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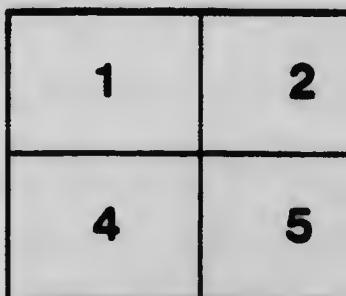
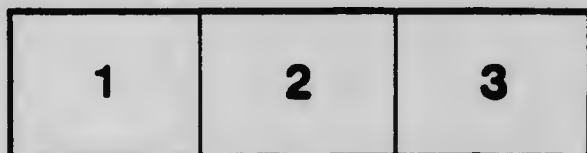
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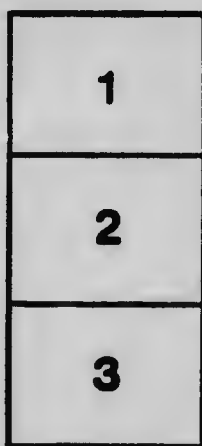
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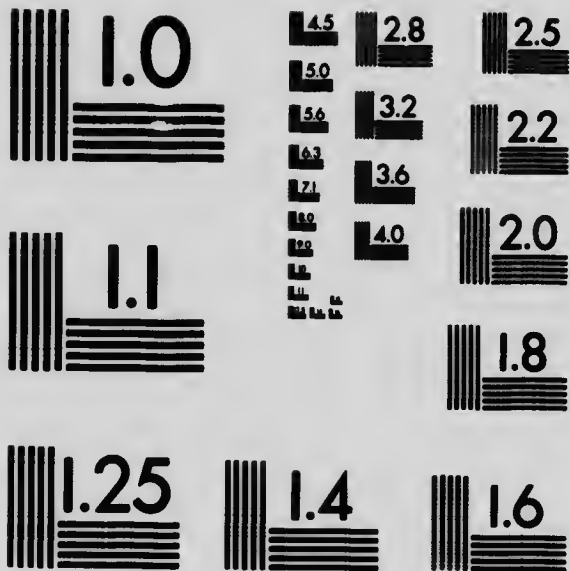
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THE ONTARIO INSTITUTION
FOR THE
EDUCATION OF THE BLIND :
ITS MANAGEMENT AND
MISMANAGEMENT.

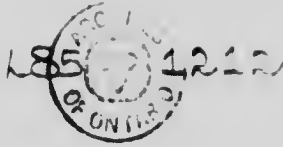
A CRITICISM

BY

ARTHUR W. BEALL, M.A., QUEEN'S,
PETERBOROUGH, ONT.

1901.

100
101
102



Though the heel of the strong oppressor
 May grind the weak in the dust,
And the voices of fame, with one acclaim,
 May call him great and just ;
Let those who applaud take warning,
 And keep this motto in sight—
No question is ever settled
 Until it is settled right.

Let those who have failed take courage,
 Though the enemy seemed 'o have won,
Though his ranks are strong, if he be in the
 wrong,
 The battle is not yet done.
For sure as the morning follows
 The darkest hour of the night,
No question is ever settled
 Until it is settled right.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

A STATEMENT

Regarding the Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind at Brantford; also regarding the Investigation held there in November and December of 1900, together with some of the causes leading up thereto.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ONTARIO :

On June 25th, 1900, while in Peterborough, in an interview with the Hon. J. R. Stratton, Provincial Secretary, in whose department is the O. I. B., regarding the Institution for the education of the Blind, he requested me to put my suggestions and recommendations in writing and to send it in at once, as a Cabinet meeting was to be held very soon, the 27th, if I remember rightly. This I did.

In it I did not give details—I could not, as the time was totally inadequate for the preparation and compilation of such a document. I was compelled to content myself with making just a few generalizations. In it I postulated that the Institution was never intended to be anything else but *Educational*;—that it was never intended to be a *Charity*, or a *Home*, or an *Asylum*, and that justly and logic-

ally it ought to be at once placed under the Minister of Education ;—that then certain other results would inevitably follow :—but that, in any case, the present Principal should be removed forthwith, for as an “ Educator ” he was a hopeless and disastrous failure.

