

they have breakfast in their cells. At dinner time, when they come in, dinner is already placed in the cells, then each cell is locked, and before being unlocked, the knives, forks and spoons, are passed out to the Steward. Those convicts who attend school are allowed to come to the Schoolmaster as soon as they have eaten their dinner. In this way there is no time lost, and no confusion whatever caused. I am happy to say that this change has received your approval, although it may sound very trifling to write, or even talk about. I assure you, in the every day life of the Penitentiary affairs, it makes a great difference. If we had a suitable dining hall for convicts, such as I understand they have in most institutions, of this kind, such an alteration, in regard to preserving safety, would I suppose, be quite unnecessary. In forming the Estimates of this Penitentiary for 1883-84, I asked that one Keeper should be appointed, and one guard added to the number. I then, on account of the unexpected increase in the number of convicts from the fall assizes of last year, was obliged to trouble you for permission to employ those officers before the beginning of the fiscal year 1883-84. Your authority to employ two guards was received by me without unnecessary delay. Where there are so many guards employed, I would most respectfully recommend that, at present, one Keeper at least be appointed.

Although I have had charge of convicts in this Province for many years, this is the only proclaimed Penitentiary that I have ever been in or have had any experience with. I must gratefully acknowledge the value of your official advice, always clearly and promptly given. Were it not so, my official life here would, indeed, be filled with difficulties. Often I have troubled you with matters seemingly very small; but where I am at such a distance from the seat of Government, I feel that when I have your approval, and on many occasions your necessary decision, I cannot easily go astray. It is now four years and nine months since you established this Penitentiary, and since that time you have not favored the institution with a visit. In the Eastern Provinces, I notice mention is made of visits from the Inspector being sometimes even *months* apart. Surely, in requesting the advantage of your presence, for a month or six weeks, after the lapse of nearly five years, cannot, I feel almost certain, be denied. Therefore, I earnestly hope, that before the end of the present fiscal year, I will have the pleasure of seeing you at the British Columbia Penitentiary. There are many things I would like to consult with you about, and that would be almost impossible to clearly explain to you in writing. You are aware how readily convicts can imagine themselves unfairly dealt with, and how anxious they are to complain on this point alone. Many who understand nothing whatever connected with convict life, or the discipline necessary to be observed in a penitentiary, interfere, nearly always, unreflectingly I suppose, but often in a manner that causes annoyance to those in charge, and scarcely ever prove of any benefit to the convicts. Such interference is bad, and should not be encouraged.

In December last, the Honorable Mr. Trutch held an inquiry at the Penitentiary, which lasted three days. For some days before opening the inquiry, notice was published in the New Westminster and Victoria papers, calling on any person or persons who had any complaints to make, to be at the Penitentiary at an appointed time. However, no complaints were brought by any one outside the institution.

On September 29th, 1882, His Excellency the Governor General paid this Penitentiary a visit. He very considerably went over the building and outhouses, and kindly expressed himself pleased, with all that was brought under his notice; also, he most graciously permitted some of the convicts to be brought before him; they were men who had most anxiously pleaded for the favor. His words gave renewed hope and encouragement to all whom he addressed.

While again requesting you to have houses built for married guards, I wish to inform you that the rooms in the Penitentiary now used as sleeping apartments by the unmarried guards, are required for store rooms; those on the lower floor are not sufficient. One has been fitted up as a surgery, the other is over crowded on account of being used for holding discarded articles of convicts, clothing, and other things that are worn out, until such time as they are disposed of, according to Penitentiary rules