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FROM DEMI-MONDES TO SLAVEYS: A STUDY OF THE TE ORANGA
REFORMATORY FOR DELINQUENT WOMEN, 1900-1918.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in History at Massey University.

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1987

ABSTRACT.

This thesis examines the management of the Te Oranga reformatory for delinquent women, from its inception in 1900 until its closure in 1918. The institution was supervised by the Education Department, a body which, it is suggested, did not have firm ideas on the functions of the reformatory. The Department's ambivalence over the role of the institution, in addition to such other problems as limited facilities and poor staff, created a number of difficulties in the administration of Te Oranga. The study also examines Te Oranga's role in the wider society. It is argued that the committal of young women to, and treatment in, the reformatory was based on accepted and stereotypical views of women's "traditional" function in society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

There are a number of individuals and organisations whose assistance I would like to acknowledge. I particularly wish to thank my supervisors, Dr Margaret Tennant and Professor Colin Davis, for their suggestions, criticisms and support during the preparation of this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr David Thomson for his comments on an early draft of some chapters. I have received help from a variety of organisations: the Canterbury Museum; the Canterbury Public Library, particularly Mr Richard Greenaway of the New Zealand Room; National Archives, Wellington; Massey University Library; and the Alexander Turnbull Library. The Department of Social Welfare, Wellington, made available a number of important files, and I wish to thank Mr Ross Mackay, Director Research of the Department of Social Welfare, and Professor Graeme Fraser of the Sociology Department, Massey University, for their assistance in gaining access to this material. I owe a considerable debt to Dr Peter Kay of the Computer Centre, Massey University, for his help in solving numerous word-processing problems. I am also grateful to Bronwyn Labrum for support and encouragement. Finally, I wish to thank Rob Forlong who read chapters, listened to seminars, criticised and encouraged throughout.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

AJHR Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives

CW Child Welfare Files, National Archives, Wellington

LT Lyttleton Times

NZH New Zealand Herald

INTRODUCTION.

If one were to provide a term which would adequately summarise the response to social problems in the nineteenth century, one could speak, with some justification, of the "Age of Institutions". During the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries, institutionalisation became the major response to the treatment of individuals considered to be dangerous or threats to the social order. Such nations as France, the United States, Britain and later Australia and New Zealand established a variety of institutions in which to house society's so-called deviant members - psychiatric hospitals, prisons, reformatories, industrial schools, rescue homes and workhouses.

This thesis is a study of the management of one New Zealand state child welfare institution, the Te Oranga reformatory for delinquent girls and young women. The reformatory was opened in 1900 in response to an apparent increase in juvenile delinquency, and was closed in 1918 as part of the reorganisation of the industrial school system. The school reopened in the 1920s as the Burwood Training Centre for girls, and was later renamed the Kingslea Training Centre, the name it still bears. This study examines the first period of the institution's operation, from 1900 until 1918.

Over the last twenty years social historians and sociologists have increasingly examined society's response to the deviant and the dependent. These studies have frequently focussed on the institutions established to treat or confine such individuals. However there have been few New Zealand studies of any type of state or private institution. A number of historians have studied women's refuge homes, old people's homes and asylums.¹ Such studies focus on the general management of

¹ Ann Magee, "Asylums and the Social Order in Colonial New Zealand: An Exploratory Study", paper presented to the Geography Conference, Wellington, 1981; M.S. Primrose, "Society and the Insane: A Study of Mental Illness in New Zealand, 1867-1926, with special reference to the

the institutions, and groups and individuals interested in their reform. Only three historians have closely studied New Zealand industrial schools and reformatories. P.J. Whelan studied the care of destitute children from 1840 until 1900, examining early government and private provisions.² Jan Beagle made a more detailed study of the industrial school system from 1880 until the Child Welfare Act of 1925, examining briefly the management of a number of schools, including Te Oranga.³ The most recent study is that by Carol Vincent, who examined the development of the schools from an educational perspective.⁴ There has been no detailed case study of the management of any industrial school, or any other type of public institution.

While public institutions are relatively under-studied in New Zealand, there are many overseas studies which examine prisons, workhouses, reformatories, hospitals for the mentally ill and industrial schools.⁵ These and other studies have made a

Auckland Mental Hospital", M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1968; Margaret Tennant, "Elderly Indigents and Old Men's Homes, 1880-1920", New Zealand Journal of History, 17:1 (1983), pp.3-20, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles': Women's Homes in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand", Women's Studies International Forum, 9:5 (October 1986), pp.491-502, "Maternity and Morality: Homes for Single Mothers 1890-1930", Women's Studies Journal, 2:1 (August 1985), pp.28-50.

- 2 P.J. Whelan, "The Care of Destitute, Neglected and Criminal Children in New Zealand, 1840-1900", M.A. thesis, Victoria University, 1956.
- 3 Jan Beagle, "Children of the State: A Study of the New Zealand Industrial School System 1880-1925", M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1974.
- 4 Carol Vincent, "Special Education as Social Control: The Historical Development of industrial schools and special classes", M.A. thesis, Massey University, 1985.
- 5 For an examination of some of these see Barbara Brenzel, Daughters of the State: A Social Portrait of the First Reform School for Girls in North America, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1983; M.A. Crowther, The Workhouse System 1834-1929 - the history of an English social institution, London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd, 1981; Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish - The Birth of the Prison, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977; Estelle Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830-1930, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981; Stephen Garton, "Bad or Mad? Developments in Incarceration in New South Wales 1880-1920", in Sydney Labor History Group, What Rough Beast? The State and Social Order in Australian History, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1982, pp.89-111; Joseph Hawes, Children in Urban Society - Juvenile Delinquency in Nineteenth Century America, New York: O.U.P., 1971; Michael Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain - The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, London: MacMillan Press, 1978; Nicole Hahn Rafter, Partial Justice, Women in State Prisons, 1880-1935, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985; David J. Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum. Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic, Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1971; Andrew T. Scull, Museums of Madness - The Social Organization of Insanity in 19th Century England, London: Penguin Books, 1979.

number of important observations on the management on institutions, and the relationship between them and the wider society.

Erving Goffman's Asylums - Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates, was one of the first studies of the management of institutions. Goffman describes prisons, workhouses and other institutions as "total institutions". He notes that a total institution may be defined as "a place of residence and work where a large number of individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable length of time, lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life".⁶ Goffman incorporates a wide range of institutions in his definition, including prisons, monasteries, military barracks, concentration camps, merchant ships and logging camps. He attempts to justify the inclusion of various institutions by insisting that total institutions bring areas of sleep, work and play into common, and that all individuals are strictly regulated, all in the same place and doing a similar thing.⁷

Several historians have criticised Goffman's thesis on the ground that the concept of total institutions is too broad.⁸ The populations and purposes of prisons and convents are tremendously diverse, and while some management techniques may be similar, admission to the two institutions is vastly different, an issue not explored by Goffman. Individuals generally join convents on their own volition, aware of the ordering of life within its walls. The same cannot be said of those committed to prisons. In practice, subsequent commentators have confined the notion of total institutions to agencies of the state - prisons, industrial schools and psychiatric hospitals - which contain a distinct population, those labelled as deviant.

Goffman makes a number of important observations on the management of total institutions. He notes that the administration may employ a variety of techniques to

6 Erving Goffman, Asylums - Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1962. xiii.

7 *ibid.*, p.6.

8 Michael Ignatieff, "Total Institutions and Working Classes", History Workshop Journal, 15 (Spring 1983), p.168.

encourage an individual's dependence on the institutional regime, in the hope that such dependency will lead to a reformation or cure. Goffman identifies two groups in the total institution: the small, supervisory group of staff members, and the much larger, managed group of residents. The staff control most aspects of the daily life in the institution. They control communication amongst individuals, and between residents and the outside world. They are also responsible for the maintenance in the residents of what Goffman terms the "mortification" of the self. This mortification is the disruption of the usual relationship between an individual and her or his actions, which, in everyday environments, attest to others that the individual has some control over her or his own life.⁹ In some instances there is a personal defacement of those who enter total institutions. This may be the loss of the usual physical appearance, such as dressing in ill-fitting or unusual clothing. The residents may be placed in humiliating positions, such as being physically punished, or they may be verbally humiliated by having to exhibit respect and deference to attendants. This mortification may be extended to violations of the body. Some individuals may be force-fed; others may have to eat unclean food from unusual food vessels; others may be placed in forced social relationships.¹⁰

Goffman identifies these violations as an attempt to destroy the self-determination and autonomy of the individuals in total institutions. The institution seeks a total control over the lives of its members, encouraging their dependence on, and eventual positive response to, the managerial regime. While such controls may be placed on individuals, Goffman notes that they were not always accepted by the residents, who have ways of "making out", subverting the rules and forming their own underlife in the institution. He notes that "our sense of being a person can come from being drawn into a wider social unit; our sense of self-hood can arise through the little ways in which we resist the pull. Our status is backed by the solid buildings of the world, while our sense of personal identity often resides in the cracks".¹¹ These "cracks", or points where the management of institutions has

⁹ Goffman, p.43.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp.20-29.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p.320.

collapsed, are interpreted by the staff of the institution as indications that the residents are not ready to leave, and that they have not responded successfully to treatment.¹²

Goffman further investigates the role of the attendants, suggesting that one of the central effects of total institutions is to sustain the self-concept and professionalisation of staff members. The attendants evolve a theory of human nature into which the behaviour of the residents is translated. To safeguard their concept of the function of the institution, the staff resort to an all-embracing identification of the residents: all patients in a psychiatric institution must be mad or else they would not be there. Goffman notes that "a crime must be uncovered to fit the punishment, and the character of the inmate must be reconstituted to fit the crime".¹³

He also identifies a number of contradictions in the institutions. He sees a major conflict to be between that which the institution does, and that which its officials must say it does. There is a difference between practice within an institution, and the public perception of this. He also perceives a conflict between humane standards and institutional efficiency. This tension is often resolved in favour of the latter, the interests of the staff being placed before those of the residents for whom the institutions are, ostensibly, to serve.¹⁴

Goffman's thesis has important implications for the study of Te Oranga. The reformatory slips easily into the category of total institutions. All of the young women slept, worked and ate in the same place, and all were engaged in similar occupations at similar times. The young women were confined together for an appreciable length of time, and were separated from the wider community by walls and the symbolic barrier of detention in a penal institution. Moreover, many of the

¹² *ibid.*, p.385.

¹³ *ibid.*, p.384.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp.74-79.

management techniques, and resistance to these identified by Goffman, are visible in the reformatory. The contradictions and conflicts suggested are also evident.

While the Goffman model is useful in understanding the management of Te Oranga, there are a number of issues in the concept of total institutions which he does not address. Firstly, Goffman presents the management rituals as universal in their effects on individuals - that deference in a convent is similar to deference in a prison. In ignoring the varieties in the populations of total institutions, Goffman does not grasp the different effects of management techniques. The purposes and methods of confinement work on individuals in various ways, depending on their age, race, gender or class.

Second, Goffman does not explore the ambiguities raised by the notion of total institutions. The staff's control of institutions was not necessarily total, for in many cases, the staff were guided by, and were answerable to, another authority such as public opinion. While society was prepared to establish total institutions, it needed to be reassured that the institutions were managed adequately. The establishment and subsequent supervision of total institutions suggests a certain public anxiety about the role of the institution. Furthermore, Goffman does not fully explore the notion that total institutions are a reflection of the wider community. Such management techniques as privileges and punishments occur throughout society, but are regularised in the total institution.

Michel Foucault builds on Goffman's thesis in his work Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison, lauded as one of the seminal works in the discussion of social control and the history of incarceration.¹⁵ Foucault's work is essentially an examination of the disappearance of the spectacle of public punishment and execution, and its replacement with imprisonment. Although public punishment worked on the body of the offender, and the incarceration on the mind or the soul.

¹⁵ Michael Ignatieff, "State, Civil Society and Total Institutions: A Critique of Recent Social Histories of Punishment", in Stanley Cohen and Andrew Scull (ed), Social Control and the State, Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1985, pp.75-106.

Foucault sees the actual aims and structure of the processes as the same. He views punishment as a very complex social function and political tactic, a technology of power.¹⁶

Foucault discusses the internal management of institutions and identifies seven principles as the universal maxims of good penitential conditions, operating in all penal institutions. In common with Goffman, Foucault sees the central function of the institution to transform the offender's behaviour into acceptable channels. Offenders must be isolated, or classified according to the gravity of their offence for easier management, and it must be possible to alter the penalties within the institution to suit the individual. Penal labour is crucial in an institution to keep the offenders occupied, and they must be provided with some moral education and later, rehabilitation. Finally, the institution must be managed by trained and professional staff.¹⁷ All of these maxims can be identified as part of the management of Te Oranga. Foucault goes on to explain the purposes of these principles in total institutions. He asserts that the prison is always omni-disciplinary: it is an unceasing discipline, despotic and total. The principles of isolation, solitude and penal labour are all part of this and represent a total submission to the total discipline.¹⁸

This analysis significantly aids in understanding the purpose of various management techniques and policies at Te Oranga. The reformatory, a total institution, was part of a process of making the abnormal normal, of changing delinquent young women into law-abiding, morally upright women. To achieve this, the institution attempted to maintain a complete and total control over the young women, and to enforce their complete and total submission to, or dependence on the regime. Incarceration was much more than the deprivation of liberty. It was, as Foucault states, "a form of 'legal detention' entrusted with the additional corrective task, or an enterprise for reforming individuals that the deprivation of liberty allowed to function in the legal

¹⁶ Foucault, p.193.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp.269-270.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.236.

system".¹⁹

Another important work for the study of total institutions is Michael Ignatieff's A Just Measure of Pain - The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution. In common with Foucault, Ignatieff explores the development of the prison as the major mode of punishment, in this instance, in England between 1750 and 1850, investigating the changing ideals of those involved in penal reform. Within this framework he discusses the purposes and aims of punishment, and incarceration in particular.

Ignatieff, like Foucault, asserts that the major change in the nature of punishment during the eighteenth century was the move away from the punishment of the body to the punishment of the mind. The shift was reflected in the gradual disappearance of public hangings, tortures and processions and their replacement with imprisonment.²⁰ Incarceration was seen as both a physical and a moral punishment, for while in prison, an offender had the opportunity to reflect on her or his crime. Those who advocated imprisonment had recognised the "social utility of guilt", and the effects of appealing to the offender's conscience.²¹

This form of punishment also had to conserve its moral legitimacy in the eyes of the public if it were to have any validity. Ignatieff goes beyond Goffman and Foucault here, noting that one of the key problems in conserving and upholding the social order was to present punishment in such a way that those who endured it, and the public, retained respect for those who performed the punishment. The efficacy of the punishment depended on its legitimacy.²²

Ignatieff further discusses public support for penal institutions noting that support for penitentiaries is inexplicable if it is assumed that the appeal of the institution

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.233.

²⁰ Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain, pp.70-79.89-90.

²¹ *ibid.*, p.72.

²² *ibid.*

was based on its functional capacity to control crime. Rather, the support was due to a larger social need, for eighteenth century prisons were presented as a response to the whole social crisis of the period. Despite the fact that penitentiaries were criticised for some shortcomings, support for institutions continued as they were seen to play a part in the maintenance of the social order.

In another work, Ignatieff continues the discussion of total institutions, introducing ideas not fully explored by either Goffman or Foucault. He claims that the "true" history of such institutions is not of what happens inside the walls, but of the historical relationship between the "inside" and the "outside" and the part the institution plays in the reproduction of the social order in the world beyond its walls. He suggests that the function of a total institution is not static and does not rest on how the institution deters or rehabilitates: total institutions have effects on the wider society through the mythic and symbolic weight of their walls on the outside world.²³

The need for public support and respect for punishment and prisons indicates a further ambivalence in the concept of total institutions. While society may have seen a need for the establishment of institutions, it was also aware of the need to police these. Punishment and treatment had to be within bounds, often a reflection of unwritten rules in the wider community.

Ignatieff's ideas are crucial in examining the purposes of Te Oranga. The institution was much more than simply a reformatory which punished and reformed delinquent young women. Its establishment in 1900 coincided with a public concern over larrikinism, the role of women in society, and eugenic ideas of racial fitness and supremacy.²⁴ The establishment of Te Oranga was a response to a perceived social

²³ Ignatieff, "Total Institutions and Working Classes", p.169.

²⁴ P.J. Fleming, "Eugenics in New Zealand 1900-1940", M.A. thesis, Massey University, 1981; P.A.Gregory, "Saving the Children in New Zealand: A Study of Social Attitudes Towards Larrikinism in the Later Nineteenth Century", B.A. (Hons) research essay, Massey University, 1975.

"crisis" of the period. Like any other penal institution: Te Oranga was to protect, punish and produce normal, acceptable members of society.

Stanley Cohen and Andrew Scull have drawn together a wide variety of views on total institutions and deviant groups in a collection of essays, Social Control and the State. Unlike earlier works, many of these historians explore in considerable detail the idea of the social control of various groups and individuals in society. A number of these essays are important for the study of Te Oranga.

David J. Rothman's essay "Social Control: The Uses and Abuses of the Concept in the History of Incarceration" traces the changing use of the term social control from the 1910s. Initially the term was used to explain social cohesion and co-operation, but more recently has come to be seen as coercion and conflict.²⁵ Most importantly, Rothman posits a number of questions about the purposes of social control. He notes that "a social control orientation does suggest that innovations were likely to occur somewhere, and so the question becomes, where?" He goes on to ask "if the prison does not serve the prisoner, then whom does it serve?"²⁶

Rothman's ideas indicate a tension in the management of total institutions between the ideas of reform, punishment and protection and the balance between them. The institutions were ostensibly to treat or reform individuals, but they were also to protect society by removing dangerous, abnormal and non-conformist elements. Te Oranga was to protect and punish young women, and in so doing, was to protect society from delinquency.

John A. Mayer's essay "Notes towards a Working Definition of Social Control in Historical Analysis" provides a summary of social control theories. He criticises historians and sociologists who have often used the term social control in a purely negative sense with regard to innovations in welfare, disregarding positive effects of

²⁵ David J. Rothman, "Social Control: The Uses and Abuses of the Concept in the History of Incarceration", in Cohen and Scull (ed), Social Control and the State, p.109.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p.113.

social control. Frequently, the term is used to describe reforms initiated by the middle-classes to control and dominate the working-classes.²⁷

The social control theories presented by Mayer are class-oriented and pay no heed to such other social divisions as gender. In her article "Chastizing the Unchaste: Social Control Functions of a Women's Reformatory, 1894-1931" Nicole Hahn Rafter, unlike many other historians of deviance, uses gender as a primary tool of analysis in discussing the management of the institution. While noting that female working-class offenders and female middle-class reformers met at the gate of the reformatory, she suggests that purely economic or class-based explanations do not adequately account for the techniques and purposes of social control in the institution. She sees the purposes of the reformatory to protect, punish, and create true and good women.²⁸

Jill Julius Matthews is another historian who has incorporated gender in the examination of the committal of women to, and subsequent treatment in, psychiatric institutions. Matthews uses the experience of the women to trace the development of the construction of femininity in Australia. Like Rafter, Matthews claims that the creation of good, feminine women is one of the primary purposes of the social control of women through such agencies as psychiatric institutions.²⁹

Mayer's, Rafter's and Matthews' ideas illuminate some of an institution's less obvious purposes than protection and punishment. Total institutions were part of the process of redefining and recreating individuals according to the constraints of their class or gender. Through a discussion of gender, Rafter and Matthews have shown that the purposes of the management of women's institutions were closely allied with notions of womanhood and femininity. Any study of a women's institution

27 John A. Mayer, "Notes towards a Working Definition of Social Control", in Cohen and Scull (ed), Social Control and the State, pp.17-19.

28 Nicole Hahn Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste: Social Control Functions of a Women's Reformatory, 1894-1931", in Cohen and Scull (ed), Social Control and the State, pp.305-307.

29 Jill Julius Matthews, Good and Mad Women - The Historical Construction of Femininity in Twentieth Century Australia, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1984, pp.3-8.

must acknowledge that the individuals confined were women, a fact which presented with problems and issues not necessarily encountered in men's institutions. The purposes of Te Oranga were as much to do with defining the role of women in the early twentieth century as they were to do with reform, protection and punishment.

Using some of the observations made by these historians, this thesis attempts to explain why Te Oranga was established and what its administrators, and society, hoped to gain by incarcerating delinquent young women. As W.H. Oliver noted, turn of the century legislation in New Zealand in such areas as child welfare was motivated by both humanitarian and disciplinary reasons.³⁰ The study also endeavours to explain and analyse the management policies of the reformatory, examining Te Oranga as a New Zealand example of a total institution, and the ambivalences inherent in this concept. Finally, using gender as a tool of analysis, the study discusses the processes of the incarceration of women, and in so doing, raises a number of questions about the role of women in New Zealand society.

To facilitate analysis, the study is divided thematically, each section discussing some aspect of the management of Te Oranga. The first chapter is a general discussion of the background to total institutions, and juvenile institutions in particular, examining features of the New Zealand industrial school system. The next three chapters discuss aspects of the management of Te Oranga, exploring the reasons and purposes for the use of various administrative techniques. Chapters five and six examine the individuals in the reformatory, both the staff and the young women committed to the institution. The study concludes with a close examination of the purposes of Te Oranga.

³⁰ W.H. Oliver, "Social Welfare: Social Justice or Social Efficiency? Social Policy in the Liberal Period", New Zealand Journal of History, 13:1 (April 1979), pp.26.30.

CHAPTER 1.

THE INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND.

Industrial schools and reformatories were not isolated institutions but were established from the eighteenth century as part of the belief that incarceration of deviant individuals would lead to reform. Foucault has identified a "carceral network" of all penal institutions, including workhouses, industrial schools, refuges and orphanages.¹ The penitentiary is at the centre of the network, surrounded by other forms of penal institutions which receive and treat criminal or delinquent individuals. Each of these total institutions has some relationship with prisons and the process of incarceration and all are managed in a similar way.

The growing number of total institutions over the nineteenth century reflects some important developments in responses to such social problems as delinquency and crime. Firstly, the establishment of institutions suggests that there was a growing number of individuals considered to be in need of a specific type of treatment, and that such individuals were becoming more visible to the wider community. The increasing visibility or number of these individuals has been noted by several historians. For example, Andrew Scull has commented on the rising number of persons labelled as insane in England and Wales during the nineteenth century,² and John Gillis and Margaret May have both discussed the rising rate of juvenile delinquency over the same period.³

However, the increasing numbers of so-called deviants may have been as much a manufactured as a natural increment. Historians have identified several

¹ Foucault, pp.297-298.