That statement was duly acknowledged by the Provincial Secretary, but, until the 20th of November last, I never knew whether any action would be taken or not. On that day, Dr. J. Geo. Hodgins, as Senior Commissioner, notified me that an Investigation was to be held November 27th, at Brantford. Not until Saturday, November 24th, did Mr. Ratcliffe, the other complainant, and myself, receive definite information that “ all ” expenses would be paid to witnesses. Notwithstanding these temporal and the more serious financial limitation, six witnesses were present, beside Mr. Ratcliffe and myself. Had we had suitable notification, we could as easily have had sixty as six ; for the eager interest and unanimity displayed by former pupils in rejoicing at the prospect of the removal of Principal Dymond, were as awful as they were singularly suggestive. Abnormal and bitter is the legacy of hatred exhibited towards the present Principal, and, when its universal character is taken into account, can be explained on no other hypothesis than that something was and is not only “ rotten in the state of Denmark,” but also that its King was not as an educator “ sans peur et sans reproche.”

Were the Institute under the Minister of Education, there would be a reasonable chance, nay a positive certainty that the Principal of such an institution would not and could not be like the man who now so unworthily satisfies the requirements of an "educator." But, after all, what better could be expected? He was not chosen because he was an "educator," but being out of a job was considered magnificently competent to "boss the job" of swaying the destinies, of moulding the characters of the blind, bringing to the accomplishment of this task, qualifications strangely unsuited for training and equipping the blind to take their place in life as Christian citizens on an equality with those who see.

The Investigation was very unsatisfactory. The two Commissioners, both Civil Servants, were appointed to investigate charges against one of their own order. The evidence offered was not under oath. The enquiry was behind closed doors. We were forbidden to speak to any of the pupils. Principal Dymond strenuously, but unsuccessfully, strove to prevent two of the pupils from giving evidence against him. We were prevented by night-sessions of the Commission, from being able to confer with our counsel. The right of Principal Dymond to be present during the whole inquiry was never questioned, cross-questioning whensoever and whomsoever he pleased, which right was not accorded to either Mr. Ratcliffe or to myself.

Mr. McLean, teacher, called by me, was a very disappointing witness. On the Saturday prior to the Inquiry, he, unsolicited, while in Toronto, called once or twice on Mr. Ratcliffe and myself at the hotel where we were stopping. We, however, were out. But the same evening, while travelling to Brantford, we had a long conversation, in which he expressed himself, in unequivocal terms, in sympathy with the objects I had in view—the placing of the Institution under the Minister of Education, and the removal of Principal Dymond—and expressed himself as quite willing to appear as a witness, stipulating only that he should not be the only teacher I should call, so as not to make invidious distinctions. To this, of course, I assented. During the course of the conversation, he stated that he had interviewed the Provincial Secretary, the Hon. J. R. Stratton, on the unfitness of the present Principal, and quoted him as speaking of the Principal as “Old Dymond.” Notwithstanding the undisguised contempt with which the Minister regarded the Principal, he still refuses to remove him. Mr. McLean also related an episode in which he had gone to the Principal to urge the importance of “spelling” as a subject of study, which proposition the Principal, he stated, scouted as impracticable, saying that the blind could not spell. Mr. McLean added, that, as he was convinced they could learn to spell, he, on his own responsibility, set to work and very soon showed that the Principal knew noth-

ing whatever about it, for Mr. McLean found the blind could learn to spell, if taught. (It is scandalous that O. I. B. pupils should have their grotesque spelling made the laughing stock of everyone, and all because Principal Dymond did not, and would not have spelling regularly and systematically taught, and persistently and thoroughly drilled.) Mr. McLean severely animadverted on the fact of the gymnasium instructor, who did not hold even a Third Class Certificate, having his salary substantially increased for teaching reading to the Kindergarten pupils, while the Kindergarten, who did not hold a diploma from any school of domestic science, was teaching a cooking class. It is all too obvious that Principal Dymond considered any person was good enough for such work; on the other hand, let it be noted that in this Province no certificates lower than second class are issued. Mr. McLean still further showed his sympathy with and interest in our cause by calling on me at the Kirby House, Brantford, Monday evening, November 26th, and yet Mr. McLean when put on the stand was a most unsatisfactory witness. Imagine him saying before the Commissioners, "I really do not want to give any evidence, I would rather not give any evidence." His conduct is inexplicable except on the assumption that he was whipped into line by Inspector Chamberlain. Certain it is that his conduct was most cowardly, and his desertion of the cause, for which he had interviewed

Members of the Legislature and Ministers
of the Crown, most foul.

“ Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a ribbon to stick in his coat ;
Found the one gift of which Fortune
bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote.”

