population cost them money, that they are also made to contribute \$26.83 per capita, towards their own maintenance. Convict labour makes all the clothing, both of the prisoners and of the staff, makes all boots and shoes, bakes all the bread that is eaten, does all carpentering, painting and glazing, blacksmithing and machine work.

All the gardening, farming and stock raising operations are carried on by convict labour, in a manner profitable to the country. All stock raising is done on the premises, whether horses, cattle, pigs or sheep—and very fine they are. In addition to four teams of excellent working horses, there are several fine colts being raised, seventy head of cattle, and about forty sheep. The prison raises all its own pork, and but for exceptionally unfavourable seasons, its own vegetables.

Like all other kindred institutions, the Dorchester Penitentiary is officered by a warden, deputy-warden, chaplains, surgeon, accountant, and several other heads of departments. The first warden was Blair Botsford, who died on April 7, 1887, at New York, of malarial fever, contracted in Florida, where he had gone for the benefit of his health. He was succeeded by the present warden, John B. Forster, who, at the time of his appointment, was deputy warden. On Mr. Forster becoming warden, chief keeper Keefe was promoted to be deputy; and when, together with his wife, deputy warden Keefe unhappily lost his life, by fire, in his quarters, on December 10, 1888, Mr. Chas. Ross, then steward, was promoted to be deputy warden. Mr. Ross is now the senior member of the staff by service, having been appointed at Halifax in the year 1867. In this series of applications of the rule of promotion, the government has been singularly happy as regards the effect upon the staff, inasmuch as the members all feel that they have something to hope for.

The chaplains are the Rev. Father Cormier, and the Rev. J. Roy Campbell, B.D.; the physician, Robert Mitchell, a graduate of Edinburgh; and the accountant, John A. Gray, who also holds with that office the position of schoolmaster.

The chapel is used jointly by the Roman Catholics and Protestants, and whilst it lacks the great beauty of the Roman Catholic chapel at St. Vincent de Paul, it has none of the extreme dinginess of the Protestant chapel of that institution. The chapel wears an air altogether devotional and inviting, there being no trace of a prison visible; it has rather the appearance of a well appointed parish church.

Whilst it would not be becoming in the writer to institute comparisons between this and kindred institutions on any economical question—the blue-books tell all that is needed—we may be pardoned for referring, in conclusion, to the uniform testimony of the inspector to the excellent *esprit de corps* that has, from his first report in 1881 to his last in 1890, always characterized the staff. And to this one fact may fairly be referred that other, viz., that the first official investigation or enquiry into the affairs of this prison has yet to be held.

Long may it be so.

## The Prince Edward Island Tunnel.



THE greatest public work the Canadian government has now in contemplation is the construction of a railroad tunnel under the Straits of Northumberland, connecting the shores of New Brunswick with those of Prince Edward Island. At the request of the Dominion government Sir Douglas Fox has made a report on the cost and feasibility of the work, of which the following is a brief summary:

The greatest depth of water is 96 ft. at high water, with a rise of tides of 6 ft. at springs and 3 ft. at neaps, and the speed of the current does not exceed three knots, with two hours of slack water at each tide. The distance from shore to shore is given at about 13,200 yds., or say from shaft to shaft 13,500 yds., exclusive of land approaches on either side, of which about 2,000 yds. would be in the tunnel. The shores on either coast are well adapted for railroad approaches, varying from 15 to 35 ft. in height above high watermark, with a mean altitude of 25 ft., the soil being largely red clay. The higher land on the Prince Edward Island shore falls away toward the interior, which will shorten the approach on that side. It is considered that about 5½ miles of railroad, including some 2,000 yards of tunnel, as before mentioned, will be necessary beyond the shafts to connect the tunnel with the respective systems of railroad, which, however, are of a different gauge, viz.,

4 ft 8½ in. in New Brunswick and the Dominion generally and 3 ft. 6 in. in Prince Edward Island.

From the above it will be seen that the length of tunnel from shaft to shaft would be 7.67 miles, while, with the connections to the present railroad on each side, the whole tunneling required would be over 9 miles.

The estimates are as follows:

In the dry portions of the work, a tunnel of brick-work, in cement, averaging 1 ft. 6 in. in thickness (the bricks being of local manufacture), and where feeders occur, with cast iron casing 1¼ in. in thickness, with 6 in. flanges, laid with steel rails weighing 50 lb. to the yard, is estimated to cost £66 10s., nearly, per lineal yard, or say £897,500 from shaft to shaft, or with the land tunnel and contingencies a total sum of £1,075,200.

Should it be decided that the tunnel must be of sufficient dimensions for a railroad of the 4 8½ gauge, and that the railroads of the island shall be altered to that gauge, a tunnel of 16 ft. in diameter would appear to just accommodate passenger and freight cars of the normal Canadian and American type, but not drawing room and sleeping cars, nor some of the cars running upon the Intercolonial railroad. This size does not allow of a very satisfactory permanent way, nor does it provide proper space for the platelayers. Such a tunnel constructed in the shale, of brickwork in cement, 1 ft. 10½ in. in thickness, and where feeders occur with cast iron casing, 15 in. in thickness, with 9 in. flanges, and laid with steel rails weighing 70 lb. to the lineal yard, is estimated to cost £122 10s., nearly, per lineal yard, or say £1,652,506 from shaft to shaft, or with the land tunnel and contingencies a total sum of £1,971,800.

Sir Douglas Fox is of opinion that to properly accommodate the Canadian and American rolling stock the tunnel should have an internal diameter of not less than 18 ft. Such a tunnel, constructed as specified for the 16 ft. tunnel, is estimated to cost £140 per lineal yard, or say £1,890,000 from shaft to shaft, or with land tunnel and contingencies a total sum of £2,225,500.

It is recommended that, before inviting tenders for the main work, a shaft placed at Carleton Point, so as to be afterward available for permanent pumping and ventilating purposes, should be sunk well into the red clay shale, which lies above the carboniferous sandstone. Borings similar to those taken at the Sarnia tunnel (viz., from a vessel or platform through 16 in. wrought iron pipes, so as to insure cores of sufficient size and undamaged being brought to the surface) should be made across the straits and down to the carboniferous bedrock. With this information obtained, much closer tenders may be expected for the construction of the tunnel.

When the work is resolved upon, immediate steps should be taken: 1st. To connect the existing railroads with the tunnel work.

2d. To establish brickyards at the nearest available site where good clay free from lime is to be found. The quantity of bricks required will vary from 30 to 60 millions, according to the size of the tunnel.

3d. To erect dwellings, stores, etc., for the staff and workmen.

4th. To put down the permanent pumps and provide the necessary plant for temporary purposes.

5th. To install the necessary electric plants and motors.

6th. To provide and fix the compressed air machinery.—*Railroad Gazette.*

## The Organisation of the Royal Artillery.

There is considerable excitement in artillery circles over the forthcoming Royal Warrant, which is to effect certain changes in the organisation of the Royal Artillery, and which, it is understood, will make its appearance in August. It has been no secret for some time that the pay of regimental officers in the Garrison Artillery is to be raised, so as to enable it to vie with the attractions of the mounted branches of the Royal regiment. It is also announced that certain special appointments will be created, and paid at an increased rate, and it is added that the change in organisation will introduce what is known as the double company system. Although strenuously denied, there is also no doubt that one effect of the new arrangements will be to commence that separation of the mounted from the dismounted branches, so much longed for by all young "gunners" who picture themselves going through life in the handsome "jacket" of the Royal Horse Artillery.—*Daily Graphic.*