² Scull, Museums of Madness, pp.222-226.

³ John R. Gillis, "The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency in England 1890-1914", Past and Present, 67 (May 1975), pp.98-103; Margaret May, "Innocence and Experience: The Evolution of the Concept of Juvenile Delinquency", Victorian Studies, 17 (1973), pp.7-29.

developments which substantiate this claim. There is evidence that instead of a higher crime rate, there was a new willingness to prosecute criminals, particularly juveniles, during the nineteenth century.⁴ There is also evidence which suggests that there was an expansion in the definition of some types of deviance over the same period.⁵ While both of these trends would have boosted the numbers of individuals labelled as being in need of institutional care, the growth could have been as much generated by external factors as by natural causes.

The concern over the perceived or the actual growth in the numbers of deviant individuals was intensified by, and perhaps even stimulated by, the expansion in the collection of statistics in such nations as England. The more comprehensive collection of statistics has been remarked upon by a number of historians, one of whom noted that "statistics were the fuel on which the reformatory movement started and ran its social control machine".⁶ In some instances, the expansion of statistics spurred new "sciences" espoused by "experts" - criminology, penology, and criminal anthropology. In turn, these "moral statisticians" generated a new concern with social problems and their resolution.⁷

Public concern over the apparent growing numbers of deviants in various nations manifested itself in the creation of reform organisations and associations. In both Britain and the United States reform movements emerged, ostensibly to improve the care and treatment of those labelled as threats to society by institutionalising such individuals.⁸ One of the major platforms of all reform organisations was the strict

4 Gillis, p.103.

5 Scull, Museums of Madness, pp.221-253.

6 Susan M. Eade, "The Reclaimers: A Study of the Reformatory Movement in England and Wales, 1846-1893", Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1975, p.403.

7 May, p.16.

8 For a survey of such organisations see Jill Conway, "Women Reformers and American Culture, 1870-1930", Journal of Social History, 5 (Winter 1971-72), pp.164-177; Eade, "The Reclaimers"; Estelle Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers; Anthony Platt, The Child Savers - The Invention of Delinquency, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1969; J.A. Stack, "The Provision of Reformatory Schools, the Landed Class and the Myth of the Superiority of Rural Life", History of Education, VIII (1979), pp.33-44.

separation of institutionalised persons on the basis of age, sex, health and offence or condition. Thus, with the exception of the English workhouse, most institutions catered for a specific type of social problem by the end of the nineteenth century. The mentally disturbed, increasingly regarded as a medical problem, were incarcerated in asylums;⁹ women prisoners were detained in specialist, all-female institutions; and criminals were further divided on the grounds of age, the younger, or juvenile delinquents committed to industrial schools and reformatories.

Despite the fact that separate institutions catered for a specific type of occupant there are features common to most institutions. The reformers of the nineteenth century overwhelmingly aimed to improve and transform the behaviour of those individuals committed to institutions. The treatment of juvenile delinquents moved away from purely punitive measures to a more reformatory approach through a programme of education and discipline.¹⁰ The principle of labour was particularly important in most institutions and served a number of functions. The idea that residents of institutions should perform some type of physical labour may be seen as part of a work ethic which had as its basis the notion that people could better themselves through hard work and diligence.¹¹ Hard physical labour was supposed to inculcate the value of work and self-improvement, and at the same time it was a means of keeping individuals occupied and too tired to engage in activities which may disrupt the order of the institution. Some institutions provided menial tasks,¹² while other institutions used the labour of residents in a more direct, profit making fashion.¹³ The principle of labour was embodied in the actual names of some institutions, such as factories or industrial schools, both presupposing a specific type of employment for the individuals committed.

⁹ Scull, Museums of Madness, pp.13-15.

¹⁰ May, pp.7-8.

¹¹ Platt, p.70.

¹² In some English workhouses the residents were set to such chores as picking oakum or pounding and breaking stones, tasks long favoured in penitentiaries. Crowther, pp.196-201.

¹³ *ibid.*; Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.494.

The creation of industrial schools and reformatories in particular was partly a reflection of a new attitude towards children. Historians have commented on the new and increased value placed on child-life and childhood as part of a widespread philanthropic movement in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Whatever motives inspired the movement, the apparent concern was to remove children and young adults from unsavoury surroundings and influences and place them in controlled institutions which would inculcate in the individuals concerned a healthy respect for society's values.

There were many children's institutions established in such nations as France, Britain and the United States from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Industrial schools were established for children and young adults who had no history of association with crime or criminal activities, but who were labelled as uncontrollable, vagrant, neglected or in need of some form of care. Reformatories were alternatives to imprisonment, specifically for those who had committed crimes or whose behaviour was too unruly for the milder industrial schools.

Many of the juvenile institutions were established in specific rural localities and provided a rural training. The French reformatory at Mettray opened in 1839 and strongly supported the value of a rural life for children under care. The United States and Britain quickly followed the example and established rural reformatories from the middle of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ The rural, pastoral bias to many industrial schools and reformatories reflected a number of ideas held by child welfare reformers. The rural location of juvenile institutions was above all to remove young offenders from the supposedly corrupting influences of towns and cities. It was held that juvenile delinquency was a product of close, squalid, unhygienic and uncontrolled city life.¹⁶ The apparent solution to the problem was simply to remove the young offenders into the country, away from all the temptations of urban environments.

¹⁴ Hawes, pp.113-126; May, pp.7-14, 21-29; Oliver, p.29.

¹⁵ Stack, pp.38 ff.

¹⁶ May, p.18; Platt, pp.40-50, 65-70; Stack, pp.33-44.

At the same time, the rural bias reflected a belief in the inherent goodness and health of the countryside and things pastoral. Many child welfare reformers believed in the vital, rejuvenating effects of a rural atmosphere for juvenile delinquents. The rural emphasis also reflected economic changes occurring in some nations, and the increased opportunities for rural employment in such countries as France and the United States.

However, not all industrial schools and reformatories were established in the countryside. In Britain there was considerable discussion over the relative merits of a rural life for female juvenile delinquents. A prominent figure in the English child-saving movement, Mary Carpenter, rejected a rural training for girls and young women on the grounds that "girls must be prepared for domestic life, either at service in the homes of persons in the respectable portion of society, or eventually in their own homes".¹⁷ Girls' reformatories in Britain and the United States were generally established on the outskirts of cities and towns, close enough to opportunities for domestic service in the populated areas, yet still retaining something of the country air.¹⁸

The belief in the intrinsic value of a rural life was a particularly romantic notion, inspired by such theorists as Rousseau who maintained that the true nature of living was to be found in the countryside.¹⁹ The very act of being in the country was held to be a first step on the way to reformation. As a consequence, many of the institutions for the mentally disturbed, the aged, or the indigent were sited in a rural locality to obtain the beneficial effects of the countryside. Yet at the same time, one can discern less altruistic motives for a pastoral location. Far from centres of settlement, the institutions were also far from the public which may not have had any wish to be reminded of the socially unacceptable individuals within its midst.

¹⁷ Stack, p.41.

¹⁸ *ibid.*: Barbara Brenzel, Daughters of the State, pp.43-44.

¹⁹ Brenzel, Daughters of the State, p.52.

Economic factors may have also played some role in establishing institutions in rural areas, for in some instances, land was cheaper in the countryside than in the cities.²⁰

Like other nations in the nineteenth century, New Zealand was concerned at the perceived or actual increase in the numbers of juvenile delinquents. The exigencies and harshness of a colonial society, disruption to family life, wife desertion, lack of adequate recreational facilities, depression and poverty were cited as reasons for juvenile delinquency during the mid-nineteenth century.²¹ Industrial schools were established quite early in New Zealand's colonial period. From the early 1840s the central government authorised a number of primary schools for Maori children, but these had become essentially industrial schools by the 1860s, catering for neglected, criminal and destitute European children.²² Provincial governments, religious and charitable groups also established and maintained a number of institutions in or near the main centres. Such councils as Otago passed industrial schools ordinances in response to the increasing number of children left destitute in the wake of the gold rushes of the 1860s.²³

The growing number of such children throughout the country led some provincial councils to demand that the central government take action on the matter. The Neglected and Criminal Children Act was passed in 1867 in response to this demand. The Act authorised the superintendents of provinces to establish and maintain industrial schools and reformatories for males and females exclusively. A lack of financial resources in New Zealand meant that it was not feasible that the two types of institution be established for each sex. In 1873 the central government amended the Act to allow for the detention of both sexes in the same institution where, in practice, no differentiation was made between criminal and neglected children.²⁴

²⁰ Tennant, "Elderly Indigents and Old Men's Homes", pp.7-9.

²¹ Beagle, pp.204-208.

²² *ibid.*, pp.11-12.

²³ *ibid.*, p.13; Whelan, p.19.

²⁴ Beagle, p.18.

In 1880 the Education Department assumed the responsibility for the management of industrial schools and reformatories from the Justice Department which previously had controlled the institutions. The change of administration was significant for a number of reasons. The Education Department pursued a more active policy than that taken by the previous administration. Beagle noted that a lack of activity and initiative dominated the Justice Department's policy towards industrial schools: only one new institution was founded during its period of administration, the Department had no real policy regarding the institutions, and it took no action to rectify any of the problems of overcrowding or mismanagement which beset the schools at the time.²⁵ The Education Department, on the other hand, was intent on tightly controlling and improving the management of the schools.

The change of administration also signified an attitudinal shift towards the treatment of delinquent children and young persons. The Justice Department was essentially concerned with penal institutions in which the primary purpose was punitive rather than reformative. The Education Department was charged more with the task of teaching, educating and reforming, although punitive measures remained important. The change symbolised the idea that children could and should be saved from a future life of delinquency, and that the focus should be more on reformation than punishment. Moreover, the change reflects a developing belief in the worth of children, and a move towards the idea of children as "social capital", the basis of the next generation.²⁶

The Education Department was quick to assert its authority over juvenile institutions. In 1882 the government passed the comprehensive Industrial Schools Act. Three different types of institution were recognised under this Act - government, local and private. The Department extended its control over these

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.22.

²⁶ Jeanine Graham, "Child Employment in New Zealand", *New Zealand Journal of History*, 21:1 (April 1987), pp.62-78; Dugald McDonald, "Children and Young Persons in New Zealand Society", in P. G. Koopman-Boyden (ed), *Families in New Zealand Society*, Wellington: Methuen, 1978, pp.46-47.

institutions through such means as appointing or approving staff, authorising inspectors for all institutions, and completely controlling the discharge of all committed children.²⁷ The Act also provided for the extra-institutional care, or boarding-out of children. Under such a scheme, children and young persons were sent to reside with a foster parent who was to provide for and educate the children. The foster parents were paid for their maintenance, or in turn, were entitled to the services of the children in lieu of payment.

The 1882 Industrial Schools Act represented an important turning point in New Zealand's child welfare system. Until the passage of the Act, New Zealand had primarily relied on British legislation as a guide to the administration of industrial schools and reformatories. For example, the government based the 1867 Neglected and Criminal Children Act on British precedent with little modification to suit local conditions. The impracticalities of directly applying British legislation were soon realised and changes were made to suit the exigencies of colonial life. In drafting the boarding-out provisions of the 1882 legislation, the reformers looked to Australian rather than British examples. Although some British juvenile institutions boarded-out children, the practice was not as widespread as it was in Australia where it had been used extensively since the 1870s.²⁸

The adoption of boarding-out represented an early effort by New Zealand to develop an industrial school system which was not based exclusively on British precedent. While the New Zealand system had legislative roots in the British system, the principle of a primarily state sponsored industrial school system was essentially colonial. Unlike Britain, New Zealand had no history or tradition of large scale voluntary charitable or philanthropic groups to erect and manage industrial schools. While neighbourly aid and private charities provided the basis for the care of delinquent children in the early colonial period, a growing population made such a system insufficient. New Zealanders increasingly looked towards the provincial

²⁷ Beagle, p.31.

²⁸ Brian Dickey, No Charity There - A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1980, pp.80-86.

and then the central governments as a source of social welfare. As the government was the only group large enough and with sufficient finances to administer welfare, it was compelled to make some provision.

Boarding-out was a move towards a more family-based system of industrial schools and reformatories. There were two major forms of juvenile institutions in the nineteenth century: the cottage system and the barrack system. The cottage system, developed at the Ecole Agricole for boys and young men at Mettray in 1839, was essentially a family-based style of reform. Residents at the Ecole lived in small cottages, each under the control of a senior resident who acted as a parent to the other residents under his charge.²⁹ The cottage system was used extensively in such nations as the United States. It was believed that the system was particularly suitable for the detention of girls and young women, as it instilled in them the worth and virtues of family life and domestication. Moreover, it was believed that women were more emotional than men, and that a family-based programme of reform would arouse maternal and sentimental feelings in women, leading eventually to reformation.³⁰ As a result, an institution incorporating the family or cottage system of reform was considered to be the ideal institution for delinquent girls and women.³¹

The barrack system, as its name suggests, was a more regulated and formal type of institution. The residents were housed in large dormitories, presided over by staff with no input from the residents. Although the barrack system aimed at a family atmosphere for the residents, such a life was impossible due to the nature of the institution and the large number of residents.

New Zealand juvenile institutions were based exclusively on the barrack system. The major reason for this appears to have been financial: one building which contained

29 Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, pp.52-55.

30 Estelle Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.95-100.

31 Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", p.289.

all the necessary facilities was cheaper to erect than a number of self-contained cottages. Although most of the institutions were new buildings designed specifically as industrial schools and reformatories,³² the facilities resembled rows of army barracks. Such institutions as Caversham, established at Dunedin in 1869, were large and contained many residents who, according to a Member of the House of Representatives, "were all brought up as automatons and under no family influence".³³ The principle of boarding-out may be seen as an attempt to move towards a family-based, and hence a normalising and balanced, environment for the children. More practically, boarding-out relieved some of the over-crowding in industrial schools and provided the government with a cheap alternative to erecting more institutions.³⁴

By the end of the nineteenth century there were eight industrial schools and reformatories in New Zealand: the government schools at Auckland, Burnham and Caversham; a local school at Thames; and four Roman Catholic institutions at Auckland, Wellington, Nelson and Dunedin. Each school received children and young persons of both sexes and of any age below twenty-one years.

Over the last quarter of the nineteenth century the number of children committed to industrial schools and reformatories increased dramatically, from 807 in 1880, to 1446 in 1885 and 1703 in 1900. The increase in the number of children committed to institutions was not matched by a corresponding growth in the proportion of children in the total New Zealand population: in 1880, children under twenty-one years comprised 53% of the total population; in 1900 the proportion had fallen to 46%. Over the same period, the percentage of the child population committed to institutions rose from 0.31% in 1880 to 0.47% in 1900.³⁵ The proportion of males and females committed to the institutions remained quite constant throughout the period: in 1880 females comprised 37% of committals to schools, falling to 32% in

³² Whelan, pp.34-36,52,70,73,78-79.

³³ Beagle, p.34.

³⁴ *ibid.*, p.33.

³⁵ *ibid.*, Table 5-1 and 5-2, following p.181.

1900.³⁶ The sudden increase in the number of children and young persons committed over the period 1880-1885 was a combination of the effects of a depressed economy and of the operation of the 1882 Industrial Schools Act.

Children and young persons were committed for a variety of reasons. Between 1880 and 1900 the largest single category of those committed were classed as destitute, 63% of the total committals in 1880 and 38% in 1900. Over the same period the number committed as vagrants increased to 7% of the total, the number committed for association with disreputable persons fell from 21% to 18%, those classed as uncontrollable rose from 3% to 6%, and those charged with committing punishable offences increased markedly from 11% to 28%.³⁷

Despite the fact that females comprised less than half of the total industrial school population, they constituted more than half the numbers committed for certain offences. Between 1880 and 1900 females comprised almost 50% of those children committed as destitute, and well over 50% of those committed for association with disreputable persons. At the same time, they comprised less than 20% of those committed for punishable offences, and less than 30% of those charged for being vagrant or uncontrollable.³⁸ The majority of girls and young women committed to juvenile institutions were charged with offences against the public order, or immorality. This trend was, and indeed still is, a common feature of female institutionalisation in New Zealand and in other nations.³⁹

36 *ibid.*, Table 5-7, following p.191.

37 *ibid.*, Table 5-4, following p.183.

38 *ibid.*, Table 5-7, following p.191.

39 See Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, pp.107-136; Pat Carlen, *Women's Imprisonment A Study in Social Control*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, pp.117-212; Russell P. Dobash, R. Emerson Dobash and Sue Gutteridge, *The Imprisonment of Women*, Oxford: Basil Blackwood Ltd, 1986, p.2; Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.79-85; Jan Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons, Men, Women and Whores: Women and Crime in Nineteenth Century Canterbury", M.A. thesis, Canterbury University, 1983, pp.41-50, 184-200, 260-266; Steven Schlossman and Stephanie Wallach, "The Crime of Precocious Sexuality: Female Juvenile Delinquency in the Progressive Era", *Harvard Educational Review*, 48:1 (February 1978), pp.65-75.

During the last two decades of the century, concern mounted over the increasing rate of delinquency amongst young people in New Zealand. At the same time, criticism of the industrial school system began to mount and a variety of groups made demands for reform due to such problems as overcrowding and poor management.⁴⁰ The intensification of concern in New Zealand coincided with, and was influenced by, developments in child welfare and concern with juvenile delinquency and adolescent sexuality overseas.⁴¹ New Zealanders were particularly aware of the Australian problem of the larrikin and expressed considerable concern over the apparent existence of a similar problem in New Zealand.⁴² Moreover, in such nations as Britain and the United States the child-saving movement generated a considerable body of literature concerning the problem of juvenile delinquency and its solution: the ideas contained in this literature did not bypass New Zealand.⁴³

One New Zealander influenced by British, European and American ideas, was George Hogben, appointed to the post of Inspector-General of Schools in 1899. Hogben was one of a group of New Zealand public servants influential in forming social policy in the period. This group included officials who had travelled overseas and studied international welfare developments and literature and included such individuals as Edward Tregear, Duncan MacGregor and Colonel Hume.⁴⁴ Before his appointment with the Education Department Hogben had worked as headmaster at Timaru High School where his teaching methods were influenced by European and Australian theories and approaches to education.⁴⁵ Hogben's administration of industrial schools displayed a similar knowledge of, and willingness to use, imported ideas to counter the increasing rate of delinquency in New Zealand.

⁴⁰ Beagle, pp.39-40.

⁴¹ Ellen du Bois and Linda Gordon, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield: Danger and Pleasure in Nineteenth-Century Feminist Thought", *Feminist Studies*, 9:1 (Spring 1983), p.15.

⁴² Gregory, pp.4-6.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p.4; Oliver, p.26.

⁴⁴ Oliver, p.26; Margaret Tennant, "Social Welfare: Social Justice or Social Efficiency? Duncan MacGregor and Charitable Aid Administration", *New Zealand Journal of History*, 13:1 (April 1979), pp.33-35.

⁴⁵ Herbert Roth, *George Hogben - a biography*, Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1952, pp.52-79.

Hogben had very specific ideas on both the causes and treatment of juvenile delinquency, ideas which were heavily influenced by the work of W D. Morrison, an American penologist. Hogben considered that the growing rate of delinquency in New Zealand was due to a number of causes such as the stress and struggle of modern life, bad hygienic surroundings, poor health, parental neglect and bad example, and the temptations to be found in the cities. He considered the last reason to be the major cause of delinquency. The movement of people into the towns and cities from the countryside was held to be a feature common to such colonial societies as New Zealand, due to the loneliness of country life, the absence of recreational facilities in rural areas and the greater attractiveness of towns. The causes of juvenile delinquency pointed to the long-term solution of the problem: to impress upon parents their responsibilities towards children; to ameliorate the conditions of rural life to encourage individuals to remain in the country; and to place back in a rural environment those who were in danger of succumbing to the temptations of the city.⁴⁶

Hogben proposed a totally new system of juvenile institutions in an attempt to improve the conditions in industrial schools and provide an immediate response to the increasing rate of delinquency. The three tier plan of day truant schools, industrial schools for those requiring firm control, and reformatories for those who were "viciously uncontrollable" or too young for imprisonment reflected overseas developments which stressed the importance of the complete classification or distinction between categories of delinquents.⁴⁷ By the end of 1901 the government had gazetted several new institutions as part of Hogben's plan. These included two receiving homes for the temporary accommodation of children at Wellington and Christchurch; industrial schools for girls and young boys at Auckland and Caversham, and for boys only at Weraroa and Nelson; Te Oranga, a female reformatory in Burwood, Christchurch, and a male reformatory at Burnham.⁴⁸ In

⁴⁶ Report of the Minister of Education, *AJHR*, 1900, E1, xviii-xix.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, xix-xx.

⁴⁸ Beagle, p.251.

addition the government contributed to the maintenance of a number of private industrial schools.

The scheme represented the first real attempt to develop a planned and comprehensive industrial school system in New Zealand. Before the turn of the century the child welfare reformers in New Zealand had looked primarily to Britain, and later Australia, for institutional precedents and had paid scant regard to developments in other countries. Hogben's plan displayed the influence of the contemporary thought, theory and practice of industrial school systems in such nations as the United States. Moreover, the government's acceptance of the plan displayed a heightened awareness of the value of child-life, children and adolescents through its willingness to invest in a new child welfare system. The implementation of the scheme also signified the beginning of a flurry of government innovations in child care in the early twentieth century.⁴⁹ Yet although the legislative changes represented some softening of attitudes towards children, such reforms as the reorganisation of industrial schools retained punitive elements. There is not necessarily a tension between the attitudes of institutionalising deviant children, and a new value placed on child welfare. While society showed that it was prepared to safeguard children and young persons, it also showed that it was not prepared to tolerate those who did not act in accepted ways and who threatened the smooth operation of society.

Hogben was aware of the problems in some industrial schools and sought to extend the government's authority over the institutions. While all schools were under the loose control of the Education Department in Wellington, departmental officials had little influence on the daily administration of the institutions. The Department's control was essentially confined to appointing school managers, authorising the discharge of committed children and maintaining a lax inspection of the institutions. Between 1901 and 1902 the Department moved to attain some control over the day to day management of schools through such means as the appointment of a regular

⁴⁹ Graham, pp.62-78; McDonald, pp.47-48.

inspectorate and the issue of a set of regulations to govern the administration of child welfare institutions.