I am still of the opinion that Mr. McLean was at heart as strongly as ever in sympathy with the cause for which I was fighting, but a spell was on him. It is reported that subsequently he stated that he could not testify, for there was “no fight in him.” To discover the cause of the sudden cooling of his ardor, and the abatement of his pugnacity, would afford a most baffling psychological study incapable of elucidation, unless Inspector Chamberlain were to wave his magic wand over him.

I have stated elsewhere that I considered the conduct of Thomas Truss, willow instructor, in reference to this investigation was simply “villainous,” as on the night of November 28th, he, in conversation with James Hales, Esq., M.A., barrister, of Toronto, my counsel, so expressed himself that neither Mr. Hales nor I had the faintest suspicion that he would give any evidence other than what would be most strongly favorable to and completely confirmatory of, the position held by Mr. Ratcliffe and myself.

Then again, during the two years spent by Mr. Ratcliffe in the O. I. B., the most cordial relations were established between

Mr. Truss and him. They were like David and Jonathan. Months after he had left the Institution, Mr. Ratcliffe was entertained for weeks at Mr. Truss's home, which to my personal knowledge very much annoyed the Principal. Again, after reaching Brantford, at the time of the investigation, Mr. Ratcliffe and I met the son and daughter of this man, both of whom evidenced the keenest pleasure at meeting him, and the deepest sympathy with our cause. In the appendix will be found a letter from Miss Truss to Mr. Ratcliffe, which speaks for itself. Verily this man, Truss, is a Judas and an Ananias rolled into one. Why do I devote so much time to these two men? Simply to affirm that had these two men stood to their guns, had they been faithful and true, had they quitted themselves like men, they would never have so cruelly abandoned the interests of the blind boys and girls of this Province. This is not a personal matter. Neither Mr. Ratcliffe nor I was personally affected by this cowardice, excepting with sorrow to see men who gave promise of nobility stultify themselves. Had they testified before the Commission as fearlessly and as truthfully as they had to others for years, this pamphlet and pamphlet No. 2 would never have been written. The justice and righteousness of our case have never been affected; the truthfulness of our charges has not been shaken; the demand that the O. I. B. be placed under the Minister of Education has the intelligent endorsement

of educators everywhere—its present departmental relations are as illogical as they are insulting. But Messrs. Truss and McLean must be held primarily and mainly responsible for the perpetuation of that moral mangling, of that intellectual dwarfing, and of that despotic repression which have ever characterized the régime of A. H. Dymond.

“ Sowing the seed of a tarnished name !
 Sowing the seed of eternal shame !
 O what shall the harvest be ? ”

I understand that the Commissioners would not allow the teachers, when testifying, to give their opinion as to whether the institution should be placed under the Minister of Education. One of the officers, however, Mr. Hossie, the bursar, in conversation with me, in his office, November 28th, made the significant statement regarding putting the Institution under the Minister of Education: “ Oh, that’s what we all want here,” adding that the main obstacle thereto was Principal Dymond.

At this point, we must devote a few words to a precious worthy, Patrick J. Paclen. This individual is styled “ house-officer,” or “ supervisor.” He is the Principal’s “ handy-man,” who performs all the Principal’s dirty work. He is the only agent in the Principal’s “ secret service ”; and words fail me in attempting to describe this fawning lackey’s loyalty to his liege lord. His education is of the cheapest and most meagre type. He does not hold even

a Third Class Certificate—couldn't if he tried. With brazen effrontery Inspector Chamberlain tried to palm him off on the other Commissioners as possessing a certificate, until Principal Dymond was reluctantly forced to acknowledge the whole truth about it. In the conversation with Mr. McLean, already referred to, he described this man's falseness and double-dealing. In two-facedness he would do credit to Janus. No man in the O. I. B. is more hated by the boys, and with better reason. He would betray a pupil's confidence without a qualm. Sly, slippery, sinuous, and sinister—fawning and false—what wonder then that one with such characteristics should exercise a most malign influence upon the boys? What wonder that they soon learn to meet fire with fire and to become as deceitful as he? Next to the Principal, no one in the Institution has such power. How then are first-class moral results possible with such a ubiquitous sleuth as this creature ever on the scent? But it is futile to expect such a position to be filled by any other than such as long as men of the type of Principal Dymond and Inspector Chamberlain are in authority and in league. Only when the O. I. B. becomes in reality, what it is in name, educational, and becomes an integral part of the educational system of this Province, only then will it be possible for persons to be chosen to mould the characters of the doubly handicapped blind, who are doubly endowed, morally and intellectually. But what

