

Following the policy advocated for many years, the actual segregation of convicts under twenty-one years of age was brought into effect. This segregation included all "A" Class convicts and "C" Class convicts under twenty-one years of age."

The report of 1935 contains an elaborate report of the Superintendent on his study of the "Borstal System" of England, and a statement of the arrangements presently being put into effect in regard to the treatment of young offenders. The report states:

"The type and nature of treatment for young convicts will follow as closely as possible that presently existing in the Borstal institution of England."

In reference to the officers to be in charge of young prisoners, the following statement is made:

"Each supervisor will be called upon to have an intimate knowledge of the history, character, disposition and capabilities of approximately thirty young convicts."

It will also be necessary for him to carry on correspondence with their relatives and other persons who may be in a position to give useful information considered to be essential in the treatment to be applied to each individual."

In the report of March 31, 1936, the segregation of the young prisoners is detailed, and the following statement is made:

"This segregation has necessitated the detailing of specially selected officers to supervise the young convicts, this being one of the reasons for the retention of officers in excess of the minimum authorized establishments."

In the report of 1937, the following statement is made:

"The segregation of young convicts is now accepted by the penitentiary staffs as an ordinary and routine practice, the results of which are reported to be beneficial."

As indicated in our report, such statements as these are entirely misleading in form and substance, and convey erroneous impressions to the public in respect to the treatment of young prisoners.

The report of 1935 contains the following statement:

"Vocational training is carried on throughout the whole year, and includes agriculture, carpentry, metal-work, motor mechanics, plumbing, painting, plastering, and all kindred building trades, tailoring, shoemaking, laundry work, cooking, catering, steam power plant management, water supply and sewage disposal. Vocational training is augmented by well equipped libraries for extensive research work, advanced and intensive studies."

In the opinion of your Commissioners, it was unfair to the Minister and to the public, and unjust to those who might be sentenced to serve terms in the penitentiaries, that the Superintendent should so describe the work carried on in the shops of Canadian penitentiaries.

In the report of 1935 the Superintendent states:

"Changes and expansions have been made from time to time until to-day each penitentiary has a program which covers every subject taught in the public schools, plus correspondence courses. Extra-mural university courses have been arranged in three penitentiaries

Students following correspondence and extra-mural university courses are guided and aided in their studies outside of the hours that they are employed in the shops or at other work."

In the report of 1937, under the heading of individual penitentiaries it is stated that "the school functioned in accordance with the regulations and instructions." A cursory inspection of the institutions and a perusal of wardens' reports show conclusively that this is not a correct statement. (See Chapter VIII for details.)

In January, 1936, in the case of Rex vs. Carter and Goodwin, the members of the Court of Appeal of the Province of Alberta had some doubts as to whether young prisoners in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary were afforded an opportunity of learning a trade, and, as a result, a telegram was sent to the warden, requesting information as to whether these young men would be enabled to learn a trade if they were to be confined in that penitentiary. The warden telegraphed to the Superintendent, quoting the telegram from the Court of Appeal, and the Superintendent wired directly to the Assistant Deputy Attorney General of Alberta as follows:

"Re Appeal Court cases William Carter and Harold Goodwin stop Convicts under twenty-one years completely segregated in separate corridor with separate exercise yard stop Youths employed manual labour not less than six months after which assigned to agriculture construction building trade or shop depending upon capability and conduct stop Institution not overcrowded." On receipt of this telegram, the Court of Appeal confirmed sentence of two years' imprisonment in the penitentiary. Your Commissioners do not believe that the above telegram correctly answered the inquiry of the Court of Appeal. It is quite apparent that, under conditions as they are at the present time in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, young prisoners are not given an opportunity to learn any trade whatever. They have the opportunity of taking part in any construction work that happens to be in progress, but they are not assigned to shops and the instruction they receive in particular trades is practically negligible. Your Commissioners consider that the telegram to the Assistant Deputy Attorney General is seriously misleading.

It has not been uncommon to read in the press that judges and magistrates, in sending young prisoners to penitentiary, have declared that they are sending them "where they will learn a trade." The gravity of publishing reports that mislead the public in this manner requires no further comment.

The evidence of the Superintendent before the Commission occupied eight days. He was given every opportunity to go into all phases of prison administration, and has since supplied the Commission with voluminous memoranda on matters discussed during his evidence and concerning which he was of the opinion that further information ought to be supplied. We have had ample opportunity to discuss with him the many matters drawn to our attention affecting his administration of the penitentiaries, and to consider his knowledge of penology, his disciplinary methods, his personality, and his general fitness for the office he holds. His evidence before your Commission was not satisfactory. It was characterized by long, irrelevant, and often evasive answers to simple questions.