In 1901 the Department appointed Roland Pope to the post of Assistant Inspector of Industrial Schools. Pope was a trained official with considerable experience with the Department and the management of industrial schools.⁵⁰ In 1902 Thomas Walker and Jessie Stewart were also appointed to the position. Walker had some experience in child welfare work, having worked in the Education Department as an Official Visitor to boarded-out children.⁵¹ Stewart, a retired teacher, was appointed to the position primarily as an inspector of girls' schools, a task considered by the Education Department to be more appropriate for a woman.⁵² The inspectors were authorised to visit unannounced, thoroughly inspect each institution at least twice a year and report back to the Department.⁵³ In 1903 Hogben recommended that the visits be more frequent to maintain a closer check on the schools: Pope was to visit at least once a year, Walker and Stewart twice a year, and the Inspector-General of Schools once a year.⁵⁴

The work of the inspectors was complemented by an expansion in the scheme of Official Visitors who visited the institutions periodically. The Visitors to each school were appointed directly by the Minister of Education and were required to visit the institution several times a year, acting as an informal check on the management. However, the Visitors had little authority. Unlike the Departmental inspectors, the Visitors could not inspect the institutions in detail, they could not make full inquiries into aspects of the schools and they had no authority over the staff of an institution.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Te Oranga Home: Report of Commission: together with Minutes of Evidence and Exhibits, AJHR, 1908, H21, p.123.

⁵¹ Hogben to Minister of Education, 8 September 1903, CW 40/4, Inspection of Industrial Schools - general, Child Welfare Files, National Archives, Wellington.

⁵² *ibid*.

⁵³ Regulations Under Industrial Schools Act, New Zealand Gazette, vol.1, 1902, p.1294.

⁵⁴ Hogben to Minister of Education, 8 September 1903, CW 40/4.

⁵⁵ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1294.

The government issued a set of regulations for the management of industrial schools in 1902 following a Royal Commission into the management of a private industrial school in Nelson. Early in 1900 the Nelson Charitable Aid Board had publicised deficiencies in the management of the Roman Catholic St Mary's Industrial School at Stoke. The problems identified by the Board, and sustained by the inquiry, included the lack of suitable staff, inadequate food and clothing, severe punishments and unsuitable facilities for the proper training of the residents.⁵⁶ The inefficiencies in the management prompted the Education Department to compile a set of rules to regulate the daily administration of all types of industrial schools. The regulations formed a basic administrative code for the managers and staff of institutions. The regulations were wide-ranging and included notes on the general management of institutions, regulations on sanitation, medical attendance of residents of schools, diet, punishments, clothing, classification, industrial instruction, education, religious and moral training, and notes on service and boarding-out.⁵⁷

The aim of the Education Department in issuing the regulations and authorising a comprehensive inspectorate was to attain more authority, uniformity and discipline over the management of juvenile institutions. In reality, the inspectorate and the regulations had little effect on the daily administration of the institutions. The visits of inspectors to the schools were too short and too infrequent to enable the Department to gain an adequate impression of the management. For example, Te Oranga was regularly inspected from 1900 to 1904 and on each occasion the inspection reports were favourable. Yet in 1905 an inspector who had spent some time at the Home in the capacity of relieving manager reported unfavourably of the management, citing excessive punishments and poor classification.⁵⁸ The fact that the problems had existed since the Home's inception in 1900 testifies to the limited view gained by inspectors.

⁵⁶ Beagle, pp.47-48.

⁵⁷ Regulations under the Industrial Schools Act, pp.1293-1304.

⁵⁸ J. Stewart's inspection report of Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, CW 40/4/10, Inspection of Te Oranga Home for girls.

The disclosure of management problems and excessive punishments at Te Oranga in 1905 also illustrates the inadequacy of the 1902 regulations, and the degree of power and autonomy of the managers. The Education Department had little authority over whether the managers of the schools closely adhered to the regulations, or what their interpretations of the rules were. In practice, the staff at the institutions formulated their own versions of the regulations and improvised when necessary. The manager and staff of Te Oranga had disregarded the punishment regulations and substituted instead a system considered to be more appropriate to the successful management of the school.⁵⁹ In other instances managers were compelled to improvise and formulate their own guidelines. For instance, there was no Departmental policy on letter-writing, so the manager of Te Oranga enforced her own regulations on residents' correspondence with friends and relatives.⁶⁰

Perhaps as a result of the inadequacy of the regulations and the personal power placed in the hands of the managers, the Education Department investigated the administration of some of its institutions: Te Oranga in 1905, 1908 and 1915, and Burnham in 1906. The inquiries of 1906 and 1908 were inspired, in part, by public concern over the management of the institutions. The Burnham inquiry was held only after attendants at the institution publicised instances of excessive punishments, mismanagement and poor working conditions. The mounting public opinion criticising the administration of the reformatory led the Education Department, sensitive to negative publicity, to instigate an inquiry. However, public interest in the institutions was not constant. The management of juvenile institutions inspired little public note until a scandal was uncovered, and even then the interest was short-lived, perhaps a consequence of the generally favourable reports of inquiries. For all except voluntary charitable groups, women's organisations and interested

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ E. Branting to Secretary for Education, 23 March 1906, CW 40/26/9, Communication between inmates and their friends.

persons, the welfare of those detained in industrial schools was not a pressing concern - out of sight appeared to be out of mind.

The inquiries into the management of industrial schools also disclosed major staffing problems. Such institutions as Burnham and Te Oranga were marked by a high turnover of often incompetent and untrained staff. The managers of Te Oranga and the Departmental inspectors made frequent complaints concerning the poor quality of the attendants employed at the institution. In 1915 an inspector noted that there had been over thirty changes of staff in the previous two years.⁶¹ Following a further visit to the institution in 1916 the same inspector described the majority of the staff as "useless", and commented that it was a pity that such women had to be employed.⁶² The staffing problems arose primarily from the long hours worked by attendants, the poor pay rates, the lack of adequate holidays and the isolation of the institutions. The poor working conditions at such schools as Burnham⁶³ and Te Oranga failed to attract the best applicants for jobs, a fact held to be a distinct disadvantage to their administration.⁶⁴

The Education Department's inability to maintain complete authority over the managers and administration of schools, its reluctance to expand the system after 1910, in addition to poor management and the insufficient regulations hampered the effectiveness of the institutions. Many of the Department's schools were overcrowded by 1915 as a result of the increasing number of young people committed. The number of young persons detained in juvenile institutions swelled from 1953 in 1905 to 2454 in 1910, and 3166 in 1915, perhaps as a consequence of changes and developments in society associated with wartime activity.⁶⁵ The

61 Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 19 September 1915, CW 40/4/10.

62 Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 6 March 1916, *ibid.*

63 The Burnham reformatory was particularly affected by staffing problems: the institution was sited in an unattractive locality, in "dreary and depressing" surroundings far from Christchurch, the distance precluding an adequate holiday on days off; staff worked for at least twelve hours each day; and the relationship between the attendants and the manager was poor. Report on Burnham Industrial School, *AJHR*, 1906, E3B, pp.4-8.

64 Beagle, p.117.

65 *ibid.*, Table 5-2, following p.181.

accommodation facilities at such institutions as Te Oranga and Burnham were over-extended: Te Oranga had accommodation sufficient for eighty residents, yet in 1915 there were over one hundred young women at the institution.⁶⁶

The need for the reform of the industrial school system coincided with the appointment of John Beck to the post of Officer in Charge of Industrial and Special Schools in 1916. Beck had joined the Education Department in 1899 and had considerable experience and knowledge of the management of industrial schools. Following his appointment in 1916 Beck proposed a two-fold plan to rectify the problems apparent in the school system: to avoid further committals of young persons to the institutions; and to reduce the number already detained.

Beck's plan was gradually put into effect from 1917: the government established a number of Probation Homes and closed several industrial schools, including both the Te Oranga and the Burnham reformatories. Like Hogben's reform of the industrial school system several years earlier, Beck's plan was modern and relied on overseas precedents. However, unlike Hogben, Beck encountered some opposition from both the Education Department and the general public. Several prominent officials of the Department were distressed at the probation ideas embodied in the scheme, fearing that such a system would involve considerable finance and would harm the standard of child care in New Zealand.⁶⁷ The support of Hanan, the Minister of Education, embodied in a lengthy report to the government in 1917, allayed any Departmental opposition.⁶⁸

Beck's reform policies culminated in the Child Welfare Act of 1925 based on legislation in such nations as Canada and the United States. The Act established a specific Child Welfare Branch within the Education Department charged with the responsibility of maintaining the care of all children in New Zealand, a further

⁶⁶ Education: Special Schools and Infant Life Protection, AJHR, 1916, E4, p.6.

⁶⁷ Beagle, pp.65-67.

⁶⁸ See Memo of the Minister of Education on reforms in connection with Industrial School System, AJHR, 1917, E1A.

indication of the increasing value of children in the view of government and society. The Act passed the responsibility for industrial schools to the Superintendent of the branch who was empowered to exercise all the rights of guardianship of children committed by the courts and was to institutionalise children and young persons only when necessary.⁶⁹

By the 1920s the industrial school system in New Zealand had radically altered from that of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The focus of child welfare reformers had moved from the purely punitive aspects of industrial schools and reformatories to a more preventative approach based on the example of other nations. The more progressive alterations in the system were twentieth century reforms, instigated first by Hogben and later by Beck. The period from 1900 until 1918 was a significant phase in the history of industrial schools and reformatories. During this period a new system of child welfare institutions was introduced under the loose control of the Education Department, yet the system proved increasingly unwieldy and unmanageable during the 1900s and 1910s. The period signified the end of large-scale, punitive institutions for juvenile delinquents in New Zealand, a system which had its roots in ideas of incarceration as reform in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

This thesis is the study of the management of one of the Education Department's institutions - the Te Oranga Home for delinquent young women. The Te Oranga reformatory was established in 1900 as part of Hogben's reform programme and closed in 1918 as part of Beck's new child welfare scheme. The institution provides an example of the problems of the New Zealand industrial school system over this period: staffing problems; the overcrowding of the accommodation facilities; official inquiries; the insufficiency of the 1902 regulations; the autonomy of the managers;

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, pp.77-81.

and the gap between the Education Department's impression of the management of institutions and the reality of administering a large reformatory.

The Te Oranga Home was located at Burwood, two miles from Christchurch, the largest centre in the South Island, and covered nine and a half acres of fertile farmland.⁷⁰ The location reflects the differentiation in the siting of male and female reformatories common to other nations. Te Oranga was sited on the perimeter of a city to provide the residents with opportunities for domestic service positions. At the same time, the institution, suitably distant from the dangers associated with urban living, allowed the young women to dwell in and benefit from the supposedly healthy rural air which would hopefully lead to their reformation. The contrast with the location of the equivalent male institution, Burnham, is marked. The Burnham reformatory covered 1100 acres of poor quality farmland and was located far from Christchurch in surroundings described by Education Department officials as unpleasant.⁷¹ The location was, no doubt, prompted by practical reasons: the institution was far from the temptations of the city, far from the public gaze, and provided the residents with agricultural training.

Te Oranga was initially a private residence leased by the government at a rental of £75 per annum.⁷² The property backed onto the Horseshoe Lake Reserve, fronted onto a public road and shared a common boundary with three private residences.⁷³ When the first residents were admitted in 1900 there was accommodation sufficient for only fifteen young women, the manager and three live-in attendants. The Education Department took immediate steps to renovate the property and allocated £700 to alter existing buildings to accommodate about twenty residents.⁷⁴ A new wing, housing about thirty-five individuals, was completed in 1903.⁷⁵ and another.

⁷⁰ Hogben to W. Walker, 22 February 1900, CW 41/17, Te Oranga Home - lease of property.

⁷¹ AJHR, 1906, E3B, pp.4-7.

⁷² Mr Swann to Land Purchase Officer, 8 March 1900, CW 41/17.

⁷³ W. Reece to Minister for Education, 20 October 1909, CW 40/1/17, Mr Reece's report on industrial school and reformatory system outside New Zealand.

⁷⁴ Hogben to W. Walker, 22 February 1900, CW 41/17.

⁷⁵ Education: Industrial Schools, AJHR, 1903, E3, pp.14-15.

for about forty residents, was added in 1910.⁷⁶ By the time of its closure in 1918 Te Oranga had accommodation sufficient for about eighty young women and ten staff members.⁷⁷ The whole property was enclosed by a six foot high paling fence with wire netting on top.⁷⁸ later replaced by a twelve foot high fence with locked gates.⁷⁹

The institution was administered on a daily basis by the manager and a number of attendants, all of whom were women. The first manager, Ellen Branting, ran the Home from its inception in 1900 until her retirement in 1912. She was replaced by Mrs Scale, a temporary manager, until a permanent appointee was found. Eleanor Johnson became manager in November 1912 and held the post until 1916 when she was replaced by Ellen Hunt.

Te Oranga was one of a number of women's institutions in Christchurch in the early twentieth century. The city contained not only the government institutions of Te Oranga, the Receiving Home and the Addington Women's Prison,⁸⁰ but also a number of other establishments. These institutions included the Canterbury Women's Refuge run by the local charitable aid board, the Salvation Army Rescue Home, the Roman Catholic Mt Magdala Magdalen Asylum, the Anglican St Mary's Home and the Samaritan Home.⁸¹ In comparison with other cities of a comparable size, the range of institutions in Christchurch was extensive, perhaps as a consequence of the activity of women's and children's organisations, a fact which may have influenced the location of Te Oranga in the city.⁸²

⁷⁶ Branting to Secretary for Education, 5 August 1910. CW 40/4/10.

⁷⁷ Children's Welfare and Special Schools, *AJHR*, 1919, E4, p.5; E. Gibbes to Secretary for Education, 11 October 1915. CW 40/3/16. Te Orangi (sic) Home. Miss Gibbs' (sic) report on criticisms.

⁷⁸ District Engineer to Public Works Department, 28 November 1900. CW 41/17.

⁷⁹ John Beck, "The Development of the Child Welfare System Part One: The Position up to 1915", *New Zealand Child Welfare Workers' Bulletin*, III:4 (February 1954), p.90.

⁸⁰ The Addington Prison was established in the 1880s but the property was passed to the local charitable aid board for the use of the Samaritan Home from 1896. From May 1912 the property was once more used as a prison for the detention of women prisoners. Report on Prisons Branch, Department of Justice, *AJHR*, 1913, H20, p.6.

⁸¹ Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.501.

⁸² Margaret Tennant has noted that many women's groups were motivated by religious ideas and has postulated that this may be one of the reasons for the range of women's organisations and homes in Christchurch, a city with a strong religious establishment. Tennant, *ibid.*, pp.493-494.

Te Oranga and St Mary's were the only two institutions which catered specifically for the care of delinquent young women and girls. Most of the other institutions were designed for the care of young unmarried mothers, prostitutes and homeless women. Nevertheless, there was a considerable degree of movement of the residents between the industrial schools and the rescue homes.

The city contained a number of women's groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Society for the Protection of Women and Children and women's political and health groups. These groups had displayed an interest in juvenile delinquency and child welfare in other centres in New Zealand, campaigning against larrikinism and advocating the need for formal control of juveniles.⁸³ These early feminist groups displayed an interest in the establishment, maintenance and closure of Te Oranga. The Society for the Protection of Women and Children, the local branch of the National Council of Women and the Women's Christian Temperance Union were all vociferous in their condemnation of the decision to close the institution in 1918.⁸⁴

During 1917 and 1918 the number of young women detained at Te Oranga had been reduced, partly through the manager's policy of placing out to service as many young women as possible, and partly through the transfer of residents to other institutions.⁸⁵ Beck proposed to close the institution at the end of 1918, but shortly before the official closure a large meeting of concerned local citizens protested vehemently, maintaining that the closure would allow young women of "low moral character" to "pollute" the streets and the youth of Christchurch. Public sentiment

⁸³ Margaret Tennant, "Matrons with a Mission: Women's Organisations in New Zealand, 1893-1915", M.A. thesis, Massey University, 1976, pp.20-33.

⁸⁴ Records of the Canterbury branch of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children. Minutes of Meetings, 8 April 1919 and 4 September 1919. Thanks to Dr Margaret Tennant for the use of this information.

⁸⁵ Beck to Minister of Education, 12 February 1917, CW 40/1/19, Proposed reforms in industrial school system.

was allayed only with the assurance that such young women would be detained elsewhere.⁸⁶

One can discern in the range of women's and children's organisations and the number of women's penitential institutions evidence of a carceral network of groups interested in the reformation of delinquent women and girls in Christchurch. Te Oranga was not an isolated institution but functioned as part of a wider, historical order and aim: the control and reformation of those considered to be threats to society, in this instance, delinquent young women. To achieve this end, the management of Te Oranga followed principles common to the administration of penitential institutions in other nations, and experienced similar problems.

⁸⁶ Beagle, pp.72-73.

CHAPTER 2.

THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM.

One of the more significant aspects of the development of total institutions in the nineteenth century was the separation of different types of individuals. The establishment of specific industrial schools, mental hospitals, women's prisons and old people's homes was evidence of this trend which emphasised the advantages of the complete segregation of institutionalised persons: the easier and more professional management of a particular group of individuals confined together because of a common age, sex or offence;¹ the better and more healthy conditions of separating different groups of people, such as female from male prisoners;² and the enhanced possibilities for the successful treatment or reform of a select group of individuals.³ Most institutions were also characterised by an internal separation or classification of individuals on the basis of the type of offence committed or the behaviour of the individual concerned.

The idea of the classification of delinquent children and young persons was epitomised by the differentiation between industrial schools and reformatories. Such English child welfare reformers as Mary Carpenter were concerned about the indiscriminate mixing of children and adults in prisons, and the confinement of a variety of young offenders in the one institution. Carpenter believed in and espoused the idea of different categories of juvenile offenders. During the 1850s she detailed the difference between the "perishing classes" of incipient criminals who committed such crimes as vagrancy and petty theft, and the "dangerous classes" of other young offenders. The ideas of Carpenter and other reformers were embodied in the English

¹ May, p.11; Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, p.52.

² Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, pp.15-20.

³ May, pp.11-14.

Reformatory Schools Act of 1854 which authorised the establishment of industrial schools for incipient young offenders, and reformatories for those who had been convicted of some offence.⁴

Before the 1850s most industrial schools or reformatories detained both categories of young offenders. This system combined destitute, neglected and criminal children and young persons in the same institution with little regard to the influence one group may have had on another. Following the developments of the 1850s industrial schools and reformatories increasingly employed a further system of classification within individual institutions.

The classification of residents of juvenile institutions into groups based on the type of offence committed by the young offender, or on the behaviour, character or reputation of the individual concerned was essentially a pragmatic response to the problems of confining all types of juvenile offenders together. For example, the management of Lancaster, the first reform school for girls and young women in North America, had initially been reluctant to employ a rigid system of classification, preferring to rely on the less formal family system. Within twenty years of its establishment Lancaster was compelled to adopt a classification system based upon the past behaviour and character of young women. The family system and the consequent mixing, in the words of the superintendent of the institution, of "persistent, evil disposed girls" and "pariahs" with better behaved individuals reduced the possibility of the reformation of any of the residents.⁵

The management of an institution gained a number of practical benefits from the separate classification of individuals. The separation of minor offenders from the more experienced ensured that first time offenders would not mingle with, and be influenced by, those who had a history of offending. Such classification would enhance the possibility of successfully reforming the less intractable individuals.

⁴ Beagle, pp.5-6; May, pp.22-26.

⁵ Brenzel, Daughters of the State, pp.149-156.

Furthermore, a system of classification facilitated the management of an institution by enabling the staff to maintain a firm control over a small group of similarly behaved individuals. Finally, classification based on the behaviour of residents would act as an incentive for a member of a low, badly behaved class to rise to a higher class which may have more status and privileges.

Most juvenile institutions in such nations as Britain, Australia and the United States employed a comprehensive mode of classification by the end of the nineteenth century as an aid to a more systematic control of the institutions. New Zealand child welfare reformers took little note of such developments before 1900. Some concerned individuals complained of the indiscriminate mixing of convicted children with unconvicted orphans or neglected or homeless children in institutions but little was done until the appointment of Hogben to the position of Inspector-General of Schools in 1899.⁶

Hogben's reform of the industrial school system was strongly influenced by developments in institutions overseas. The differentiation between industrial schools and reformatories was an important departure from earlier New Zealand practice and policy. Hogben firmly believed that classification of individuals between and within institutions was the "key-note of the most recent and intelligent methods of dealing with juvenile delinquents".⁷

Hogben's plan, put into effect from 1900, reflected this belief, incorporating an extensive system of classification within the new reformatories.⁸ Hogben recommended that the system of classification within Burnham and Te Oranga comprise three classes to be kept completely separate. The third, or the lowest class was to be governed by rules resembling prison regulations, tempered by the

⁶ Beagle, p.37.

⁷ AJHR, 1900, E1, xx.

⁸ Hogben recommended that the classification in industrial schools be on the basis of age rather than behaviour or offence, and that the residents not be separated from one another into specific groups, a policy which may have reflected the less serious offences or misdemeanours of those committed to industrial schools rather than reformatories, *ibid*.

educative purposes of the institution. Although completely separate, the composition of the classes was to be fluid and provision was to be made for promotion and demotion through each class. The planning and structure of the two reformatories was to fit the scheme of classification.⁹

Although the principle of classification of individuals within institutions was a new idea for the management of industrial schools and reformatories, other institutions around the country had used the system for a number of years. The Canterbury Female Refuge for "fallen" women, founded in 1864, was divided into two classes, the "first falls" and the "second falls", for easier management.¹⁰ By virtue of the fact that second falls had erred twice, they were considered to be more intractable and more in need of guidance and reform than other women.¹¹

Despite the principles of classification noted in Hogben's report to the Minister of Education in 1900, the regulations governing the management of juvenile institutions gave few guidelines. Aside from providing for the isolation from other residents of sexually active, or suspected sexually active young women, the regulations noted only that "in each reformatory there shall be a well-considered system of classification" and that the classes were to be kept strictly apart.¹² It appears that the actual practice of classification within each institution was left to the discretion of the manager with approval and periodic inspections from Education Department officials. The Department's plan of classification could be hampered further in practice by a lack of finance, a shortage of accommodation, insufficient numbers of residents at an institution or the sheer impracticalities of the scheme. Such problems characterised the classification at Te Oranga. The reality of classification at the Home did not reflect the principles set forth by Hogben in his early reports to the Minister of Education, or the expectations of other Departmental officials.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Tennant, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles'", p.494.