better results can be expected when the blind are by the Ontario Government classed with the insane, the idiotic, and the criminal class! when such as Dymond, Truss, McLean and Patrick J. Padden are among the chief formative influences surrounding them! and when such a moral cipher and political huckster as Chamberlain is its sole inspector! Is such a man capable of perceiving that the O. I. B. is the O. I. E. B.! Ninety-five per cent. of his work is that of inspecting the asylums and jails, so that, when he reaches Brantford, he has become so afflicted with mental obliquity as to be utterly incapable of even imagining that the blind should be treated other than as "inmates" mentally or morally defective. This is seen in the character of most of the men placed over them, seen in the separate dining-rooms for the teachers and the "inmates," and seen all the way right on down through to the flush-closets for the teachers and the pigstys for the boys!

THE PROBLEM OF THE BLIND.

The great problem with regard to the totally or partially blind of this province is how to make them self-supporting, self-respecting Christian citizens—citizens of equal economic value to the state with their sighted fellows, and the more difficult the problem is of solution, the more resolute should be the determination to bring every

power to bear upon the work, to bring together the finest spirits capable of producing these results. One of the most stubborn prejudices to be overcome is that the great majority of the blind must necessarily be brothers or sisters of Bartimeus—that they are fated to be dependents. Let it once for all be understood that it costs more to make the blind, citizens of equal economic value with their sighted fellows. On this score, however, the people of the Province have lavishly provided, for with the Province at its back, from \$30,000 to \$35,000 have been spent annually, in the most cheerful manner, upon the O. I. B., but the economic results are crushingly disappointing, for a man's economic value to the state, no matter how well-equipped he may be, mechanically or scientifically or intellectually, is in direct ratio to the strength of his moral character and to his tenacity upon moral verities. And when we look to-day upon the graduates and alumni of the Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind, during the last fifteen years, we find a number of whom it may be affirmed that whatever moral worth, that is, whatever economic value they are to the state, is in spite of the O. I. B., not because of it; the great majority of them are fighting hard to regain their moral equilibrium, ever hampered by evil habits and more evil modes of thought and haunted by sickening memories that will not down; the remainder are doomed to a life of moral hopelessness or helpless de-

pendence. For Sweet Charity's sake I will concede that it is possible there may be a handful who came up through great tribulation and who kept their garments white, but who at the same time have not a scintilla of gladness at the retrospect upon their "old college days." I am well aware of the gravity of this indictment; all I can say is that to understand an atmosphere one must live in it, and this I did for three and a half years; I have lived behind the scenes, I have moved beneath the surface of the life at the O. I. B. in a way which no teacher or officer ever did and I know whereof I speak. "By their fruits ye shall know them"—judged by this highest test, the results are appalling, but the blame for it must primarily rest upon the head of the Principal. For whatever aim or policy the Institution may be said to possess or not to possess, Principal Dymond must be held responsible; about twenty years his spirit has dominated, informed and permeated the Institution; and anyone who has known his powers, by polysyllabic diatribes, of riding ruthlessly rough-shod over an opponent, in public or in private, will be able to appreciate fully this man's fitness for directing the symmetrical education of the blind. And right here I must protest against the aspersions emanating from a certain quarter that the blind are "morbidly sensitive." If any degree of morbid sensitiveness has been displayed by the successive generations of blind at the O. I. B., it must not be attri-

buted to their blindness, but to those conditions of life existing at the O. I. B., under which introspection is the only alternative. A cardinal principle in true education is to have faith in one's pupils and persistently to put them on their honor. Trust and love beget trust and love—I do not mean soft sentimental love, but sacrificial love, and the amount of this shown by Principal Dymond has been of 'microscopical proportions. He does not "believe in" the blind, consequently the blind have withheld their confidence and their affection from him, but not their fear. One thing a boy at the O. I. B. would never do (he would cut off his hand first) was to go and make a confidant of the Principal and open his quivering heart to him. For the first few weeks such a one might think the Principal was a "nice man," but he soon was disillusioned, never again to indulge in such a chimera. He learned instinctively that he was not trusted and he acted accordingly.

I iterate my demand for a change of relation and a change of Principal—that the O. I. B. shall be placed forthwith under the Minister of Education and that a new Principal be chosen, an all-round educator, not a man "out of a job,"—not a man who would regard the pupils as "pawns upon the board" with which for him to play his game—but a man whom the place shall seek,—a man who is ever a student of child-character, of their aptitudes and capabilities, a man whose one purpose is to make

the school as home-like and as free from 'Institutional' character as possible, all things being tributary to the supreme object of existence, which is "character,"—a man whose life before and behind the pupils shall be beautiful, ever "wearing the white flower of a blameless life," and whose life shall never fail to be an incentive, an inspiration to noble, sacrificial living—a man of whom the pupils shall irresistibly be constrained to say: "After leaving our Principal's presence, we always want to be better and to work more faithfully, for there is a subtile charm about him that always reminds us of Jesus Christ."

Then the Institution will no longer be classed among the Asylums, Reformatories and County Jails,—never again will inspection by the Inspector who inspects Lunatic Asylums and County Jails be regarded as the kind to which an Educational Institution of the unique character of the Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind (for that is its full title) is justly entitled, but inspection adequate and thorough-going and suited to the dignity of the place. Just imagine the pupils at Brantford laconically remarking, "Oh, yes, Chamberlain's here again—been visiting the idiots and the lunatics and the jail-birds—our turn now,—whose next? Oh, we suppose our brothers and sisters at the other penal colony at Belleville."

Then whatever are needed of the "Authorized Text-books for the Public Schools of this Province of Ontario" would

be put into both "line-type" and "point," so that each pupil would have his own text-book in each subject, thereby relieving the teachers from one of their present heaviest burdens, and setting them free for more profitable work. "Seeing" pupils in the public schools study from text-books; why should British subjects because they happen to be blind be compelled to use readers compiled and edited by United States citizens? Why are these blind debarred from using our magnificent Public School Readers? Why are there not British and Canadian Histories to be had, and in abundance? Let us not forget text-books on Natural History, on Physiology and Temperance, on Composition (this subject as such has been totally neglected); and let us not forget the Spelling book, that "bête noir" of the present Principal.

Then the middle wall of caste between teachers and pupils would be no more—as long as that congeries of Asylums and Institutions and County Jails exists, it is bound to exist; there would then be but one table for teachers and pupils, at which the boys and girls would always meet; for never, except when the sexes thus meet as self-respecting individuals, will it be possible to inculcate the observance of table-etiquette, the little courtesies that go to make up the charm of home life, and above all, personal purity, for never was a more damnatory statement than that made at the recent inquiry by one of the witnesses regarding the awful yet logical results of

the unnatural and rigid separation of the boys and girls at the O. I. B. I cannot conceive a more hideous and heart-breaking story than that long chapter of secret vice, of self-abuse and mutual pollution by grown up men with little boys, of little chaps of seven and eight going there innocent and artless, and then turned adrift among a great crowd of immoral and profane companions (themselves the results of similar treatment in years gone by at the hands of others). This marring of Christ's "little ones," this "daubing more and more from the first similitude" was not an occasional incident; this carnival of bestiality, went on for years before January, 1897 (the time I entered), and went on until broken up a few months after I entered—went on unknown or unheeded—take which ever horn of the dilemma you please. Unfaithful shepherds! Verily, one is tempted to fear that the supply of millstones for necklaces may run short for those who by sheer neglect or crass ignorance caused "His little ones to fall into sin!" Is there nothing tangible in this? And how was the exposure dealt with? By reprimand or corporal punishment or by expulsion—the one who was expelled being re-admitted at the re-opening of the school the following September. Besides all this, during the first six months I was in the O. I. B., it was a veritable hell to me, for the air was ever green with obscenity and blue with profanity. And what is the supreme remedy? That "right knowledge, in the

right proportion, at the right time and by the right person will produce right results !” But as long as the proper and self-respecting co-mingling of boys and girls at table and in drawing-room is not only frowned on but actually forbidden, dire will inevitably be the results. As long as that pestilential heresy continues to prevail among vast numbers that “boys must be boys, you know !” and that a certain amount of “smut” among boys and men is either a desirable or an inevitable “sine qua non” of manhood, so long will there be a scarcity of chivalrous boys and men of the type of “Sir Gallahad,” who sang :—

“ My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure !”

Great help could be given were the school physician instructed to complement his duties by giving “talks” to the boys suited to their various ages. But even that will not be sufficient, unless the higher, the wider truth, be instilled and drilled into them, the sacredness of the body in which each lives, the only “true temple of God,” and of the awful enormity of desecrating this temple.