¹¹ Tennant, "Maternity and Morality", pp.41,45.

¹² Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1298.

Although Hogben had recommended the division of reformatories into three distinct groups, the lack of sufficient accommodation at Te Oranga until 1910 compelled the management to classify the residents into two divisions. The first division contained only the best behaved individuals, the second division containing the remainder of the young women and all new admissions. The division of the residents into two classes created a number of difficulties for the management.

Following a period at the Home as relieving manager, Jessie Stewart commented on the poor classification at the institution. Her criticisms focussed on the mixing of all types of residents in the same division. Stewart noted that the young women were one of two types: a group which was moral, free from impure living and who had been either transferred from another institution for insubordination and misbehaviour, or who had been committed or transferred as juvenile offenders; and a group which was immoral, including individuals who had been transferred for this and those with known immoral tendencies who could corrupt other residents.¹³ Both groups had been mixed together in the one division due to insufficient accommodation.¹⁴ The second division housed twenty-nine of the forty-two residents. The members of this class contained individuals who were described as "quiet and well-behaved", "not a naughty girl", "a good quiet girl" in addition to those described as "hysterical", "irresponsible - erratic in conduct", "pert when spoken to in reproof" and those whose tempers were "vindictive" or "irritable".¹⁵ The combination of such residents necessitated that a rule of silence be imposed on the second division to suppress any supposedly harmful communication between the members of the class.¹⁶

13 Stewart's inspection report of Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, CW 40/4/10.

14 Stewart noted that there was accommodation sufficient for only ten individuals in the old, first division building necessitating the combination of young women in the second class, *ibid.*

15 List of inmates at Te Oranga, drawn up by J. Stewart, 25 May 1905, *ibid.*

16 Stewart's inspection report of Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, *ibid.*

The inspector noted that the combination of residents was to improve the behaviour of the worst behaved members of the division, which she believed it did to some extent. Yet she did not agree with the stringent criteria used by the manager, Ellen Branting, for admission to a higher class. Branting had claimed that there were no first division residents as the behaviour of all the young women was poor and abnormal. Stewart criticised this interpretation of the resident's behaviour, noting that many of the young women had some mental deficiency or want of balance and could not be judged from a "normal" standpoint. Although there were residents placed in the first division, Stewart did not agree with the manager who believed that there were no proper first class young women in the Home.¹⁷

The staff of the institution recognised several problems with the inadequate system of classification. During the official inquiry into the management of the institution in 1908 several staff members identified the want of adequate classification as the major problem in the Home. One attendant noted that extra accommodation for the worst residents would enable the staff to attend more to the younger and better behaved members who were unduly influenced by their more wayward sisters.¹⁸ Branting identified the lack of suitable accommodation and the consequential poor classification as system as some of the major reasons for the use of corporal punishment, asserting that a specific building for the worst residents would abrogate the need for such disciplinary measures.¹⁹

Following the completion of the new accommodation wing at Te Oranga in 1910 many of the difficulties associated with the classification system were solved. According to a plan presented to the 1908 inquiry two new classes were established: a third class for the very worst individuals, and a class for new admissions. New residents had been placed in the second class before 1910. The staff recognised that there were problems with such a system of classification, in that the newcomers

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.79-80.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.105.

could "corrupt" other members of the class and vice versa. In 1909 an inspector had written to the Education Department urging that "the Second Class be not sacrificed by admitting new girls to it. These, with all the influences of their wayward and garish street lives upon them, would do untold harm to those, who, by much effort, were rising above their former inclinations".²⁰ The probationary class established in 1910 received all newcomers for a short period before their placement in other divisions according to their behaviour and conduct. Those newcomers whose behaviour necessitated it - "confirmed juvenile prostitutes of refractory dispositions" - were immediately placed in the third class.²¹

The establishment of the two new divisions enabled the management to employ a more comprehensive system of classification. The badly behaved individuals, those whose conduct was described as bad, marked by impudence, idleness, "downright refusal to work", filthy conversations, thieving and plotting to abscond²² were completely isolated from the other residents. The third division building was set apart from the other buildings of the institution, and, after 1915, this "self-contained prison" was enclosed by a twelve foot high fence.²³ The first and second divisions contained the majority of the residents. Between 1910 and 1918 over 80% of the residents were classified as members of these classes.²⁴ The separation of the young women enabled the staff to maintain a tighter, more systematic and more effective control over each division, although the need for corporal punishment was not obviated, as suggested by the manager and the attendants during the 1908 inquiry.

A fourth division for the "very worst" residents was added to the institution in 1913.²⁵ The establishment of this class appears to have been an emergency measure

20 Pope to Secretary for Education, 31 May 1909, CW 40/4/10.

21 *ibid.*

22 Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, *ibid.*

23 Beck, "The Development of the Child Welfare System", p.90.

24 Inspection reports of Te Oranga, 1910-1918, CW 40/4/10.

25 Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 13 May 1913, *ibid.*

on the part of the manager, Eleanor Johnson, for few residents were placed in the division. At the time of Walker's visit in 1913 there were only two individuals in the new class.²⁶ Inspection reports after that date indicate that the fourth division was seldom, if at all, used.

Difficulties associated with the classification system before 1910 may be attributed to a number of causes. The lack of sufficient accommodation was the major reason for problems. The inadequate accommodation had been recognised by Education Department officials as early as 1901²⁷ but plans for a new building were not made until 1908, perhaps a result of a lack of finance or unwillingness on the part of the government to extend the school.²⁸ Until 1910 the staff at Te Oranga had to improvise and develop their own system of classification. The young women were either sent to an institution in Christchurch which had an effective system of classification, such as Mt Magdala,²⁹ or were divided into two unsatisfactory classes.

The problems of the classification system before 1910 also reflected some inadequacies of the 1902 regulations. The regulations did not provide the manager of Te Oranga with detailed guidelines for effective classification. The manager had complete liberty in formulating a scheme and deciding the allocation of residents. Departmental inspectors made few comments regarding the classification system employed before 1910. Stewart's criticisms of Branting's policy in 1905 were rebuffed by the manager who defended her actions on the grounds that it took many months for the staff to learn the character of an individual who often presented the best side of herself to a stranger such as Stewart. Branting did not approve of the combination of young girls with badly behaved residents, but commented that her

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ *AJHR*, 1901, E3, p.6.

²⁸ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.81.

²⁹ Before 1910 Te Oranga had sent a number of intractable Protestant and Catholic residents to Mt Magdala where the classification system was acknowledged as superior to that of Te Oranga. H. Holbrooke to Secretary for Education, 23 September 1909. Secretary for Education to Minister of Education, 7 October 1909. Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909. CW 40/15/4, Transfer of girls from St Mary's, Auckland to Mt Magdala in preference to Te Oranga Home.

own actions had little effect for "it must be remembered that they [the residents] all come from the same class of people".³⁰ Branting undoubtedly took exception to Stewart's comments and the supposed slur on her management. Her comments suggest that she considered herself and her management of Te Oranga as above reproof, or at least beyond the authority of an inspector of the Education Department. The gap between the principle of classification expounded by Hogben in 1900, and the actual practice at Te Oranga before 1910, was considerable.

The Education Department had little control over the management of the separate classes at Te Oranga. In 1901 Hogben had formulated a set of regulations to govern the management of the classes at Burnham and recommended that a similar system prevail at Te Oranga. The third class at Burnham was to be under the control of a select group of staff members: the members of the class were to attend school at specific times; and they were not to earn pocket money or wages. The second class was to be governed by a less harsh set of rules and the members were to be under less control than those in the lower division. The second class was entitled to such privileges as rewards for good conduct and pocket money. The first division was under the least amount of control in the institution. The members of the class were set apart from the other residents of the school in that they were housed in rooms attached to the apartments of married staff members to receive some of the benefits of the family system. The residents of the first division could be licensed out to service and they could earn wages and pocket money.³¹

The management of the separate divisions at Te Oranga was similar to that outlined for the management of Burnham in many respects. The separation of the first division from the remainder of the residents was impossible owing to the structure of Te Oranga, based as it was upon the barrack system rather than the semi-cottage system of Burnham. However, the lack of sufficient guidelines from the Education Department for the management of separate divisions compelled the staff of Te

³⁰ Branting to Secretary for Education, 16 June 1905, CW 40/4/10.

³¹ AJHR, 1901, E3, p.6.

Oranga to develop their own regulations to suit the specific character of the institution.

Hogben recommended that the third division of reformatories be governed by quite harsh rules.³² The staff at Te Oranga appear to have followed the general spirit of this recommendation in formulating the regulations to govern the conduct of the members of the third division. The management of Te Oranga openly acknowledged that the third class was to be an "undesirable place of residence"³³ for its members in the hope that the strict rules would act as an incentive for the residents to behave well and avoid being transferred to the lowest division. To this end, the members of the third division were tightly controlled and received few privileges in comparison with the other classes.

The third division was kept completely separate from the other residents in a sub-institution modelled on the Long Bay Reformatory Prison for women near Sydney.³⁴ The only contact between this and the other classes was at mealtimes and some religious services. Talking and communication between the young women was prohibited in both circumstances.³⁵ Such complete segregation was believed by some officials to "be as necessary as that of lepers" to avoid the "contamination" probable between members of different classes.³⁶

The young women in the third division appear to have led a very rigid and ordered life. They had to work indoors for seven hours a day, six days of the week at such tasks as sewing and laundry work and cleaning the building. They were not permitted to work outside, or go outside the building unattended for fear that they would attempt to abscond. Some officials believed that such an ordered, indoor life would be eventually detrimental to the well-being of the members of the division

³² AJHR, 1900, E1, xx.

³³ Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, CW 40/4/10.

³⁴ Beck to Director for Education, 11 September 1926, CW 41/37/6, Burwood, buildings etc.

³⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.74; Pope to Secretary for Education, 31 May 1909, CW 40/4/10.

³⁶ E. Kaye to Secretary for Education, 21 May 1912, CW 40/4/10.

and recommended that the young women be taken outside gorse-grubbing as a reward for good behaviour, and to widen their interests.³⁷ Gorse-grubbing, quite hard physical labour, was an unusual type of "reward" to offer the young women, particularly as most of their work was light. The reward of the work was presumably associated with the supposed moral benefits to be gained from hard work in the outdoors. Moreover, it may have been that gorse-grubbing was an essential task, for young women who attempted to abscond from the institution often hid in the gorse bushes and lupins.³⁸

The mundane, industrial work performed by the residents of the third class was punctuated by attendance at the day school, and recreational activities. However, even these rewards were regulated. The recreation consisted of one free evening a week which comprised singing, reading or plain sewing. The substitution of plain sewing for fancy needlework was considered by both the staff and the residents to be a great loss of privilege.³⁹ The school-age members of the division attended school for only four hours a week, the other members of the class attending a "refresher course" one evening a month.⁴⁰ The restricted education appears to have been some form of punishment, its loss acting as incentive for the young women to improve their conduct.

The members of the division received no rewards or privileges. They were not entitled to receive pocket-money, and were not eligible for wages for odd jobs performed around the Home. Moreover, these individuals were given no opportunity of going out to domestic service, a loss considered by the manager to be the greatest incentive to good behaviour she knew.⁴¹ The young women detained in the third class were to remain in the division for a period of at least six months, after

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.43-44.

³⁹ Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, CW 40/4/10.

⁴⁰ Miss Johnson to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1913, CW 7/61/12, Girls' Training Centre: Burwood - teaching aids and equipment.

⁴¹ Branting to Secretary for Education, 12 November 1908, CW 40/4/10.

which their conduct would be reviewed, and if suitable, they would be promoted to the second class.⁴² The possibility of removal to the more lenient surroundings of the second division was held to invoke an improvement in the behaviour of some individuals.⁴³

The first and second divisions were governed by a less harsh and ordered set of regulations, although again, both classes were separated on all occasions except meals and religious services. The school-age members of both divisions attended school for at least ten hours a week.⁴⁴ These residents were permitted to work both indoors and outdoors, and received such privileges as pocket money, free recreation times and excursions to outside activities and events.⁴⁵ The first class residents were given the opportunity to earn their own wages in the Home for assisting in the laundry or the kitchen - a task also given to the members of the second division for no wages - and both divisions were entitled to pocket-money and the chance of domestic service positions.⁴⁶

The managers appear to have generally followed the pattern for the regulation of each class as stipulated by Hogben in 1901. However, the vagueness of Hogben's plan and the inadequacy of the 1902 regulations with regard to classification compelled the institution to formulate internal rules and management procedures. These rules were seldom criticised by the Education Department. The only criticisms found in the records concerned the limitation to one letter every three months for members of the lower classes,⁴⁷ the occasional combination of all the residents in one religious service,⁴⁸ and the poor recreational facilities for members

42 Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, *ibid.*

43 Mrs Scale to Secretary for Education, 29 May 1911, *ibid.*

44 Proposed syllabus for Te Oranga, 29 June 1909, CW 7/61/12.

45 For example, twelve of the better behaved residents were taken to view HMS New Zealand at Lyttleton in 1913. Pope to Johnson, 13 May 1913, CW 40/28/10. Recreation, Burwood.

46 Branting to Secretary for Education, 8 June 1906, CW 7/61/12.

47 Branting to Secretary for Education, 23 March 1906, Secretary for Education to Branting, 11 July 1906, CW 40/26/9.

48 Official Visitors of Te Oranga to Minister of Education, 6 January 1910, CW 40/4/10.

of the third class.⁴⁹

The lack of criticism of the classification procedure may be an indication of the Education Department's general approval. Alternatively it may have been the consequence of the Department's ignorance of the regulations governing each division. Although there was a considerable amount of regular correspondence between the Secretary for Education and the managers of Te Oranga, the regulations governing classification were seldom discussed. In many instances the Department became aware of a regulation only when it created difficulties, such as the restrictions placed on letter-writing. Moreover, the inspection reports presented to the Education Department provided a limited impression of the management of the institution, although some inspectors maintained that they had an exact knowledge of all aspects of the Home.⁵⁰ In reality, the inspectors could not gain a detailed and accurate account of the management: their visits to the institution were too short to gain an adequate impression of the actual administration of the Home, a fact illustrated by the criticisms made by Stewart in 1905 following her period as relieving manager.

There was a considerable gap between the Education Department's principles of classification and the actual practice of this at Te Oranga. It was a gap manufactured by the inadequacies of the Department's plans with regard to the reality of the classification facilities at the institution, by the insufficiencies of the 1902 regulations and the power placed in the hands of the managers of the Home. The gap was reflected in other aspects of the management of the reformatory, and in other institutions around the country.

⁴⁹ Kaye to Secretary for Education, 21 May 1912, *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.124.

CHAPTER 3. THE DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM.

One of the central features of the management of institutions is the disciplinary system. Such measures as house rules, punishments and privileges had a number of functions: to control the behaviour of the residents; to facilitate the role of the staff by enabling the institution to run smoothly; and to encourage the residents to respond positively to reform programmes. There are a number of important features of the disciplinary system which will be examined in this chapter.

Erving Goffman makes several points concerning the disciplinary systems of total institutions. He identifies the system of privileges and punishments as essential features of institutions.¹ Privileges are offered to the residents by the staff as rewards or incentives for good behaviour. The privileges in total institutions are often assumed to be rights in the outside world: the freedom to smoke, talk, read or bathe. Punishments, comprising either loss of privileges or physical punishments, are held out as the consequence of inappropriate actions, and are commonly held to be measures associated with the discipline of children and animals rather than adults.²

While privileges and punishments may be essential features of total institutions, they are also features of everyday life and are not modes of organisation peculiar to total institutions, as Goffman alleges.³ The disciplinary systems of total institutions are distinctive in so far as everyday rules and patterns are translated into formal regulations. Activities which are taken for granted in the outside world become

¹ Goffman, pp.48-51.

² *ibid.*, p.51.

³ *ibid.*

privileges and rewards in the total institution. The institution does not necessarily devise new rules to govern the behaviour of those inside its walls, but formalises informal, unwritten social norms.

Rules, privileges and punishments serve several functions in a total institution: they allow the institution to operate smoothly by delineating those actions which are proper: they are an attempt to impose some sort of order on the residents; and they serve to remind the residents that they live in a controlled environment in which most rules are formulated and exercised by individuals other than themselves. The privilege system is one way in which a total institution disrupts activities which, in non-institutional society, have the role of exhibiting to others that a person has some control over her or his own life and activities. The loss of much decision-making power leads the individual to become dependent on the institutional structure, a condition considered to be important in achieving their "reformation" or cure.

The disciplinary systems of total institutions represent a conflict between the reformatory and punitive aspects of an institution. While such institutions were charged with the task of reforming individuals the process of incarceration was itself a form of punishment and the successful management of an institution often depended on a disciplinary regime to control the residents. The house rules of institutions were mechanisms designed to regulate the behaviour of residents and direct their activities into "correct" channels. The rules were part of the reform process, yet infractions resulted in punitive, disciplinary measures. The process of reform and punishment was an inherent part of the privilege system in that appropriate actions were rewarded and incorrect activities were punished.

Goffman maintains that there is a contradiction in total institutions between what the institution does, and what its officials must say it does, that there is a gap between the practice within an institution and the public perception of that practice.⁴ Michael Ignatieff observed the importance of public support and acknowledgement of

⁴ *ibid.*, p.74.

practices within institutions. He notes that one of the key problems of institutional management was to represent the act of incarceration and punishment in such a way that those who endured it, and the wider public retained their respect for and approval of those who inflicted the punishment.⁵

Public support for total institutions was and is based on three major assumptions: that the institution imparts justice, that it helps to maintain order in the wider society, and that it does something for the individual confined.⁶ The notion of justice applied both to the payment for offences and the treatment of the person committed to the institution. Nineteenth century ideals of reform and humanitarianism meant that individuals confined in institutions should be treated in a proper, judicious manner to ensure their reformation.⁷ Both discipline and humanity were to be exercised in the treatment of offenders.⁸ While public support was important for the management of a total institution, Ignatieff's interpretation relies on public knowledge of the activities there. This knowledge was often based on what the staff of the institution reported and may have been incorrect or biased. In some institutions there was a difference between that which was presented as happening and what actually happened.⁹

The features outlined above are evident in the disciplinary system employed at Te Oranga. There was a considerable gap between the way in which the disciplinary system was presented to the public and the Education Department and how the system worked in reality. Not only did this gap represent a major difference between the ideals of managing an institution and the practicalities of this, but it also exemplified the Department's loose control over the schools. The comprehensive set of house rules, privileges and punishments were designed to

5 Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain, p.72.

6 Barbara Brenzel, "Domestication as Reform: A Study of the Socialization of Wayward Girls 1856-1905", Harvard Educational Review, 50:2 (May 1980), pp.197,199; Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain, p.210; Oliver, p.28; Tylor, p.480.

7 Foucault, pp.269-270.

8 Ignatieff, "State, Civil Society and Total Institutions", p.88.

9 Beagle, pp.111-118,127.

allow the school to function smoothly and maintain a control over the residents. In all, the dual nature of the system - reward and penalise - represented an incipient tension between the confinement and reformatory aspects of the Home.

The parameters of the disciplinary system were established by the Education Department in 1902. In response to the inquiry into the discipline at St Mary's, Nelson, the Department issued a set of management regulations for industrial schools. The regulations stipulated that the control over the residents was to be judicious and kindly, and that all attendants were to attempt to make the schools as home-like and as comfortable as possible.¹⁰ Perhaps as a consequence of the allegations of excessive punishments at Stoke, the regulations dealt extensively with the rules, privileges and punishments to be used in institutions. These regulations primarily discussed the outer limits of attendants' authority, listing actions which were prohibited rather than recommending a procedure for punishing individuals who transgressed the rules. The regulations included a list of punishments which could not be inflicted, such as dosing offenders with harmful substances, and limited the extent of some punishments, such as the maximum period to be spent in solitary confinement or diet restrictions.¹¹

In many instances, these regulations transformed everyday social norms into written rules. For example, the regulations stipulated that all punishments were to be given in a strictly judicial manner, taking note of the mental and physical condition of the offender. Yet other rules and infractions of these were not generally reflected in the wider society. Reformatory residents could be detained in solitary confinement for a week, and could be forced to wear visible badges of degradation, such as a runaway dress for those who had absconded from the institution.¹²

¹⁰ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1294.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp.1300-1301.

¹² *ibid.*

Although some limits were placed on punishments, the managers of schools had a considerable amount of personal authority in the matter. Despite the fact that the Department generally disapproved of corporal punishment, the decision to strap an intractable individual was left to each manager. The Department did attempt to maintain some control over the managers' authority by stipulating that a punishment register be kept in which all punishments were to be recorded. This register was to be sent to the Department for inspection every month, and read by school inspectors and medical officers on each visit to the institution. However, the effectiveness of the registers as a check on the managers' authority was reduced as the registers were inspected after the punishments had been given: no consultation was made prior to punishing an individual.¹³

Moreover, the utility of the registers was undermined by unreliable recording of punishments. The inquiry into Te Oranga in 1908 uncovered the manager's practice of completing the register incorrectly and at irregular intervals. Although the practice had been common for some time, the inspectors had not noticed the irregularities on their visits.¹⁴

The Department also attempted to maintain control over the institutions through public inquiries into the schools. It ordered commissions of inquiry into Burnham in 1906 and Te Oranga in 1908, and an internal inquiry into Te Oranga in 1915. The investigations into the reformatories were held only two years apart, and just a few years after the much publicised Stoke inquiry in 1900. The proximity of the inquiries may have been the consequence of the Department's efforts to enforce the 1902 regulations and avoid a repetition of the Stoke affair.

Moreover, Burnham and Te Oranga were situated near Christchurch, a centre which contained a number of groups interested in the welfare of women and children. Such groups as the Progressive Liberal Association, the Society for the Protection of

¹³ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.127.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, ii.