Little wonder then a feeling of abiding bitterness exists in many homes towards the Principal under whom this sickening tale of horror went on. I know of nothing more blood-curdling than this moral ruining of little boys, which went on in a place that parents supposed to be a home, and after they had handed them over to the tender care of a man who would be a father

to them. Cruelly deceived were these parents, for no sooner were their backs turned than the little blind chaps were turned as lambs among wolves. And this went on for years and years. Is there nothing tangible in this? What further is needed to exemplify the sad truth that when the moral foundations are sapped and honey-combed, the superstructure is bound to totter, and, sooner or later, to fall, unless re-vitalized by Divine Life and re-energized by Divine Energy.

Th's last remark will provoke the question, "Is there no religious instruction in the O. I. B.?" Yes, in abundance, but the fatal weakness is the lack of "Applied Christianity." Religiosity, on the one hand, and a sacrificial, strong, noble, Christian character on the other, have but little, if anything, in common. The former has been in evidence "ad nauseam," but when the fountain-head sends forth both sweet water and bitter, the pupils will have none of it—they have not seen exemplified before them the necessary identity of morals and religion. A boy learns morality primarily as an art, and not as a science. Christian theory is of doubtful value unless invariably accompanied by Christian practice. Character—character—character—is the only touchstone of life. If some of the teachers inspired to higher living, certainly the Principal never did. His inconsistency, his capriciousness, his ungoverned temper, his uncontrolled rage; and then his roarings, and his cutting sarcasm, at

morning roll-call, year in and year out, to and upon the wincing and smarting ones before him, followed ever by mellifluous and unctuously-toned "morning prayers"—all combining to form among the boys a never-failing target for every shaft of ridicule and scorn paid back, principal and interest.

As soon as the Institution is placed under the Minister of Education, a change of name will not only be pre-eminently desirable, but imperatively necessary. It should be at once christened "College," or some other equally euphonious and appropriate designation. The term "Institution" will be too redolent of its past associations with Asylums and County Jails.

Then there will be no desire or inclination on the part of partially-sighted graduates to be so ashamed of their connection with the O. I. B. as to most carefully conceal it. When, too, the re-organization takes place, the present dormitories must be remodelled, making it impossible for more than three (two should be the maximum) to be in one room; anything that will foster the sense of self-respect, of responsibility, of trustworthiness, of honor, should be adopted as soon as possible. But under no circumstances should any but seniors or adults use these rooms. For the smaller ones, cottages must at once be erected, each of which should be a genuine home, but never a "Home." I have already indicated, in black enough colors, the appalling results of the present "herding"

system. For everything must lead up to the one supreme end—the turning out of high, noble, Christ-like characters, in the attainment of which every factor must make it “easy to be good and hard to be evil.” At present, the opposite is true, and has been for long years back.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

In my first statement, the one to the Provincial Secretary, I stated that I had no grievances of my own to air or to remedy. This I repeat. Neither have I had any axes to grind. Neither have I been prompted by any desire to get even with any one over mistakenly supposed “blighted hopes.” I have neither had nor held any grudges against anyone. To any who may have imputed evil motives to me or placed wrong constructions upon my course, I simply say their imputations and their thoughts have not an atom of truth on which to rest.

The charge of ingratitude has been made ; such a charge is cheap and easily made. I repudiate it—it is baseless. To the Province of Ontario I owe a deep debt of gratitude ; my expressions of gratitude have ever been out-spoken and cordial. To the servants of this self-same Province of Ontario at the O. I. B., viz., its Principal, its staff, and its officers, I never failed to pay the respect due to their various offices, to be always most courteous to them, and to speak respectfully of them, behind their backs as

well as to their faces. My influence among the boys was never subversive of authority. With but one or two exceptions, this Servant of the Province always used me courteously. And why should he not have done so? I obeyed the rules of the Institution—I acted as a gentleman should act. I am surely not to suppose that he does not habitually treat a gentleman with the courtesy due a gentleman, especially when that gentleman invariably pays due deference to him and fitting respect to his office. But that Servant ought to be disillusioned by this time, and ought forever to cease confounding Stewardship with Proprietorship.

I entered upon this campaign with no jauntiness. It was one of the severest struggles of my life, but “The Cry of the Children” prevailed. I would have been the most cowardly of moral cowards had I been deaf to that bitter cry. Every spark of manhood within me flamed forth. And I am in good company. I count myself honored to be one of the humblest in that mighty army of Knights of the Cross.

Long ago Isaiah pealed forth my commission thus:—“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”

I desire no reward, excepting to hear our Lord’s words, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my blind brothers and sisters, ye have done it unto Me.”

APPENDIX.

The following three extracts are from Pamphlet No. 2, and are chosen from the first part of it, written by Mr. Walter A. Ratcliffe, Port Hope. They speak for themselves.

Because, there are little boys and girls in Ontario who because of their defective sight or their total lack of sight, are unable to profit by our public schools, and because the Provincial Institution for the Education of the Blind is so grossly mismanaged, so wretchedly principaled that none but one totally ignorant of it or heartlessly criminal could advise a parent to send a child to it for even one term, these pages are written.

Early in March, 1900, I published "An Appeal for the Blind." In June, Mr. Beall made a statement to the Secretary of the Province, but not till late in the autumn was any notice taken of the charges we had made. On the 27th day of November, what for convenience' sake I will call an investigation was commenced. The facts connected with this investigation are briefly these :

1. Only eight days' notice was given complainants of the investigation, and the information was so vague as to cause Mr. Beall and myself no little annoyance.

2. Two civil servants, Dr. George J. Hodgins and Prof. Mills were appointed to investigate the charges. This was unfair to say the least.

3. Dr. Chamberlain, the Inspector of Prisons and Charities, was associated with these gentlemen. This was all the guarantee A. H. Dymond needed that nothing very damaging should meet the public eye. There has never been any appeal from a decision reached by the Principal and the Inspector. Their rule of the Institution is absolute, but notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding the fact that the criticisms reflected upon the Inspector, he was made a judge.

4. Principal Dymond might as well have been made Associate Commissioner, for he was never absent from the enquiry room. He put questions and made statements at will. More than once he refused to answer my questions and the Commissioners sustained him.

5. Part of the minutes of the several meetings was taken by Mr. W. Wickens, the faithful Friday of A. H. Dymond. The latter part was made up by a man from Dr. Chamberlain's office.

6. The press and the public were excluded.

7. No witness was placed under oath.

8. The complainants were never treated as such, being denied the right to question any one, and being dismissed before another witness was summoned.

9. Terror reigned over the entire building. Officials fled from ex-pupils, others

begged not to be placed on the stand. Pupils were told that it would be worse for them after the investigation ceased. As will be shown later on members of the staff were lashed into line.

People of Ontario, how much could an angel prove under such circumstances ?

Before going further let me record my appreciation of the conduct of Prof. Mills. He was kind, easy of approach, and throughout the investigation gave evidence of a desire to learn the truth. I have already stated that these pages are written because of the wretched condition of the school. The course of studies is by no means elaborate. When compared with that of similar institutions in Boston, Philadelphia and New York, it pales into insignificance. The New York (city) Institution for the Blind is a member of the University of the State of New York, and the literary standing of the pupils is determined by the Regent examinations. These examinations are planned to meet the requirements of the schools of the state. Mr. Wait, the Principal, assures the public that not a single rule is relaxed in favor of the blind. All questions are answered in writing, and within a time limit. Notwithstanding this the blind carried off the honors of the state. The course comprises languages (Classics and Moderns), Algebra, Geometry, Physics and many other branches not dreamed of at Brantford. The Perkins Institution, Boston, and that at Overbrook, a suburb of Philadelphia, show a similar

marked superiority over the Ontario Institution. Not a single pupil beginning and ending his school course in the O.I.B., could come anywhere near passing the Public School Leaving Examination. There is no reason why the blind children of Ontario should be the inferiors of their seeing brothers and sisters if the blind of New York are actually able to outdo theirs.

This morsel of comparison is made, not because I desire to contrast Institutions. I am showing, and have shown that the O.I.B. is not what it ought to be. The Inspector of Prisons and Charities endeavored to belittle Mr. Beall and myself by stating that we had no experience with other institutions. I refer him to the annual report of the above mentioned institutes for 1899, the year in which "An Appeal for the Blind" was written, reminding the public at the same time that Dr. Chamberlain is no more fit to inspect a school for the blind than a poodle is to be a parish priest.