Women and Children, the Children's Aid Society and the Women's Christian Temperance Union took an interest in both reformatories and agitated for public inquiries into their management.¹⁵

The public inquiries into industrial schools were paralleled by a number of other commissions into a variety of state and private institutions at the turn of the century. For instance, there was a managerial inquiry into the Wellington Home for the Aged Needy in 1897, and commissions of inquiry into the Costley Home for the Aged in 1903 and Waltham Orphanage in 1905,¹⁶ and into the Auckland Hospital during 1904 and 1905.¹⁷ The frequent inquiries suggests a certain anxiety over the role of the institutions in society. While the New Zealand public was prepared, and even eager, to establish institutions to house deviant and dangerous groups, it was not content to completely leave the control of the institutions in the hands of others. Once a scandal was uncovered in any institution, the public was quick to call for an inquiry into the management. As suggested by Ignatieff, public support was important for total institutions, and some inquiries may have been called to avoid condemnation and adverse publicity.¹⁸

Public discontent with total institutions was also represented by the attempts to exercise some control over the powers of the managers of such schools as Te Oranga. The punishments registers, the Official Visitors, the Departmental inspectors and the regulations were all an attempt to maintain supervision over the management of the reformatory. While not all of the measures may have been successful, the attempt signified a degree of anxiety over the control of total institutions.

15 Beagle, pp.94,96; New Zealand Herald, 30 November 1907, p.5, 7 December 1907, p.6.

16 Margaret Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid in New Zealand 1885-1920", Ph.D. thesis, Massey University, 1981, pp.265,272,322.

17 Royal Commissions, appointed since 1902, and cost of same, AJHR, 1913, H12, pp.1-2.

18 Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain, p.210.

An examination of the 1908 inquiry into Te Oranga suggests that the inquiry was ordered by the Department with the primary intention of avoiding public censure rather than fully investigating the conditions of the residents. The inquiry also revealed a considerable gap between what was happening in the school, what the Department believed to be happening and what was presented to the public. This gap resulted from deficiencies in the 1902 regulations, the inefficiency of the inspectorate and in some instances, deliberate policy on the part of the staff of the Home.

The management of Te Oranga was brought to public attention with the appearance of an open letter in a local paper in November 1907 concerning the punishment of some residents. A number of the young women had attempted to abscond from the institution early in the month but had been caught before they left the grounds of the school. One of the ring-leaders of the group was punished by being confined in the cell and detention-yard for eight days as well as receiving twelve strokes of the strap and having her hair cut short; the other leader also received twelve strokes of the strap and a hair cut. The others involved in the escape attempt received eight strokes of the strap and were held in solitary confinement for six days.¹⁹ The author of the letter, Reverend Fendall of the Anglican Vicarage at Rangiora, noted that

it is generally supposed that the chief object of the institutions for unfortunate girls is to reform those who are committed to them; to build up the character, and restore self-respect. This end can hardly be attained if the methods adopted are not those of the enlightened age, but savour rather of the Dark Ages and the savagery of some of the slave owners of American notoriety.

He went on to describe the punishment for the "heinous offence" of attempting to abscond and claimed that "if such methods of dealing with troublesome girls are in vogue, I think it is high time an enquiry were held into the whole management of the Home".²⁰

¹⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.137.

²⁰ Lyttleton Times, 14 November 1907, p.9.

Fendall's letter generated a series of often exaggerated and emotive comments in papers throughout the country. An editorial in the New Zealand Herald noted that

the course adopted towards these young women . . . was brutal in the extreme, was utterly inexcusable and hateful . . . for the flogging of women is an offence against the good name of this country, and is an insult to womanhood which is not to be slurred over by any ridiculous claims that in modern civilisation such brutalities are necessary to discipline.²¹

The Post, in commenting on the punishment of hair cutting, stated that "with one flick of the scissors the mind is carried back to the Dark Ages, when noses were slit and ears were lopped off for trivial offences".²² One Christchurch paper was less convinced by Fendall's letter, noting that "those who describe the hair cutting as mutilation have crossed the border to hysterics", and that there was no need for an inquiry into the institution.²³

Many members of the public were particularly perturbed that some of the young women had had their hair cut as a punishment. One correspondent, quoting from the Bible, noted that "if a woman have long hair it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering" and observed that Branting and Fowlds, the Minister of Education, evidently thought they knew better than the Bible when they cut the young women's hair.²⁴ Hair cutting was viewed as a brutal punishment for both the residents and the staff participating in the act. Moreover, some members of the public saw it as defeminising the young women and removing their dignity.

The public protest at the incident suggests that the management of Te Oranga had crossed the bounds of its authority in administering a punishment which was abhorred in the wider community. While some correspondents were supportive of corporal punishment, none supported hair cutting as a punishment. The institution's use of corporal punishment was a formalisation of practices in the wider community.

²¹ NZH, 20 November 1907, p.6.

²² In LT, 16 November 1907, p.7.

²³ The Press, 19 November 1907, p.6.

²⁴ LT, 23 November 1907, p.11.

and in other schools throughout the country. The negative reaction to hair cutting suggests that it was not a common form of punishment. Its use was roundly criticised by the public, prepared to build penitentiaries for delinquent young women, but anxious to ensure that they were managed adequately and to society's standards.

The majority of those who demanded an inquiry were at pains to point out that they found fault with the Education Department and the Minister of Education rather than with the staff of Te Oranga who were seen to be doing their duty. One local correspondent supported the manager, claiming that Branting's task was "so arduous, so brain distracting, so nerve exhausting, that self-control for her is as difficult for the girls. If the archangel were superintendent today tomorrow he would be stripped of his feathers and virtues".²⁵ Branting made no comments about her administration, preferring to let the accusations "fire away" and allowing the Education Department to handle the matter.²⁶

The Minister of Education was not swayed by demands for a public inquiry. He maintained that Branting had acted completely within the bounds of her authority and that her actions were justified. He held that absconding was one of the most serious crimes committed by residents of institutions, and that the punishment of hair cutting was not only the strongest deterrent for misconduct, but it ensured the quick location of those who escaped after punishment. He did not believe that an inquiry was necessary at all, for any resort to corporal punishment would soon be alleviated by the construction of a new accommodation wing, easing some of the institution's problems.²⁷

Despite Fowlds' assurances, the public continued to clamour for an inquiry. A local paper's publication of an article concerning the management of the Home did

²⁵ *ibid.*, 16 November 1907, p.7.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ NZH, 18 November 1907, p.5.

nothing to dispel the allegations of maladministration. The author of the piece pointed out that the management was not as it had been described by other correspondents. Branting was forced to control a particularly difficult type of young woman, "girls . . . of sufficiently desperate character - of almost indelible criminal taint who would stop at nothing to regain their liberty, and contaminate their companions with knowledge of the most dreadful vices". The reformatory itself was described as clean, reflecting "the comforting atmosphere of a splendidly equipped home", and the residents, "rosy-cheeked, sturdy-limbed, well-clothed damsels",²⁸

The publicity over the management intensified once again with the disclosure, in February 1908, that the administration had gone unaltered and that harsh punishments continued to be employed to enforce discipline. A reporter for a local paper and a Member of the House of Representatives had both received information from a number of young women at the institution who complained of poor conditions in the reformatory. The residents claimed that one individual had been strapped while ill and consequently had to spend time in hospital, and that others had been strapped so hard that they carried the marks on their backs for days. In addition the residents maintained that they were often short of food, that it was usual for many in the Home to be on rations, and that if they did not work hard enough, they were given dry bread to eat.²⁹ The local papers immediately demanded that an investigation be made into the management on the grounds that "the charges made . . . this time are definite enough to warrant an enquiry", and that Branting should be given an opportunity to defend herself.³⁰

On the day following the disclosure the Minister of Education authorised an inquiry into Te Oranga "to satisfy the public mind on the matter".³¹ The reasons for Fowlds' sudden change of decision appear to have been a desire to end speculation and assure the public that Te Oranga was a well-managed institution and that the

²⁸ The Press, 19 November 1907, p.8.

²⁹ LT, 6 February 1908, pp.6.8.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p.6.

³¹ *ibid.*, 7 February 1908, p.8.

staff had acted correctly at all times. The Department had been the object of considerable adverse public criticism over the management of both Burnham and Te Oranga and was prompted into action to clear its name and restore its reputation as guardian of child welfare. As one Departmental official noted during the course of the inquiry, the government did not readily countenance attacks on its administration.³²

Favourable public comment of its juvenile institutions was important for the Department. Although as Beagle noted, the management of the institutions received little publicity in general, there was considerable attention once a potential scandal was brought to light.³³ On those occasions the Department was prepared to act and allay allegations of mismanagement in order to reassure the public that the schools were being administered justly. If no public interest were aroused the Department took either no action on allegations or ordered only a quiet, internal investigation.

The alleged maltreatment of residents which led to the 1908 inquiry was just one of several complaints over harsh discipline at the Home.³⁴ However the allegations of 1907 and 1908 were the only complaints to receive an official public inquiry. The lack of formal investigation into other allegations of excessive discipline was not the consequence of fewer examples of harsh punishments. Rather, a decisive factor for a public inquiry was the amount of exposure the allegations received.

During 1915 an Anglican clergyman, Reverend Tobin, made several accusations concerning the excessive measures used to control the young women at Te Oranga. His claims were based on interviews with staff members and residents and were, according to the Official Visitors of the reformatory, the results of information he

³² Gibbes to Minister of Education, 12 April 1908. Management and Functions of National and Dependent Institutions. Kingslea, Horseshoe Rd, Shirley, Christchurch, February 1908 - February 1957. Kingslea Home Files, Department of Social Welfare, Head Office, Wellington.

³³ Beagle, p.92.

³⁴ Stewart's inspection report of Te Oranga, 25 May 1905. Walker's inspection reports 29 January 1906, 20 May 1911. Scale to Secretary for Education, 22 May 1911. CW 40/4/10; Interview notes, 9 September 1915. Report of Official Visitors, 15 September 1915. CW 40/3/16.

had gathered against the administration for at least six months.³⁵ Tobin's accusations, and those of three ex-attendants,³⁶ included instances of alleged maltreatment of some residents: one who had been held in solitary confinement for ten weeks with reading material only on Sundays; another who had been locked in a cold cell without adequate bedding for three weeks in the middle of winter, was on reduced rations and received a forcible cold bath every day; and the whole institution being denied a meal as punishment for an offensive comment written on a wall.³⁷ Tobin also claimed that he was not consulted or informed when Anglican residents were in hospital or in other institutions, and that Johnson had ordered her staff to deliberately conceal information from him.³⁸

While some of Tobin's allegations were the result of frustration over his limited power at the institution, the claims of excessive punishment were supported in an informal investigation by the Official Visitors. The group affirmed that some individuals received cold baths in the belief that the douse would be advantageous in calming young women in an excitable condition. They also noted that food had been withheld from some residents although, they maintained, "no harm appears to have been done".³⁹ Johnson claimed that Tobin's charges were "wicked and preposterous", yet she admitted that residents received cold baths as a remedy for violent tempers and that the second division had been deprived of a meal as punishment for their "rebellious attitude".⁴⁰

The Official Visitors, the manager and the Education Department attributed the basis of Tobin's complaints to pique and the "disloyalty" of some staff members. Johnson was particularly concerned that Tobin had secretly interviewed some

³⁵ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 14 September 1915. List of complaints drawn up by Official Visitors to Te Oranga for Under-Secretary for Education, 15 September 1915, CW 40/3/16.

³⁶ Gibbes to Minister of Education, 11 October 1915. *ibid.*

³⁷ Interview notes, 9 September 1915. *ibid.*

³⁸ Report of meeting of Official Visitors of Te Oranga, 11 September 1915. *ibid.*

³⁹ Report of Official Visitors for Under-Secretary for Education, 15 September 1915. *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 14 September 1915. *ibid.*

attendants and she recommended that two of the women be dismissed.⁴¹ Several months prior to Tobin's accusations there had been a considerable amount of discontent between staff members, several of whom disliked the manager and her methods. A number of attendants were later dismissed for their actions.⁴²

Although Tobin was described as "very antagonistic" to Te Oranga and anxious to institute a public inquiry, the Department made no attempt to investigate his accusations thoroughly.⁴³ The investigations and report of the Official Visitors formed the basis of a brief to the Minister.⁴⁴ The administration of the Home was left unaltered and the Department took no action on the disciplinary techniques of forcible cold baths and deprivation of meals. Despite the fact that Tobin threatened to publish his information, the Department did not order a public inquiry.⁴⁵ One reason for lack of further investigation may have been that both Johnson and the Department considered that Tobin had acted in an underhand manner and that his accusations were more the result of his own wounded vanity and the antagonism of some attendants rather than reliable information. Yet Tobin's claims were similar to the accusations of 1907 and 1908. In both instances the accusations were made by clergymen who had received their information from residents who claimed that they had been treated unjustly. Neither man verified his information by interviewing other residents or attendants.⁴⁶ A major reason for the decision not to make a formal investigation of Tobin's claims was because his accusations received no publicity. In 1908 Fendall realised that the only way of forcing the Department to act was through public opinion.⁴⁷ In 1915 there was no major publicity, no adverse public criticism and no public inquiry into the institution.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Gibbes to Minister for Education, 11 October 1915, *ibid.*

⁴³ Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 19 September 1915, CW 40/4/10.

⁴⁴ Gibbes to Minister for Education, 11 October 1915, CW 40/3/16.

⁴⁵ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 14 September 1915, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.98.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

The investigations revealed that the Department did not have a clear impression of the management of Te Oranga. Although one official noted in 1908 that he had "not only a general knowledge, but an exact knowledge" of what went on in the Home, the inquiry showed that this was not so.⁴⁸ Questions raised by the Commissioner revealed a number of practices of which the Department was unaware. Branting had neglected to adequately record all details of punishments given, in some instances recording a lesser punishment than that actually inflicted, a practice unnoticed by the inspectors whose task it was to thoroughly examine the register.⁴⁹ Such a discrepancy was not necessarily the consequence of poor inspection, for the registers were completed and presented to the inspectors after punishments had been given. Moreover, the inspectors were unaware of the manager's self-acknowledged habit of hitting residents about the head, a practice prohibited by the 1902 regulations.⁵⁰ While such examples were regarded as serious by the Commissioner,⁵¹ they were dismissed as "trifling irregularities" by senior Education Department officials, and not worthy of fuller investigation.⁵²

The disciplinary system of Te Oranga served several functions. Firstly, the collection of house rules, privileges and punishments allowed the institution to be managed efficiently. Such rules as the prohibition placed on the third division from working outdoors, for fear that they would attempt to escape was a regulation which ensured that the third class could be managed easily.⁵³

Other types of discipline facilitated the role of the staff. For example, during the course of the 1908 inquiry it was noted that corporal punishment was a frequent

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p.124.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, ii.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, v.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, ii.iv-vi.

⁵² Gibbes to Minister for Education, 12 April 1908, Management and Functions of National and Dependent Institution, Kingslea Home Files, Department of Social Welfare, Wellington.

⁵³ Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, CW 40/4/10.

means of securing discipline. The Commissioner noted that the staff considered the strap to be an effective and simple way of keeping the young women under control, although he personally could not justify its use and recommended its abolition. The manager claimed that all of the staff would tender their resignations if corporal punishment were abolished and a less effective control substituted in its place.⁵⁴ While frequent corporal punishment was a way in which the staff facilitated their own role, other rules did this for them. The members of the third division were not permitted to communicate with each other on the grounds that conversation would be harmful. Yet the manager claimed that the rule was established as the attendants had no other way of controlling the young women.

The major function of the disciplinary system was to regulate the behaviour of the young women. Punishment was a crucial element in the control of the residents. Branting claimed that punishment, or the threat of punishment, was important in deterring the young women from breaking the rules.⁵⁵ Punishments such as hair cutting were defended by both the manager and members of the Education Department on the grounds that they stopped other residents from committing similar acts. The Minister claimed that cutting a young woman's hair was the strongest deterrent for misconduct that could be inflicted.⁵⁶ a view supported by Branting who believed that it stopped the residents from attempting to abscond again for they did not like their "wool" coming off.⁵⁷

Hair cutting was one way that Te Oranga attempted to completely subjugate the young women and enforce adherence to the house rules. The punishment could not be inflicted without the sanction of the Minister, and was used for offenders who repeatedly absconded or who continually misbehaved. Hair cutting was seen as a peculiarly feminine form of punishment, designed to appeal to women's supposed vanity and concern with physical appearance, as indicated by Branting's

⁵⁴ AJHR, 1908, H21, iii, p.105.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, pp.105.119.

⁵⁶ NZH, 18 November 1907, p.5.

⁵⁷ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.108.

observations. It was used extensively in overseas institutions as a means of controlling particularly fractious women.⁵⁸

Yet the practice of hair cutting has an ambiguous role in any women's institution which seeks to make its residents more womanly and feminine. Although the practice was a feminine form of punishment, its effect, and indeed purpose, may be defeminisation. Te Oranga sought to make its residents good, feminine women, yet those who crossed the boundaries of appropriate behaviour could be treated in a distinctly unfeminine and dehumanising fashion. The institution endeavoured to treat the residents as women and encourage their femininity: those who did not respond to the treatment were given a clear message. Hair cutting was part of the process of a total control of the individual in the total institution. The staff of Te Oranga believed that the punishment was effective as it deterred others, and made the offenders ashamed to appear in public, encouraging their dependence on the institutional regime.

Despite the fact that corporal punishment, solitary confinement and badges of degradation were claimed to act as deterrents to misconduct, it appears that the punishments had little effect on some individuals. The punishment register of 1906 to 1908 contains accounts of 153 punishments inflicted on forty-three individuals. Included in the list was one resident who was punished on eighteen separate occasions, another who was punished on fourteen occasions and another punished ten times. Only fourteen of the forty-three young women listed were punished once.⁵⁹ Slightly less than half of the total number of individuals in the Home over this period received some type of punishment. In 1907 the institution punished at least thirty residents of a total of eighty-six during the year. The punishments were spaced evenly throughout the year.⁶⁰ The remaining residents may not have

⁵⁸ Annette Salt, *These Outcast Women. The Parramatta Female Factory 1821-1848*, Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1984, p.90; Sabine Willis, "Made to be moral - at Parramatta Girls' School 1898-1923", in Jill Roe (ed), *Twentieth Century Sydney: studies in urban and social history*, Sydney: Hale and Iremonger and Sydney History Group, 1980, p.180.

⁵⁹ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, iv, pp.135-137.

⁶⁰ *AJHR*, 1908, E3, p.5, H21, pp.135-137.

misbehaved, or they may not have had their punishments recorded, or they may not have been caught breaking the house rules.

These figures suggest that the punishments were not, in fact, stopping all residents from breaking the rules. Moreover, the list included individuals who were repeatedly given quite mild punishments for misdemeanours as well as those who received a number of severe penalties for continued offences. The severity of the punishment did not appear to act as a deterrent.

For example, Ellen O'Lafferty⁶¹ received a series of punishments for quite minor offences over this period: insubordination on the way to church; insolence to staff members; quarrelling with other residents; impudence; insolence to the manager; "continual misbehaviour"; and more seriously, throwing a jug at an attendant, threatening to strike another resident and striking an attendant. Ellen was punished for these offences with strappings and short periods in solitary confinement, punishments which did not appear to alter her behaviour.⁶²

Other residents were repeatedly punished for more serious offences. In October 1906 Alicia Smithers spent twenty-four hours in the cell and twelve hours in the detention yard as a punishment for absconding and robbing a neighbouring house; she was later compelled to wear the runaway dress. She was punished on two occasions in January 1907: all night in the cell for making a disturbance during the night and using bad language to staff members, and later five hours in the cell for insubordination and bad language. During the next month she was missing for a week when she again robbed houses in the neighbourhood. On this occasion Alicia was sent to the local prison for a month. Three months after her return she spent six hours in the cell for insolence and refusal to work, and three months later, was given six strokes of the strap for repeated refusals to work and for informing the

61 The young women have been given fictitious names throughout which attempt to retain their ethnic or national identity.

62 AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.135-137.

other residents that she had no intention to do so.⁶³ Alicia's and Ellen's experiences suggest that punishment was not always an effective way of controlling the young women, and did not deter others from committing similar offences.

However the disciplinary system sought to reform the residents by means other than coercing or cajoling them into the proper channels. The system of rules, privileges and punishments can also be seen as a "physics or anatomy of power" exercised over the residents by the staff.⁶⁴ While some individuals, such as Ellen and Alicia took power for themselves, the residents were given little personal decision-making power in their own lives and were compelled to rely on the decisions of the attendants.

Many of the rules and punishments attempted to reform the residents by making them dependent on the institution. The restrictions on correspondence between individuals and their relatives and friends was one way in which the young women were compelled to become dependent on the institution and its members for emotional support and companionship. Many residents had not seen family members for some time.⁶⁵ In one instance the Home contained two sisters who had not met for eight years. One had been recently transferred to Te Oranga from another institution but was not permitted to see her sibling on arrival at the reformatory.⁶⁶

The separation of the residents from their families was intensified by the fact that Te Oranga was the only female reformatory in the country, and as such, received young women from all around New Zealand. Upon their discharge the young women were released into the local community rather than into their original areas. This was a practice disliked by some in the vicinity who remarked that they "looked forward with dread to the importation into Christchurch in such numbers of the worst girls

63 *ibid.*: Nominal Rolls of Te Oranga. 1906-1908. CW 14. Industrial Schools. Nominal Rolls. 1900-1910.

64 Foucault. p.215.

65 *AJHR*. 1908. H21. pp.6-8.

66 Interview notes. 9 September 1915. CW 40/3/16.

in the colony" and recommended that the young women be released back into their own locality.⁶⁷

The release of the residents into Christchurch heightened their dependence on Te Oranga. For those who had no friends or relatives in the area the institution may have been the only familiar feature in the vicinity. Branting claimed that she maintained a lively correspondence with most of the young women who had been discharged⁶⁸ and that many returned to visit.⁶⁹ Some of the young women who had been released were interviewed during the course of the 1908 inquiry and supported these claims. One young woman who had lived in Dunedin prior to committal and was currently a domestic servant in Christchurch stated that she looked on Branting as a mother and Te Oranga as a home, sentiments echoed by other residents.⁷⁰ These sentiments may have been prompted by feelings of gratitude as well as a consequence of confinement and training in the Home which had encouraged and taught dependence on the institution.

Many penal establishments attempted to reform the residents by encouraging their dependence. Yet penal institutions for women encouraged the dependency of the individuals doubly: as offenders and as women. Dependency was held to be the desired state for both children and women.⁷¹ While the dependency of children may be seen as the consequence of the age and abilities of the subjects, the idea of women's dependency was based on their supposed fragility, weakness and need for protection. Women's dependency was a two-pronged idea. It attempted to foster the notion that women were, in essence, child-like: they were emotional, irrational and

⁶⁷ The Press, 3 December 1901, p.4.

⁶⁸ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.113.

⁶⁹ The Press, 19 November 1907, p.8.

⁷⁰ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.57.63.72.

⁷¹ Robyn Anderson, "The Hardened Frail Ones: Women and Crime in Auckland, 1845-1870", M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1981, p.207; Brenzel, Daughters of the State, pp.17.39.141; Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, pp. 19.154; Deborah Gorham, The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, p.102; Gregory, p.33; Platt, p.74; Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", p.306; Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", pp.49.158.184.

unable to adequately provide for themselves. Women were to be cared for, a service provided by men. In turn, such an idea legitimised the protection of women by men, a contract which sought to assure the submissiveness of women as well as the power and status of men.

Confinement in Te Oranga was a form of protection for the young women. "Te Oranga" was variously translated as a place of safety or a place of refuge, providing shelter and protection from the outside world.⁷² Inside the institution, the young women were encouraged to look to others for guidance and advice. The staff took the role of protectors and guardians, a role which would be assumed by fathers, brothers and husbands upon discharge.

A number of historians have noted that the disciplinary systems of women's institutions were devised to create the women's dependency in a way not paralleled in men's institutions.⁷³ For example, restrictions on correspondence were not imposed on the residents of Burnham and the young men were released into the community after having received instruction in a number of marketable trades. Even such "female" punishments as hair cutting and the wearing of a runaway dress which were used at Te Oranga enforced the dependence of the residents, for no young woman could successfully escape from the reformatory while marked by such distinctive features. The disciplinary system of Te Oranga was designed to make the residents submissive, law-abiding and dependent.

The whole disciplinary system of Te Oranga was over-arched by an incipient tension between the reformatory and punitive functions of the Home. The conflict was written into the system by the two ideas of privilege and punishment, for residents could be encouraged to behave appropriately by either method. In some instances monetary rewards were given to individuals who attained the desired standard of

⁷² Whelan, p.187.

⁷³ Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, p.154; Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", pp.296-302; Tennant, "Maternity and Morality", p.33.

behaviour.⁷⁴ Others received good conduct marks which entitled them to special privileges. Yet the comments of contemporary observers suggest that the primary way of enforcing discipline at Te Oranga was by punishment for misdemeanours.⁷⁵ It may have been that the more spectacular means of enforcing discipline were noted more frequently than the quieter, subtle methods, but statements presented at the 1908 inquiry suggest otherwise.⁷⁶

Physical punishment was an important form of discipline at Te Oranga. The punishment register of 1906 to 1908 contains no reference to loss of marks or deprivations of privileges being imposed in place of physical punishment.⁷⁷ Despite the fact that the staff attributed the frequency of corporal punishment to the lack of sufficient accommodation and classification, this form of punishment continued to be used as the major disciplinary technique even after extra facilities had been provided.

While the disciplinary system was initially devised by the Education Department and regulated by inspectors and Official Visitors, the system was interpreted by the staff of the reformatory. The implementation of the system inside the walls of the Home represented a significant gap between the Department's ideas over managing an institution and the practicalities of this. The system stood as a symbol of the power of Te Oranga, and the public face it attempted to maintain.

⁷⁴ AJHR, 1901, E3, p.11.

⁷⁵ Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 25 April 1904, Stewart's inspection report, 25 May 1905, Walker's inspection report, 19 September 1915, CW 40/4/10.

⁷⁶ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.73-74,78-81,84-91,104-106.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, pp.135-137.

CHAPTER 4.
**FROM DEMI-MONDES TO SLAVEYS: EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL
 TRAINING.**

One of the ways the management of Te Oranga attempted to regulate the behaviour of the residents was through education and training. An adequate education accompanied by a sufficient amount of industrial training was held to instil into the young women such values as hard work, perseverance, respect and industry. Yet the academic and vocational training was not a straightforward procedure. The instruction given to the young women was complicated by a number of issues: a conflict between the idea of reform and punishment, inherent in the principle of reformatory institutions; an imbalance of education and industrial training; and a tension between the specific forms of industrial training provided.

A major purpose of juvenile institutions is to reform and change the behaviour of the children and young persons detained there. Throughout the nineteenth century officials connected with juvenile institutions had increasingly stressed the importance of the reformatory rather than the punitive aspects of detention. The institutions were educational establishments, industrial workplaces and "moral hospitals"¹ in which individuals were encouraged to change their behaviour to accord with the values of the wider society. However, these institutions were also forms of prisons. Despite the importance placed on the reformatory features of juvenile institutions, the fact remained that industrial schools and reformatories were essentially penitentiaries to which individuals were committed and confined as punishment.

¹ May, pp.8.28.

The two purposes of industrial schools and reformatories - to punish and to reform - contained the potential for conflict, a feature noted by some historians.² The imbalance between the punitive and reformatory aspects could be realised in the vocational training. While adequate educational and industrial instruction was considered as crucial to the proper reformation of a juvenile offender, such training was not to be more comprehensive, or of a higher standard than that offered to the wider society. The punitive aspects implied some loss of liberty: to supply incarcerated juvenile delinquents with an education that was equal to that of the majority of other children and young persons was to reduce the loss of privilege associated with confinement. Such an idea was, and still is, a familiar charge directed at prisons and similar institutions.

The task of the administrators of Te Oranga was to attempt to reconcile the two purposes of incarceration and achieve some balance between the therapeutic and disciplinary functions of the Home. Te Oranga was both a refuge and a reformatory, protecting the young women from the wider community, and protecting society from them. While the Home was established as a reformatory for juvenile offenders who were too young to be sent to prison, or whose behaviour necessitated firm control,³ the institution was under the control of the Education Department which emphasised the importance of education as reform. Yet the type of young offender for whom the institution was established dictated that the institution be run along quite strict lines. Incarceration in Te Oranga was a warning to all young women in New Zealand that society was not prepared to tolerate immoral behaviour, a warning which necessitated some loss of privilege to support the message. The apparent need for the strict control of the residents made it difficult to maintain a balance between the reformatory and punitive aspects.

The title of "industrial school" presupposes some form of balance between industry and schooling, that the individuals would receive instruction in both spheres. Many

² Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge, p.130; Eade, p.400.

³ AJHR, 1900, E1, xx.

institutions provided a training biased in favour of industrial work, with academic education only a minor, secondary consideration.⁴ While Te Oranga was legally obliged to provide some academic education to the residents the focus of the training was industrial.⁵

The tension between the reformatory and punitive functions of an institution, and in the balance between the academic education and vocational training were all evident in the management of Te Oranga. The Education Department clearly enunciated the purpose of its institutions following the reorganisation of the industrial school system in 1900. Hogben noted that although the educative purpose of reformatories was important, the training in both industrial schools and reformatories should be primarily industrial:

a boy or a girl should be so taught that a taste for manual employment should be acquired, and a trade properly learnt, or the learning of it properly begun. Several trades should be taught. . . . Farming and other country occupations may be looked upon as the most important of all "trades" for children of this class.⁶

Such a philosophy laid the basis for the imbalance between the types of training provided in Departmental institutions.

The regulations for the management of industrial schools and reformatories issued in 1902 further embodied the bias in favour of industrial training. The regulations provided no guidelines for the academic instruction of residents in institutions other than applying the regulations under the Education Act of 1877 to day school instruction, detailing the range of subjects and school hours.⁷

4 Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, pp.33-36; Noeline Williamson, "Laundry Maids or Ladies? Life in the Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls in New South Wales, Part II, 1887 to 1910", *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 68:4 (March 1983), p.321; Willis, p.187.

5 Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1297.

6 *AJHR*, 1900, E1, xx.

7 *New Zealand Statutes, 1877*, Education Act, section 84, p.126.

In contrast with the paucity of detail with regard to the academic education, the regulations described at length the industrial, vocational training. All residents over fourteen years of age were to be given regular instruction in industrial training. The managers of institutions were charged with the responsibility of directing the attention of all individuals to a rural life and rural occupations. To this end, male residents were instructed in farm-work, and both males and females instructed in dairy work, poultry-keeping and gardening. In addition, females over twelve years of age received instruction in household management, cooking, laundry work, sewing, darning, cutting out, and setting plain work for a sewing machine.⁸ The regulations also provided quite detailed instructions concerning moral and religious training.

The managers of Te Oranga and the Departmental officials were concerned to limit the academic educational opportunities offered at the institution and to channel education into domestic topics. Such a trend was particularly evident as the movement for a domestic science oriented curriculum for girls gained momentum in the wider education system. The policy was acceptable to the Education Department which considered school-work to be only an auxiliary to the general purpose of the institution.⁹ The Department's opinion of the academic education at Te Oranga highlights not only the imbalance in the types of training offered provided at the Home, but a tension between the reformatory and disciplinary functions of the institution. Although Te Oranga was to reform its residents it was a reformation which was to come about through hard work and diligence - essential features of a penal institution¹⁰ - rather than a comprehensive policy of education. The punitive aspects of the focus on work and industrial training at Te Oranga are implicit in the bias.

While the conflict between the two functions of the Home may have been at times subtle and not easy to distinguish, that between the types and amount of training

⁸ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, pp.1297-1298.

⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, vi.

¹⁰ Foucault, pp.269-270.

provided are more evident. Prior to 1904 there were limited academic education facilities at Te Oranga. The manager or an attendant conducted classes in a small cottage away from the main buildings and gave instruction in composition and arithmetic.¹¹ Few of the residents appear to have received the limited education provided at the time. The school medical officer reported in 1903 that during the previous year only six residents received ordinary school-teaching, although all were instructed in cookery, laundry work and dress making, and all worked at outside chores.¹² During 1902 there were fifty residents at Te Oranga and although the majority were either at service or detained temporarily at St Mary's or Mt Magdala, less than a third of the remaining individuals received any school instruction.¹³ That so few of the young women received school instruction indicated the manager's and Education Department officials' attitude to the importance of education in general. Despite the fact that the number of residents had increased from thirteen in 1900, to forty-six in 1901 and then fifty in 1902,¹⁴ no provision had been made for either an adequate school-room or a qualified school teacher, although some inspectors had commented on the Home's urgent need for proper school facilities.¹⁵ The Department appears to have been content to provide the young women with a training biased in favour of domestic pursuits. Such training may well have been less expensive than providing adequate school facilities.

During 1903 and 1904 the number of residents transferred from Te Oranga to other institutions in Christchurch decreased following the completion of a new accommodation wing at the Home.¹⁶ The increase in the number of residents remaining in Te Oranga may have prompted the Education Department to provide adequate school facilities. By the end of 1904 the Department had ordered the

¹¹ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.35.

¹² AJHR, 1903, E3, p.15.

¹³ *ibid.*, p.7; Nominal rolls, 1902, CW 14.

¹⁴ AJHR, 1901, E3, p.14, 1902, E3, p.6, 1903, E3, p.7.

¹⁵ Pope's inspection reports of Te Oranga, 10 September 1902, 29 December 1904, CW 40/4/10.

¹⁶ Nominal rolls, 1903-1904, CW 14.

construction of a school-room¹⁷ and had appointed a qualified teacher.¹⁸ The employment of a professional teacher represented a new approach to education at Te Oranga, yet if the teacher became ill the day school was closed and no tuition, even on a limited basis, was provided by other staff members.¹⁹

The Department's move to augment the educational facilities at Te Oranga coincided with an increase in the number of young adolescent girls committed to the institution. After 1901 the official school-leaving age was raised from thirteen to fourteen years.²⁰ Only six of the twenty-two new committals to Te Oranga in 1901 were under fourteen and thus legally entitled to some schooling.²¹ However, during 1904 slightly less than half of the number of new committals were under fourteen.²² The young age of many of the new admissions may have been a reason for the Department to expand the school facilities, for it was under no legal obligation to provide an education for those above the official school-leaving age.

In 1904 the Department devised a school syllabus to guide the teacher, although it appears that both the teacher and the manager had a considerable degree of freedom in choosing the composition of the curriculum.²³ The syllabus covered a range of subjects including reading, spelling, composition, recitation, writing, arithmetic and physical drill.²⁴ The curriculum reflected the Department's bias towards a practical and useful education, equipping the residents with knowledge of basic communication and mathematical skills. The content of the curriculum was expanded several times to incorporate other subjects and fields of interest. For

17 Secretary for Education to relieving manager of Te Oranga, 13 December 1904, CW 7/61/12.

18 AJHR, 1908, H21, p.34.

19 Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 9 September 1907, CW 40/4/10.

20 Ruth Fry, It's Different for Daughters. A History of the Curriculum for Girls in New Zealand Schools, 1900-1975, Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1985, p.9.

21 Nominal rolls, 1900-1901, CW 14.

22 *ibid.*, 1904.

23 Miss Harrison to Secretary for Education, 18 June 1904, Secretary for Education to Branting, 29 June 1909, CW 7/61/12.

24 Proposed syllabus for Te Oranga, 29 June 1909, *ibid.*

example, the teacher gave instruction in the principles of agricultural chemistry until it was replaced with tuition in basic physiology, the laws of health and homecraft during 1904.²⁵ The instruction in agricultural matters reflected the rural bias of the reformatory system in New Zealand and upheld Departmental directives. However, the substitution of domestic for rural topics at Te Oranga represented a fundamental shift away from the principle of a rural education for girls and young women. The Department considered such topics as homecraft to be of more use and benefit than agricultural chemistry.

There do not appear to have been any clear reasons for the move away from a rural emphasis in the education at Te Oranga, a step also evident in the industrial training provided. While the move was in line with a more general educational trend towards domestic subjects for girls, it may have been that the Department was aware that domestic service positions were unpopular in rural areas where the work was more varied, and presumably more difficult than in urban households.²⁶ Whatever the reasons, the education and training given at Te Oranga were not agricultural.

The composition of the curriculum was the subject of continual discussion by officials of the Education Department and the managers of the Home. The frequent criticisms illustrate the tension between the academic education and the vocational training of the residents, and the bias in favour of the latter. Members of the Education Department repeatedly criticised the educational syllabus, claiming that it was not "useful" and that it would not benefit the residents in later life. One inspector noted in 1904 that the young women would gain more from lessons in cookery and home management than they would from an elaborate, academic school syllabus.²⁷ Following a complaint from the Secretary for Education that the syllabus was "too literary", the Department modified the curriculum in 1909 to include the more practical topics of health, civics, nature study, gardening and moral

²⁵ Harrison to Secretary for Education, 18 June 1904, *ibid.*

²⁶ Janet Bray, "Government and Private Attempts to Alleviate the Domestic Servant 'Problem' in New Zealand 1890-1914", B.A. (Hons) research essay, Massey University, 1979, p.48.

²⁷ Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 7 October 1904, CW 40/4/10.

instruction. The supposedly literary syllabus included instruction in such subjects as reading, arithmetic, writing, composition, recitation, spelling, physical drill, cookery and needlework.²⁸

Such criticisms highlight the Department's view of the school as both an educational and penitential institution with reformatory and punitive functions. The condemnation of the "liberal" school curriculum affirmed an awareness of the conflict between the reformatory and disciplinary functions of the Home: the education provided at Te Oranga was not to approximate or be better than that available to the wider community. Part of the reformatory's role was to punish: punishment was not to be associated with the availability of services and facilities better than those given to children and young persons who had not committed some offence.

The "liberal" curriculum appears to have been the responsibility of the school teacher, Ada Harrison, who fervently criticised the restricted education offered. Harrison maintained that the daily two hours of schooling was insufficient for the residents, and believed that education should not be forfeited in favour of domestic service or manual work. Contrary to Departmental regulations, Harrison provided the young women with a more comprehensive education than was recommended. She taught pupils to the sixth standard rather than the fourth, for she considered it to be unfair and discouraging to keep able pupils at a low level.²⁹ Despite her endeavours the Department refused to raise the possible level of educational attainment beyond the fourth standard.³⁰

The apparent conflict between the Department and some staff of the Home over education was the result of the somewhat loose control the Department maintained over the management. As indicated earlier, the daily administration of the institution

²⁸ Secretary for Education to Branting, 26 June 1909, proposed syllabus for Te Oranga, CW 7/61/12.

²⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.34-36.

³⁰ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 13 January 1914, CW 7/61/12.

was the responsibility of the staff and managers with little direct interference from the Education Department or its officials. The observation or disregard of regulations and directives were the responsibility of the managers, and although all institutional staff were required to adhere to the regulations, effective policing of this was difficult.³¹ Moreover, the insufficiency of some aspects of the regulations left a considerable degree of decision making up to the staff. The teacher and the manager appear to have frequently acted on their own initiative in educational matters: Harrison gave instruction beyond the stipulated level and the manager felt free to remove students from class as she wished and to engage them in domestic chores. The gap between the approach of the reformatory and the approach of the Education Department was the gap between the ideal and the reality of managing an institution.

The Department's complaints of the curriculum continued until the closure of the Home in 1918. In 1916 an inspector visited the institution and roundly condemned the syllabus, claiming that the seven pupils attending the day school received insufficient training in domestic duties. He recommended that all school instruction, with the exception of English and arithmetic, be discontinued in favour of a regime of domestic training. The new training course included such topics as laundry, cookery, needlework, garment-making, economic purchasing and some basic rural chores, all subjects considered to be of use to the residents in their later lives.³² The day school was not reopened in 1917 and it appears that for the remaining two years of the Home's operation, none of the school-age residents of the institution received any formal educational instruction.³³ Although the closure was part of a wider reform of the industrial school system,³⁴ the consequent lack of proper educational facilities at Te Oranga was indicative of the Education Department's attitude towards a broad education for the young women.

³¹ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1294.

³² Spencer's inspection report of Te Oranga, 4 December 1916, CW 40/4/10.

³³ Miss Hunt to Secretary for Education, 3 January 1917, CW 7/61/12; Beck to Assistant Director of Education, 24 March 1917, CW 40/1/19.

³⁴ AJHR, 1917, E1A, pp.5-6.

The managers held a similar attitude towards education. During the 1908 inquiry Harrison maintained that Branting, had "no sympathy with . . . [the] school-work", and that the manager removed students class to engage them in domestic duties. As a result, some students received less than the minimum amount of two hours of instruction a day. Harrison cited the irregular attendance as a reason for the poor reports and performance of some pupils.³⁵ Although Branting admitted the truth of Harrison's allegations, she justified her actions by claiming that the purpose of education at Te Oranga was to equip the young women with a "useful knowledge for life". She maintained that she supported the proper academic education of the residents, an education in which arithmetic was "much more important" than Shakespeare's plays. She believed that all of the young women should be taught to read and write, and should be given instruction in arithmetic so that they could "calculate the cost of things while in a shop" and manage their wages.³⁶ The paramount importance of instruction in the "3 Rs" and "practical" skills is evident in these comments.

The managers and the Department both insisted that individuals over sixteen or eighteen years of age should be removed from school and engaged in what they believed to be more useful duties.³⁷ Although there was no age limit on the school and the teacher taught pupils ranging from eleven to twenty years,³⁸ the manager removed most of the residents from school and sent them to domestic service after they reached fifteen years of age.³⁹ The managers maintained that it was pointless for young women to remain in school if they were over fifteen and showed little progress in their school work. Provision was made for these residents to receive one or two hours of revisionary schooling a month.⁴⁰

³⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.34.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p.112.

³⁷ *ibid.*: Johnson to Secretary for Education, 13 January 1913, CW 7/61/12.

³⁸ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.35.

³⁹ See nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

⁴⁰ Proposed syllabus for Te Oranga, 29 June 1906. Johnson to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1913, CW 7/61/12.

The fact that some educational facilities, however limited, were provided to residents over fourteen years of age, is evidence of a somewhat liberal stance on the part of the Education Department. Only a small percentage of young women over this age remained in school in the early twentieth century.⁴¹ The provision of revisionary education for residents who had left school was unusual in the light of developments in the wider community and was a liberal move in contrast with the Department's frequent attempts to limit the amount and type of education offered.

There were no apparent reasons for the Department to provide any educational facilities for such individuals. While there may have been no legal obligation, the Department and the staff may have been swayed by a more moral duty towards the older residents who had received little education prior to committal. For example, sixteen of the twenty-two new admissions in 1901 were over fourteen years of age, and of these, four had passed the Standard I exam, five had passed the Standard II exam, four had passed Standard III, two had passed Standard IV and one had not passed any school exam at all. These residents ranged from an eighteen year old who had only passed Standard I to a fourteen year old who had passed Standard IV.⁴² The Department and the managers considered it imperative that the residents possessed the necessary skills to assist them in managing their wages, ordering and purchasing items in a shop, and later, running household finances. The inclusion of arithmetic as the only academic subject taught to the older residents who had left school supports this proposition.⁴³ In a less altruistic light, the Department and managers were reluctant to send very poorly educated young women to service positions and cast reflection on the standard of education provided at Te Oranga.

41 Margaret Tennant, "Natural Directions. The New Zealand Movement for Sexual Differentiation in Education during the early twentieth century", in Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (ed), *Women in History. Essays on European Women in New Zealand*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1986, p.88.

42 Nominal rolls, 1901, CW 14.

43 The other subjects taught were needlework, cookery, health and moral instruction. Proposed syllabus for Te Oranga, 29 June 1906, CW 7/61/12.

Despite the Department's strictures against a liberal curriculum and its need to provide an education which did not approximate that available to children outside the institution, the academic education which was offered at Te Oranga was similar to that of other schools. The curriculum at most Department primary schools included such topics as mathematics, reading, writing, spelling, composition, dictation, history, geography, elementary science, hygiene and moral instruction, topics which were taught at Te Oranga. The curriculum at secondary schools was more varied and could include ancient and modern languages, advanced science, algebra, physics, botany and home science.⁴⁴ In some instances, the educational equipment available at the reformatory was more elaborate and of a better standard than that available to other students. Te Oranga maintained a well-equipped laundry, kitchen and sewing room, facilities which were not necessarily available to pupils of other schools.⁴⁵

The contrast between the liberal and restricted aspects of the education at Te Oranga may have been the result of the Education Department's uncertainty over the role and purposes of the institution. In some instances the Department placed limitations on the syllabus, claiming that it was too liberal, yet at the same time, provision was made for older residents to receive some schooling. The Department appears to have been confused over the balance to be struck between the punitive and reformatory aspects of the Home. The frequent comments made by officials concerning the "class" or "type" of residents detained at the institution suggest that there was a perceived need to punish such individuals, part of the punishment to be restricted educational facilities. Yet the very act of confining the young women in an institution such as Te Oranga served at times to enhance their access to a variety of educational amenities. Such contradictions within the actual process of confinement do not appear to have been recognised by the Department, intent on reforming and at the same time limiting the freedom and opportunities open to the residents. The "give and take" educational policy of the Department may be ascribed to a confusion and uncertainty over Te Oranga's role in the industrial school system.