The mediocrity or even worse, of the literary work done is by no means the only reason why I have criticized the O.I.B. It is not by any means the most important reason. Mr. Beall made charges last June, and they were amply sustained before the commission. I charge here as I charged a year ago, that A. H. Dymond, by his stupidity, his blundering, his lack of heart, his indifference to the rights of others, his total ignorance of the fitness of things, has transformed the Institution into a moral

quagmire, a destroyer rather than a developer. I dare not say what I want to say. When I asked a physician if there was any technical name for the practice that prevailed among the male pupils for years, he answered, "You will have to call it sexual perversion. That means many things." Children seven or eight years of age enter the Institution healthy and innocent, but leave it a few years later blasted, because they were herded with seniors who had been similarly poisoned, or who were vicious before entering the school. A. H. Dymond must be held responsible for this awful state of affairs, for no one rules in that school but him.

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Thomas Truss knows the facts better than any other man in this Province, for he has been longest at the Institution. He knows in his heart that I wrote truly. The following letter shows how he greeted the pamphlet :

104 St. Paul's Ave., Brantford, Ont.
March 12th, 1900.

Mr. W. A. Ratcliffe, Port Hope :—

Dear Friend,—We received your pamphlet on Saturday morning after father had gone to work. When he came home he asked for it and has been reading it ever since ; every now and then he bursts out laughing and pronounces it rich.

Father says they are all going round with gloomy faces, wondering "who could have

told him ?” “ who gave him all his information ?” Quite dramatic, is it not ? The “ King ” was indisposed, so did not go to church.

The second officer, Mr. Hossie, thinks it is a terrible blow, but still makes light of it ; even he is struck with the force of there being no chairs or private place for the pupils to go to. In this case you seem to have performed a surgical operation, for which receive my congratulations.

They are all able to apply it to each other, but not to themselves.

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Miss Dymond could hardly be civil to father when she met him in the sitting-room, but father is very serene. The “ Courier ” mentioned your Appeal, and said they had seen some of the officials, who said they did not fear an investigation. Thank you for the kind things you said about father. I am pleased the people should know the truth about the workshop. I never knew before that the shop was self-sustaining.

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I write this because I thought you would like to know how they were taking it. When I learn more I will write and tell it to you.

Hoping you are in better health than when you wrote me last, I remain,

Your true friend,

Mary E. Truss.

What hideous threat must have been held over the head of the Trade Instructor to cause him to give such evidence as was evoked from his lips at the investigation? Could it have been less than a threat of decapitation, which would carry with it not only the loss of salary, but the forfeiture of the retiring allowance for upwards of thirty years' service?

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Ratepayers of Ontario, once more I appeal to you to see that the blind of this Province are cared for according to the means you contribute for that purpose. I plead for the little ones who must grope their way all down "life's little lane" strangers to the sunshine. I plead with you to answer dispassionately my question: Are the men discussed in these pages fit men to entrust with the characters of our shadowed little ones? "Men do not gather figs from thistles," nor can your children receive light from darkness. If you cast them into an atmosphere of hate, dissembling and treachery, where shall they find the impelling power of love? Are A. H. Dymond, Thos. Truss, T. W. McLean and Patrick J. Padden the noblest, worthiest men you can find to watch and direct the development of your children? No, a thousand times, no. Then, with tears I implore you displace the unworthy and give your little ones guides who will lead them gently and faithfully till they be strong

enough to go out into the wide (and to them) dark world, alone.

I plead for the little children, but I also plead for those whose light failed when they were in the mid-forenoon of life. Have they no claim upon you? It is now definitely stated that no adult will hereafter be admitted to the Institution. And why? Because, it is alleged, that the present trouble was caused by the presence of adults at the school. This assertion is a lie pure and simple. The trouble is the outgrowth of years of bungling. None but a set of cowardly incapables would dream of denying admission to intelligent persons over twenty-one. None but a Pharoah would condescend to reign over a community of women and children, who could not oppose his dastardly, cowardly onslaughts. Look at the blind men on your streets, begging from door to door. There is money enough wasted annually in the Institution to equip and maintain work-shops capable of employing every blind man and woman in Ontario able to work, and to give a living to every one not able to work. Will you do nothing for the army of the blind, many of whom are now tramps? For the laboring man in possession of five senses the struggle for existence is life-long and unremitting. What is it to the man without friends, without money, without sight? Deprive a man of feet, of hands, of speech, of hearing, and he is still able to take care of himself. There are many things he can

do in order to maintain himself. Take away his sight and you bury him beneath the calamity of calamities.

Men and women whose hearts are hearts of flesh I plead with you to help the blind to help themselves. Make the O. I. B. a part of our system of education. Re-organize and enlarge the industrial department, so that all who want work can find it.