⁴⁴ Fry, pp.10-22,34-67.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.109.

Moreover, the Education Department's policies at Te Oranga reflect a certain anxiety over the role of the Home as a penitential institution. Te Oranga was to reform and to punish, and some balance had to be maintained between the two. The totality of the total institution at Te Oranga was not complete: the Department was aware of its moral obligations to reform the residents and allow them access to benefits available to other young persons, yet it was also concerned to punish the young women and limit their opportunities.

The academic education was an "education for domesticity".⁴⁶ The young women were not encouraged to look beyond domestic service or marriage as careers, despite the fact that there was a range of new occupations opening for women in the early twentieth century. The education reflected a prevailing belief in the limited capabilities of the residents and the limited occupations supposedly open to such individuals.

Several reasons may be advanced to explain the unbalanced programme of training. First, it was commonly held that the individuals in such institutions had no need of an elaborate, academic education. It was believed that the residents of industrial schools and reformatories were destined to become domestic servants, farm and manual workers. The education programme in many institutions reflected this belief by not encouraging the young people to rise above their "station" in life. Most schools provided no more than an elementary education and instruction in the "3 Rs".⁴⁷ Some institutions removed the residents from the day school if they could read and write.⁴⁸ The residents of the schools were not, in general, provided with an education which would enable them to choose avenues of employment other than domestic service, factory or farm work.

⁴⁶ Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, p.71.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, pp.71-72; Platt, p.52.

⁴⁸ Williamson, p.321.

Moreover, it was maintained that the female residents in particular had no need of an extensive academic education, as most young women would leave the institution for domestic service and marriage. Some institutions which received both males and females reflected this belief by removing the female residents from an educational programme at a younger age than the males.⁴⁹ Education in domestic matters was considered to be the best form of training for girls and young women.⁵⁰ The idea that young women were in no need of a broad education was also prompted by a widespread belief that female juvenile delinquents were of low intelligence and could not assimilate complicated information.⁵¹ This may have been a reason for the Department's reluctance to instruct the residents of Te Oranga above the fourth standard.

The tendency to attribute insanity or mental retardation to women of all ages who were seen to be acting in an immoral, aggressive or "unfeminine" manner was not paralleled by a similar attitude to delinquent men. The actions of delinquent women were not seen as being prompted by economic or political motives, but by psychological sickness.⁵² In contrast, most delinquent men were held to be acting out of economic necessity rather than immorality. The supposed low intelligence of delinquent women, supported by "scientific" studies on criminal women, was used to justify the lack of importance placed on educational achievement and expectation in institutions.⁵³ In New Zealand schools, girls and young women were held to have a lower mental capacity and ability than their male counterparts. Such subjects as physics and mathematics were believed to be unsuitable and too difficult for females to comprehend and were given little attention in some girls' schools.⁵⁴

49 Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.321.

50 Brenzel, Daughters of the State, pp.71-72.

51 Schlossman and Wallach, p.81; Tylor, p.473; Willis, p.181.

52 Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", p.59; Anderson, p.47.

53 Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge, pp.89-123; Schlossman and Wallach, pp.78-80.

54 Tennant, "Natural Directions", p.93.

The limited academic educational programme offered at Te Oranga was to encourage the residents to look no further than domestic service. Several historians have commented on the shortage of young, trained domestic servants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.⁵⁵ The instruction provided at industrial schools would have contributed to a greater pool of trained domestic servants to meet the needs of society.

Industrial schools and reformatories were not the only educational establishments in New Zealand to exhibit a tension between the academic and industrial aspects of education, or a tension within the variety of industrial occupations taught. Although primary and secondary schools often had a more varied curriculum than industrial schools and reformatories, considerable importance was attached to industrial training, such as woodwork for boys and sewing for girls.⁵⁶ A particular type of industrial training for girls and young women was emphasised in secondary schools after 1900. Science subjects for such pupils were slanted towards hygiene and physiology, and a specific Home Science course was made a compulsory subject for girls in 1917.⁵⁷ The reasons for a biased curriculum in schools were similar to the reasons used to justify the training provided at industrial schools: that young women had no real need for an extensive academic education but should be equipped to handle their "natural" vocation in life, domesticity and motherhood. The emphasis on domestic training for girls and young women was part of a wider concern with the stability of the country, the race and the British Empire. Women's increasing entry into such paid occupations as teaching, factory work and commercial occupations was believed to be a reason for a variety of social ills including the declining birth rate, racial unfitness and wife-desertion.⁵⁸ The redirection of girls and young women towards the home through education was considered to be a major step in solving such social problems.

55 Bray, pp.2-4,10-12,15-19; Jean Holland, "Domestic Service in Colonial New Zealand", M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1976, pp.8-9,73-74; Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.298, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles'", p.494.

56 Fry, p.18.

57 *ibid.* pp.49-52.

58 Tennant, "Natural Directions", pp.89-90.

The academic curriculum and training offered to the residents of Te Oranga had some features in common with the contemporary school system, but the fact that Te Oranga was a form of penitentiary and that the residents were supposed to be punished, increased the possibility for conflict with regard to education and industrial training. The Education Department had complete control over the school curriculum and general training of the residents and was virtually free to impose its will over the type and amount of instruction provided, a freedom sometimes assumed by the school teacher and managers of the Home. At industrial schools and reformatories, unlike at other schools, the Department had no parental influence to whom to answer and justify educational policy, although the Department recognised the importance of public opinion. The parents of children in non-institutional schools were free to, and did, criticise the education system and curriculum. For example, some parents were reluctant to countenance any syllabus which strayed too far from an academic basis, believing that such a move would limit the number and status of occupations for which the students could qualify. Such a protest was particularly evident with the emphasis on domesticity and home science in girls' curricula.⁵⁹ The Education Department stood in loco parentis at Te Oranga, a position which justified its control over the residents, their education and training.

The industrial training at Te Oranga, like the education programme, reflected a tension between the confinement and reformatory functions of the institution. The principle of work, and of training for work, could be both a tool for reform and a mode of punishment.⁶⁰ Needlepoint could be a means of keeping the residents occupied while encouraging them to work and produce useful items. Yet the actual type of needlepoint used could be a form of punishment: the members of the third division were given plain rather than fancy sewing, the deprivation of advanced needlework being considered to be a punishment in the view of the managers and

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p.98.

⁶⁰ Foucault, pp.269-270.

the residents.⁶¹

The industrial training comprised both indoor and outdoor work. Although the latter incorporated some instruction in poultry and bee keeping, dairy work and gardening, the majority of the work was the maintenance of the grounds of the institution: tree-removing, grubbing lupins, wood-chopping and swamp-draining.⁶² While such tasks were hardly the rural occupations recommended in the 1902 regulations, they may have been tasks considered to be more appropriate for women. Rough outdoor labour was criticised by some as it was perceived to be damaging and "unsexing" for women.⁶³ Women were to remain feminine and womanly even when working hard.

In common with the academic education the industrial training moved away from a rural emphasis to concentrate primarily on domestic service. The residents were not, in general, taught to become rural housewives. In contrast with similar institutions in other nations, there is no evidence that the officials at Te Oranga deliberately placed the residents in rural areas for service positions.⁶⁴ Rather it appears that the young women were placed at service in homes around the vicinity of the institution or in Christchurch.⁶⁵ Small-scale poultry keeping and dairy work were skills which could be utilised in the urban or suburban areas.⁶⁶ Moreover, such work allowed the institution to produce its own butter, honey, wax and other products. The Department had urged that each institution should be, to a large extent, self-

⁶¹ Branting to Secretary for Education, 6 September 1910, CW 40/4/10.

⁶² AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.1.3.4.6.10.13.15.50.60-65; Scale to Secretary for Education, Proposed timetable for Te Oranga, 3 October 1912, CW 40/4/10.

⁶³ Marilyn Lake, "'Building Themselves Up with Aspros': Pioneer Women Re-assessed", Hecate, 7 (1981), p.14.

⁶⁴ Margaret Barbalet, Far From a Low Gutter Girl - The Forgotten World of State Wards: South Australia 1887-1940, Melbourne: O.U.P., 1983, p.196.

⁶⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.9.16.19.31.45.102.

⁶⁶ Erik Olssen has noted that such livestock as poultry and cattle were common within urban boundaries at the turn of the century, a feature which would have called for domestic servants to have some skills in dairy and poultry work. Erik Olssen, "Towards a New Society", in W. H. Oliver (ed) with B. R. Williams, The Oxford History of New Zealand, Wellington: O.U.P., 1981, p.253.

supporting.⁶⁷ Self-sufficiency would teach the residents useful skills and at the same time reduce the cost of maintaining the schools.

The emphasis on the attainment of useful and practical skills was exemplified in domestic training. The managers regarded this to be of considerable use to the residents. Branting noted that the training provided equipped the residents "to become capable women when they have their own homes".⁶⁸ Although the managers did believe in the principle of hard, outdoor work for the moral benefits it was supposed to impart,⁶⁹ similar advantages could be gained from domestic labour. One manager commented on the fact that some of the young women were seemingly averse to working outdoors and that they needed to be accustomed to laborious efforts, "or else Te Oranga is failing in its work of reform".⁷⁰ The reforms associated with hard physical labour were also part of domestic service and the management of households, both tasks which demanded considerable time and effort.

All of the residents were taught a variety of domestic topics such as cookery, sewing, laundry and housekeeping, and all were encouraged to be self-sufficient. Each young woman was responsible for the manufacture of her own clothing, a move which may have been as much prompted by financial considerations as by an attempt to encourage thrift, industry and usefulness in the residents.⁷¹ Some of the young women worked at particular tasks for which they received payment if they were members of the first division. Three paid and one unpaid resident assisted in the kitchen, one paid resident worked in the sewing room and twelve unpaid residents helped in the laundry. These positions, and those of general assistant, were rotated monthly to provide all with experience in different aspects of domestic service. In addition to this, each young woman was expected to do the housework

⁶⁷ AJHR, 1900, E1, xx.

⁶⁸ Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, CW 40/15/4.

⁶⁹ Williamson, p.314.

⁷⁰ Scale to Secretary for Education, 3 October 1912, CW 40/4/10.

⁷¹ AJHR, 1904, E3, p.8.

and clean the institution daily.⁷² Some were also used as personal servants for the staff members, performing such tasks as cleaning the rooms, arranging the fire, or, on some occasions, brushing the hair of attendants.⁷³ The practice of using residents as personal attendants was a feature of women's institutions in other nations, and was justified as a means of teaching the young women the "finishing touches" of domestic training.⁷⁴ Such work was not discussed by the management of the Home and it may be that the practice was to reduce the workload of staff members, or was considered a favour to select, well-behaved young women.

The labour of the residents was used in other ways by the officials of the institution and the Education Department. Until 1904, the young women mended the socks of the residents of Burnham.⁷⁵ This task passed savings onto the Education Department as well as providing the residents of Te Oranga with skills which it was believed they would need later. Unlike many other women's institutions in New Zealand and overseas, the labour of those committed to Te Oranga was not used for profit-making purposes.⁷⁶ The residents were not required to manufacture or launder articles for the wider community or other institutions. The manager used the proceeds from any items which the residents produced and which were later sold at local picnics, to purchase a range of articles: Christmas gifts, sports equipment and other recreational aids.⁷⁷ However, the time spent by the young women in sewing their own clothes, making the institution's bread, butter, cheese and other articles may be seen as residential labour being used for profit-making purposes, for these tasks would have passed on some savings to the Department.

72 Branting to Secretary for Education, 8 June 1906, CW 7/61/12.

73 AJHR, 1908, H21, p.55; Johnson to Secretary for Education, 19 July 1915, CW 41/17/3, Property, buildings etc.

74 Williamson, p.318.

75 AJHR, 1903, E3, p.15; Branting to Secretary for Education, 11 May 1904, CW 7/61/12.

76 Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge, pp.67-72; Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.295, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.494.

77 Beck, "The Development of the Child Welfare System", p.91.

The Department's reluctance to use residential labour for direct profit-making ventures may have been prompted by an unwillingness to engage in the competitive labour market and the government regulations this imposed. The Factory Acts required such institutions as women's refuges and church homes to register and function as factories if the labour of the residents were used for profit-making purposes, a regulation not acceptable to all institutions for the controls it placed on management and finances.⁷⁸ While there is no evidence that the Education Department contemplated exploiting the labour of the residents of Te Oranga for commercial purposes, it is unusual that the reformatory and other government industrial schools for girls and young women were among the few women's institutions in New Zealand which did not employ residential labour. It may have been that as Te Oranga was established as an educational institution, any commercial intrusion into the school would have been unacceptable to the Department's emphasis on education and the idea that the young women were receiving a wholesome training.

Branting believed that the residents should be taught all of the facets of home management. She roundly criticised the training at Mt Magdala which taught only laundry work, a programme she considered to be too narrow.⁷⁹ The residents of Te Oranga were given a "scientific" course of instruction in home management, including such topics as the laws of health, homecraft and basic home-nursing skills. Several historians have noted the professionalisation of motherhood and housekeeping in the early twentieth century in New Zealand and other nations.⁸⁰ The scientific topics of home economics and domestic science taught at Te Oranga reflect some features of this trend. The Education Department fully supported domestic science instruction at Te Oranga. One official noted that

⁷⁸ Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", pp.304-305.

⁷⁹ Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, CW 40/15/4.

⁸⁰ Erik Olssen, "Truby King and the Plunket Society. An analysis of a Prescriptive Ideology", New Zealand Journal of History, 15:1 (April 1981), pp.8-10,21-22; Schlossman and Wallach, p.78; Welter, pp.65-67.

a sound knowledge of the household sciences and arts may serve not to tie a woman more to the storeroom and the kitchen, but to enable her to get better results with the expenditure of less time and energy, by fitting her to apply to everything, simple and complex, within the household the master mind instead of the mind of the uncertain amateur.⁸¹

The industrial training at Te Oranga was primarily instruction and practice in domestic service. Although such skills as dress-making and laundry work could be applied to occupations other than service, the residents were not encouraged to enter other fields of employment.

Yet there is evidence of a tension about the particular type of training provided. The Department was concerned that the residents did not engage in factory work of any type. In 1911 the manager had received an offer that the young women be employed at packing spice for a local firm and being paid for their labour. This work was to be performed at the institution itself under the guidance of the usual attendants. Branting supported the offer and regarded the labour as a "nicer" occupation than laundry work, and one which could be taken up by individuals of delicate health. The Secretary for Education expressed concern over the offer, noting that it was "perhaps questionable that 'genteel' occupations of this kind be introduced into the Home, where the general atmosphere is that which pertains to home duties". The work was declined by the Minister for Education who recommended that it would be much better for the residents to be taught small fruit-growing and jam-preserving.⁸²

The Department's decline of the work was the consequence of a belief in the supposed moral benefits to be gained through domestic service, and the apparent lack of such advantages associated with factory work.⁸³ The Department believed that a proper moral upbringing rather than wages was the first priority for residents at service.⁸⁴ Factory work did not provide an adequate means of control or moral

⁸¹ *AJHR*, 1917, E1A, p.3.

⁸² Gibbes to Hogben, 24 June 1911, Hogben to Gibbes, 5 September 1911, CW 40/4/10.

⁸³ Gibbes to Hogben, 24 June 1911, Scale to Secretary for Education, 3 October 1912, *ibid*.

⁸⁴ Beck to Assistant Director for Education, 20 July 1917, CW 40/25, Licensing.

suasion over the young women. Moreover, such work did not instil any notion of deference into the workers, an important principle associated with domestic service, particularly if the workers were considered to be wayward and uncontrollable.⁸⁵

Domestic service was supported by the Education Department as a means of improving the morals of the residents of Te Oranga. However, in practice, domestic service was not the sanctuary the Department believed it to be. Margaret Tennant has observed that domestic servants comprised the majority of single mothers in women's rescue and maternity homes.⁸⁶ Domestic service was not necessarily a means to a moral, virtuous life. The insecurities of the work, the very real possibilities of the rape and sexual exploitation of female employees, the poor working conditions and the low pay rates meant that domestic service was not the most safe, attractive or lucrative occupation for young women.

The Education Department and the officials of Te Oranga do not appear to have been completely unaware of the possible dangers of service. One young woman maintained that the manager had advised her to lock her bedroom door at service in case her male employer should attempt to sleep with her. Branting hotly denied the allegation, although she did admit that she gave the residents a "general caution" before going to service.⁸⁷ Moreover, the Department had issued a memo to all industrial schools and reformatories in 1907 to the effect that no individual at service should share a bed with another person under any circumstances.⁸⁸ While such a regulation may have been issued to ensure the privacy and health of domestic servants it was also an attempt to protect domestics from unwelcome sexual advances and guard against the possibility of homosexual relationships.

⁸⁵ Barbalet, p.199.

⁸⁶ Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.499.

⁸⁷ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.32,133.

⁸⁸ Pope to managers of industrial schools, 5 November 1907, CW 6/12, Industrial Schools Act - proposed amendments.

Although the Education Department and the staff of Te Oranga were aware of the dangers involved in domestic service, they continued to present the occupation as the most beneficial and appropriate role for the residents. There are several reasons for this. Some of the explanations for the bias towards domestic service have been discussed above. It may be that in directing the residents to service, the officials at Te Oranga and in the Education Department were aware of the stigma attached to discharged residents of reformatories,⁸⁹ and of the difficulties faced by such individuals in gaining entry into the "respectable" occupations of nursing and teaching.⁹⁰ In 1908 Harrison had noted that all of the young women wished to become domestic servants or housewives when they left the institution,⁹¹ and the limited information on the destination of residents following their discharge suggests that many married shortly after and ceased to engage in the paid workforce.⁹² Only two of the young women who had married and "done well" and who had some contact with officials of the institution were described in any detail: one, who was to be married to a farm station manager at Fairlie, and another, who had become the manageress of the Farmers' Coop tearooms in Christchurch.⁹³ The eventual occupation of the young women appears to have vindicated the Department's and the staff's idea of their role.

Nevertheless, the instruction in domestic service at Te Oranga looked to the past and channelled the residents into one type of employment, a feature common to women's institutions in other nations.⁹⁴ Educating the young women of Te Oranga to domesticity was backward looking at a time when New Zealand women were

⁸⁹ For example, Beck noted in 1917 that there was a stigma attached to girls and young women who had been detained at Te Oranga, and that the institution was not well regarded by the residents or the public. Beck to Director for Education, 12 February 1917, CW 40/1/19.

⁹⁰ Williamson, p.319.

⁹¹ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.34.

⁹² Manager of St Mary's Home to Secretary for Education, 28 September 1909, Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, CW 40/15/4; Past inmates of Te Oranga Home, list of inmates discharged during 1917, CW 15/2, Series 15 - Industrial Schools, Miscellaneous Records, List of inmates discharged, 1917.

⁹³ Past inmates of Te Oranga Home, CW 15/2.

⁹⁴ Barbara Brenzel, Daughters of the State, p.72; Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, p.95; Williamson, p.319.

increasingly entering other areas of the paid workforce such as nursing, teaching, secretarial positions and factory work.⁹⁵ The Education Department was conscious of the fact that women worked in jobs other than domestic service, but held to the view that the "dignity" and "attractiveness" of service and household management needed to be restored for the benefit of society. Domestic service, the "noblest and most refining of all occupations for women",⁹⁶ was a training for motherhood in an age when motherhood, the "proper" sphere for women, racial fitness and the supremacy of the British Empire were believed by some to be under threat.⁹⁷ Yet domestic service was also seen as a means for "restoring" womanhood that was supposedly being lost by women's involvement in a range of paid, "unsexing" occupations. Service was one way to true and good womanhood, and one way of keeping women in a specific place in the social order.

The channelling of young women into domestic service positions was also prompted by concerns that women were becoming independent through other forms of work. Independent women, without male support were seen as a threat to the accepted social order and gender roles. The training programme of Te Oranga encouraged the adolescent girls and young women to be dependent individuals who relied on others for support and guidance. Most of the residents of Te Oranga had been independent prior to their admission. Many were taken from supposedly harmful and degenerate independent situations - "from brothels, from Chinese dens, from the open streets, from the company of dissolute parents"⁹⁸ - and placed in a dependent position in the institution. The training prepared the young women to enter another state of dependency. Domestic service simulated a family-style environment in which the residents were minor members, under the complete authority of the employers. The lessons taught from service - deference, respect, humility - were important features of dependency. Following the service the young

⁹⁵ Erik Olssen, "Women, Work and Family, 1880-1926", in Phillida Bunkle and Beryl Hughes (ed), Women in New Zealand Society, Auckland: George Allen and Unwin, 1980, pp.163-164.

⁹⁶ AJHR, 1917, E1A, p.3.

⁹⁷ Fleming, pp.9-10,21-22.

⁹⁸ AJHR, 1908, H21, vii.

women were expected to marry and enter yet another dependent situation, this time under the authority of a husband. "True" women were not independent beings, but individuals dependent on men for their status, livelihood and support.

The tensions evident in the management of Te Oranga - between its confinement and reformatory functions, between the academic and industrial training, and the particular type of industrial training - can be summarised and indeed explained by a contemporary who saw Te Oranga as "not a gaol or a prison but an educational institution . . . where the budding demi-monde are rescued and transformed into respectable and reliable slaveys".⁹⁹ Te Oranga was both an educational institution and a prison, a dual focus which led it to "rescue" and confine supposedly wayward young women and direct them to a "respectable", yet restricted type of employment. It may have been that Te Oranga, in common with some North American reformatories, was merely a way-station for girls and young women who would have arrived at a similar position in life had they not been confined in an institution.¹⁰⁰ Yet Te Oranga's status as an educational institution, and the fact that it was under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education meant that it was under some obligation to provide the residents with an education that would benefit them later.

The Department could decide whether to train the young women to become secretarial workers, factory labourers or "reliable slaveys". The emphasis on the latter was the result of a deliberate choice on the part of the Department, almost at liberty to make and impose its own rules on the industrial schools. The Department was free to decide the balance between the reformatory and punitive aspects of Te Oranga, between the academic and industrial training offered, and the specific type of industrial training. The tension between each of these was the consequence of the

⁹⁹ Quoted in E. Olssen and Andree Levesque, "Towards a History of the European Family in New Zealand", in P. G. Koopman-Boyden (ed), Families in New Zealand Society, p.11.

¹⁰⁰ Barbara Brenzel, "The Lancaster Industrial Schools for Girls: A Social Portrait of a Nineteenth Century Reform School for Girls", Feminist Studies, 3 (Fall 1975), p.51.

act of confining individuals in a total institution which governed most aspects of everyday life, and the Department's confusion over the actual purposes of Te Oranga as a reformatory.

CHAPTER 5.

THE STAFF.

"In reformatory work woman is the good mother. The pulse of the school or home throbs in her breast. She is the one to whom all look for comfort and relief".¹

The management of institutions by specialised staff was a feature common to many institutions over the last century and a half.² Although the minor staff members and attendants remained untrained, individuals with some knowledge, expertise or interest in the care of those committed to institutions were increasingly employed as managers or superintendents of total institutions.³ Staff possessing the correct moral qualities or technical abilities were held to have a considerable influence over the individuals under their charge, for in many institutions, the personality, training, beliefs and character of the staff and manager largely determined the treatment of those committed.⁴

Women were involved extensively in the administration of many institutions in the capacity of managers, minor staff members and attendants from the middle of the nineteenth century. Although women had worked as managers and other staff members in institutions before this time, their administrative role was greatly enhanced during the nineteenth century.⁵

1 Quoted in Platt, p.79.

2 Foucault, p.270.

3 Crowther, p.113; Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge, p.189; Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, p.71; Scull, Museums of Madness, p.16; Tennant, "Elderly Indigents and Old Men's Homes", p.18.

4 Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers, pp.76-77.

5 Charlotte Mackenzie, "Women and psychiatric professionalization, 1780-1914", in London Feminist History Group, The Sexual dynamics of history, London: Pluto Press, 1983, pp.107-114.

The expansion of women's management of institutions was due to a number of causes. During the nineteenth century there was a belief that as individuals, women were passive, caring, pious, domestic, submissive and morally superior to men.⁶ Such attributes were held to automatically equip women for a role in the management of institutions for individuals who were in need of the type of care and attention a woman could offer. Moreover, it was considered to be the particular responsibility of women to engage in institutional work, either as staff members of institutions or as members of philanthropic groups which established and reformed such places. Interest in saving the errant was held to be the proper domain and role of good Christian women.⁷

The role of women in institutions and reform movements was a combination of household, moral and social responsibilities. There was a considerable degree of support for women's management of institutions in such nations as the United States and Britain, for the work was seen as a natural extension of a woman's housekeeping roles.⁸ Women's managerial role was an affirmation and extension of the traditional domestic sphere, an appropriate task for a woman who wished to extend her housekeeping functions into the community. The work provided a career or interest for women which enabled them to combine both their traditional, household roles with the notion of social service and obligation.

Although women worked in a variety of institutions it was believed that two types of institution were the particular responsibility of women: women's institutions and children's homes. Estelle Freedman and Nicole Rafter have commented on the historical links between institutions for delinquent women and delinquent children which embodied the idea that as individuals women and children were soft, emotive,

6 Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.19,25,95; Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood", *American Quarterly*, 18:2 (Summer 1966), pp.151-174.

7 Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, p.22; Platt, p.75; Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.493.

8 Platt, pp.75-76.

dependent and malleable.⁹ The distinctively "feminine" skills possessed by women - chastity, piety, domesticity, morality - were considered to be important in the care of delinquent women and children and formed the basis of arguments for the specifically female administration of some institutions.¹⁰

Women's demand for control of women's homes has been interpreted by Freedman as "institution building" or the development of a public, female sphere to mobilise women and gain political power and experience.¹¹ Such female "institutions" rested on the belief that women were particularly suited to some public responsibilities because of their qualifications gained in the private, domestic sphere. Thus, women were suitable for managing reformatories because of their maternal, caring instincts. Some women's groups in New Zealand which based their arguments for female control of women's and children's institutions on the grounds of women's particular qualifications may have done so in order to gain political power, leverage and experience. The National Council of Women, for instance, argued that women should hold parliamentary seats for such reasons.¹² However, the major reason for demands for female control of institutions was women's unique predisposition for such work.

New Zealand organisations and individuals campaigned vociferously for female control and management of women's and children's homes. Such groups as the Society for the Protection of Women and Children, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the National Council of Women and the Canterbury Women's Institute called for this on the grounds that women were the most suitable individuals for working with members of their own sex and children.¹³ One member of the Canterbury Women's Institute, Eveline Cunnington, was particularly

9 Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.90-96,154; Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste" p.306.

10 Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.46,58-63,72,95.

11 Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building, 1850-1930", *Feminist Studies*, 5 (1979), p.513.

12 Tennant, "Matrons with a Mission", pp.67-70.

13 Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.297, "Matrons with a Mission", p.21.

outspoken in her demands.¹⁴ Not only did she call for the control of institutions by women, but also women's equality in all stages of the judicial process, from police and detectives, to senior posts in the Department of Justice and advisors to the Minister. She argued that women were not only specially suited to working with their own sex, but also that it was immoral and unfair that women offenders should have to deal with often unsympathetic male officials.¹⁵

New Zealand followed the example of other nations in employing women in the management of both women's and children's institutions. Although most women's institutions were managed exclusively by women,¹⁶ both men and women managed homes for delinquent children. In the 1900s such industrial schools as Burnham employed a married couple as the manager and matron of the school to give the institution a more homelike quality.¹⁷ There were, of course, less altruistic motives for employing a married couple in any capacity at an institution, for in many instances, the labour of the woman could be obtained at minimal or no cost as part of her husband's employment. The appointment of a gardener at Te Oranga was influenced by the fact that his wife had experience in poultry handling and could be interested in child welfare, presumably in an unpaid capacity.¹⁸

Not all of the industrial schools in New Zealand in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were staffed by both sexes. For example, men exclusively managed St Mary's, the Roman Catholic industrial school for boys and young men at Nelson. Following the inquiry into the management of this institution in 1900, the lack of women staff members was identified as a major problem of the school's administration. The Commissioner maintained that the entire dissociation of boys from women would act as a detriment to the proper development of the character of

¹⁴ Tennant, "Matrons with a Mission", p.56.

¹⁵ E.W. Cunnington, The Letters and Lectures of E.W. Cunnington edited by her Children, Christchurch, 1918, pp.65.70.98.

¹⁶ Tennant, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles'", pp.493-495.

¹⁷ Beagle, following p.97.

¹⁸ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 14 October 1915, CW 19/70/2, Box 6 Girls' Home Burwood - Gardener Attendant.

the residents, and that no institution could be properly conducted without the influence of women. The Commissioner went on to add that he was convinced that if there had been women employed at the school, many of the management problems would not have arisen. He felt sure that women would not have condoned the punishment given to some residents, and that they would not have allowed the boys to wear ill-fitting, insufficient and dilapidated clothing.¹⁹

The Commissioner's comments reflect the ideas embodied in women's role in the management of institutions in other nations. His statements exhibit an acceptance, or acknowledgement of the belief that a woman's influence could only benefit the management of an institution. The motherly, sentimental aspects of a woman would soften institutional life and impart a more normal, homelike and caring atmosphere.

The Education Department accepted the Commissioner's comments and recommendations that institutions should have the benefit of female staff members. The 1902 regulations stipulated that at least two women should be employed as staff members in each institution and that one woman should hold the position of matron. Married women who had experience in the care of children were preferred. Men were not permitted to hold the position of manager, teacher, attendant or officer of any female industrial school or reformatory. Male attendants could be employed at such schools only for specific duties considered to be unsuitable for women.²⁰

The regulations reflect a number of features evident in the management of industrial schools and reformatories elsewhere. The inclusion of at least two women on the staff of all institutions is indicative of the belief that women had something special and beneficial to offer. The motherly, sentimental aspects of women appear to have been the most important of these benefits. Moreover, women were particularly suitable for the exclusive management of those Departmental institutions which detained only young women and girls. The female staff of the institution would,

¹⁹ AJHR, 1900, E3B, pp.6-7.

²⁰ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, p.1295.

supposedly, be more understanding, sympathetic and appropriate to the needs of the young women detained in the school than male staff.

Yet the strictures against the employment of men in female institutions were not solely because of women's supposed suitability for the work. Implicit in the regulations was the belief that it was not morally proper for men to be in charge of adolescent girls and young women. Men who managed women's institutions were in a position to abuse their power and sexually exploit the women under their care. This was a feature of some women's institutions in the United States which men managed.²¹

The concern over the role of men in female institutions was also extended to casual workers who were called into the institutions for specific tasks. During renovations to Te Oranga in 1901 the Secretary for Education ordered that only married men of good character be employed on the construction site.²² While a new accommodation wing was being erected in 1908 the young women were not permitted to approach or signal to the workmen.²³ Fears about casual labourers were not confined to Te Oranga. The Canterbury Female Refuge was described as a wasteland as the land around the institution had not been developed for fear that the workmen would pose a security risk to the institution.²⁴ Despite such precautions, contact between residents of institutions and visiting workmen did occur. It was reported that a young woman in St Mary's Home in Christchurch had been made pregnant by the visiting milkman, an occurrence which prompted the management of the Home to strengthen the walls surrounding the institution.²⁵

In accordance with the regulations, all the staff at Te Oranga, with the exception of the gardener, were women. The Home was under the sole charge of the manager

21 Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.16-17.

22 Secretary for Education to Public Works Department, 28 August 1901, CW 41/17.

23 *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.48-49.

24 Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.304.

25 M. L. Roper, "The History of the Social Services of the Anglican Church in Canterbury". M.A. thesis, Canterbury University, 1943, p.47.

who was responsible to Education Department officials in Wellington. Although the Department preferred that the managers of institutions be married women with some experience of child-care, only two of the managers at Te Oranga had been married. The first manager, Ellen Branting was a trained nurse who had earlier held the position of sub-matron and later matron at the Samaritan Home in Christchurch, an institution which provided care for elderly men and women, and for single mothers.²⁶ Another manager, Ellen Hunt, was not married, but had served at Te Oranga for a number of years in the capacity of sub-manager prior to assuming the role of manager shortly before the closure of the Home.²⁷

While the management of total institutions by specialised staff may have been a feature of other institutions, this was not the case at Te Oranga. None of the managers had any particular training in child welfare work, although the nursing background of one and the long service of another qualified them for the position. Until recent times nursing experience was considered to be a good qualification for social work, as nursing embodied all of the supposedly womanly qualities of caring, service and nurturing, attributes which were important in child welfare work. Despite the image of nurses as ministering angels, the profession was also highly disciplined and authoritarian, skills which were useful in managing an institution. For example, the head matron of the Addington Women's Prison in Christchurch was a trained nurse.²⁸

Although the Department attempted to appoint only trained or capable women to the position of manager, the appointees were not always successful, and were not always supported by the Department. Following Branting's resignation from her post in 1912, the Department was unable to appoint a replacement with experience in welfare work. Until another manager was found, Branting's place was taken by a visiting officer, Mrs Scale. When the Department finally appointed a replacement,

²⁶ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.56; Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.501.

²⁷ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, p.81.

²⁸ Cunningham, p.148.

she proved to be unsuitable and left the institution after several months. Another woman, Eleanor Johnson, was appointed at the end of 1912, but owing to poor relations with the other staff, resigned in 1916. Her place was taken by Ellen Hunt.²⁹

In contrast with the managers, the majority of the minor staff members appear to have been young, unmarried women with little experience in the care of juvenile delinquents. The regulations outlined only a few requirements necessary for the task of working in an institution: that the attendants be kindly and judicious; that they obey the manager in all circumstances; and that each attendant was to set a good example to the residents in speech, manner, personal neatness, cleanliness, and respect for those in authority.³⁰ Such qualities did not necessarily result in efficient management. The frequent comments made by the managers and the Departmental inspectors suggest that many of the attendants were ill-suited for their positions and performed their work badly. The Department justified the strict enforcement of a rule of silence in the institution on the grounds that such a rule would encourage healthy activity in the residents, but it was admitted that the task of controlling the residents without the regulation was beyond the capabilities of the average attendant.³¹

Yet there were some staff members who had experience in the care of institutionalised women and children. One attendant at the Home in 1915, Miss Anderson, had previously been engaged in rescue work in England for nine years.³² An attendant who was charged with supervising the transfer of residents from the Home in 1918³³ had earlier been an official visitor to the institution.³⁴ There were other attendants who, if not experienced in the work, were at least interested in it if

29 John Beck, *Memoirs*, n.d., MSS A61, pp.15-16, Auckland University Library.

30 Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, pp.1294,1299.

31 E. Gibbes to Minister for Education, 11 October 1915, CW 40/3/16.

32 Interview notes, 9 September 1915, *ibid.*

33 Beck, *Memoirs*, p.16.

34 Kaye to Gibbes, 21 May 1912, CW 40/4/10.

one can judge by their length of service at the Home. One attendant who had joined the institution in 1902 retired in 1913.³⁵ Another started at the institution in 1906 and was still there in 1915.³⁶ Ada Harrison, the school teacher, was another deeply interested in the welfare of the young women in the institution.

Such experienced or interested attendants were the exception rather than the rule at Te Oranga. Although all of the attendants interviewed during the course of the 1908 inquiry stated that their object in working at the Home was a desire to reform wayward young women rather than pecuniary rewards, the expression of other expectations or opinions may have been disadvantageous to the security of their jobs.³⁷ Presumably, economic need was an important motive in influencing women to take up the work, a far cry from the humanitarian, caring ideals demanded by some women's groups.

In common with other industrial schools, Te Oranga experienced a high turnover of staff members. There were five staff vacancies in 1913, five attendants resigned in 1914 and another three resigned or were dismissed in 1915.³⁸ The frequent changes were the result of poor working conditions, low pay rates and quarrels with the managers. The attendants were expected to work for at least thirteen hours a day with half an hour for meals.³⁹ Most attendants were off duty for one afternoon and one evening a week, and one Sunday every month.⁴⁰ All of the attendants, with the exception of the school teacher, lived in the institution, close to the residents and the possibility of duty at all times.

Some staffing problems at Te Oranga may have been the consequence of the manager's authority. The manager was given the power to choose, appoint and

³⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.78: List of attendants at Te Oranga at 1 April 1913, CW 40/4/10.

³⁶ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.73: Gibbes to Minister for Education, 11 October 1915, CW 40/3/16.

³⁷ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.73-91.

³⁸ List of attendants at Te Oranga since 1913, Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 13 May 1914, CW 40/4/10; Gibbes to Secretary for Education, 11 October 1915, CW 40/3/16.

³⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.90, 118.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p.138.

dismiss staff, and alter their salaries and conditions of employment without Departmental direction.⁴¹ This degree of autonomy was potentially open to abuse. The Education Department ordered the 1908 Commission of Inquiry, in part, to investigate the dismissal of one attendant, Elizabeth Howden, who claimed that she had been treated unfairly by the manager. Branting had engaged Howden as a clerk at a salary of £60, a sum set by the Department. During the course of the employment Branting reduced the woman's salary to £52 and altered her duties to those of a general attendant.⁴² Although the Commissioner upheld Branting's actions and approved Howden's dismissal, the incident highlighted the power of the manager in staffing matters. The Commission recommended that every attendant should henceforth be supplied with explicit information regarding her conditions of employment and duties. This did not alter the manager's authority over the choice, appointment or dismissal of staff members.⁴³

The reality of the management of Te Oranga did not necessarily reflect the ideals behind the exclusive employment of women in female institutions. Women's management did not automatically guarantee good administration. Although Te Oranga was staffed exclusively by women, there were inquiries into the management of the institution, one of which specifically investigated the staff's allegedly unsympathetic treatment of the residents.⁴⁴ Such instances did not support the view of women's natural predisposition to care for delinquent young persons.

The 1908 inquiry inspired a public outburst which questioned the maternal qualities of some staff members. The New Zealand Truth's coverage of the inquiry portrayed Branting as a "miniature Almighty in the institution", describing her variously as a "hard-faced", "gloating", "unwomanly" and "mannish" matron.⁴⁵ Correspondents to local papers were particularly outraged at the assistance given by attendants

⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp.51-52.56.

⁴² *ibid.*, pp.54-55.

⁴³ Kaye to Gibbes, 21 May 1912, CW 40/4/10.

⁴⁴ Interview notes, 9 September 1915, CW 40/3/16.

⁴⁵ New Zealand Truth, 18 April 1908, p.5.

during instances of corporal punishment. One correspondent, "X", noted that no man would watch the "floggings" at the Home but it was a task that was taken up by the "tender sex".⁴⁶

The perceived lack of maternalism at Te Oranga was an inherent part of the expectations placed on women managing institutions. The staff were expected to be maternal, gentle and womanly, yet they were also expected to exercise a firm discipline in controlling their charges. While the concept of maternalism does embody some idea of control and discipline, it is not necessarily the same as that needed to administer a reformatory. The attendants at Te Oranga were unable to provide a caring, gentle atmosphere as well as keeping the young women under the control demanded by the Education Department and the public. Such a tension led to one aspect of management being sacrificed for another. It was a common feature of total institutions that "humanitarianism" or maternalism was downplayed in favour of effective or efficient management.⁴⁷

The gap between the Education Department's ideals of the management of institutions by women, and the actual practice of this at Te Oranga was due as much to the fact that women did not necessarily possess the desired attributes as it was to the actual nature of institutional life. The rules of silence, isolation and separation enforced at Te Oranga did not impart a kindly, homelike atmosphere. The institution itself was described as a grim, prison-like building.⁴⁸ Moreover, the Education Department expected the staff to maintain a tight discipline and to keep the residents under control. One inspector identified a number of disciplinary problems in the institution as the result of Johnson's laxness and her excessive sympathy and tenderness - supposedly womanly qualities - with the residents.⁴⁹ A profusion of maternal virtues appears to have been regarded as equally harmful to effective administration as the complete lack of such qualities. The conflict between

⁴⁶ LT, 23 November 1907, p.11.

⁴⁷ Goffman, p.79.

⁴⁸ Beck to Director of Education, 12 February 1917, CW 40/1/19.

⁴⁹ Walker's inspection report of Te Oranga, 19 May 1915, CW 40/4/10.

an effective and a kindly administration was not easily resolved. The Education Department castigated those staff members of Te Oranga who were considered to be too soft, and those believed to be too harsh.⁵⁰

The lack of sufficient staff guidelines and a high turnover of untrained attendants contributed to the staff problems at Te Oranga. Yet the nature of institutional life also affected the attendants. The staff of Te Oranga were as institutionalised as the residents. The fact that all attendants resided in the institution, worked and took their meals together, suggests that they, too, were part of the total institution. The perceived necessity for a harsh disciplinary system meant that the staff had to be an integral part of this, being present when corporal punishment was administered as well as enforcing the rules and regulations. Fears of masturbation among the young women meant that attendants had to sleep in or near the residents' dormitories. There seems to be little difference between the keepers and the kept at Te Oranga. While the staff had the freedom to come to or leave the school, the institution was just as much an ever-constant reality to them as it was to the young women under their charge.

⁵⁰ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.54,82.

CHAPTER 6.

THE RESIDENTS.

If one is to comment on the purposes of a total institution and assess its role in maintaining the social order, it is imperative that some examination be made of those considered to be sufficiently problematic to warrant their detention. An analysis of the backgrounds, ages and reasons for committing the young women to Te Oranga can provide some answers to the questions of why the Home was established and what its function was in society.

Historians have often bewailed the dearth of personal information surrounding individuals in the past. As the majority of women and men left no written record of their lives, it is difficult to reconstruct more than superficial impressions of their experiences using statistics and information collected by other individuals.

While the residents of Te Oranga left no written records, an impression of their experience in the Home can be constructed using information collected by the Education Department. Of the 278 young women who passed through the institution,¹ information has been collected on 253. The data on these individuals is not uniform owing to the scattered nature of the surviving records. The nominal rolls of all residents in Te Oranga between 1900 and 1910 have enabled a useful amount of information to be collected on the young women admitted to the institution over the period: their names, ages at committal, religion, place of residence and section under which they were committed. A file on the parental details of some residents has provided more information on a group of forty-seven young women admitted between 1906 and 1910. This, combined with other

¹ AJHR. 1902-1908. E3. 1909-1918. E4. Education: Special Schools and Infant Life Protection.

scattered records, allows a more detailed picture to be drawn of the experiences of some members of the Home.

Freedman, Rafter and others have observed that the majority of women committed to institutions in the past were charged with moral offences.² These offences, or "crimes against morality",³ included such misdemeanours as beggary, stubbornness, promiscuity, drunkenness and immoral behaviour. Unlike male delinquency, female offending was equated with sexual immorality and promiscuity, and female crimes were generally against the public order rather than persons or property.⁴

New Zealand industrial school committals for females exceeded males in only one category, that of association with such disreputable individuals as prostitutes and drunkards. Females comprised the minority of those committed for punishable offences between 1900 and 1918. In 1900, females constituted 7.3% of those convicted, but 52.8% of those committed for disreputable associations.⁵

The sexual and moral nature of women's offences often led to a harsh public attitude to the women concerned, seen to be crossing the proper role of women in society.⁶ Jan Robinson noted that considerable public outrage was directed at women offenders, not so much for the actual crime committed, but because they had broken an ideal sex role which demanded that good women be respectable, chaste and feminine.⁷

2 Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, pp.81-82,123-124; Brenzel, "Lancaster Industrial School", pp.43,45; Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.10-14; Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", p.292; Schlossman and Wallach, pp.72-75,84-87; Tylor, p.477.

3 Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, p.81.

4 Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", pp.41,184.

5 Beagle, Table 5-7, following p.191.

6 Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, pp.18-20.

7 Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", pp.25-28.

A similar attitude was held towards female juvenile delinquents who were charged with the same type of moral offence as adult women. Young women were charged for such misdemeanours as running away, stubbornness and promiscuity as well as the "adult" crimes of lewd behaviour and vagrancy. Young women were charged with both juvenile and adult offences for it was believed that, if left unchecked, one form of activity would lead to the other: a young woman's flirtations and adolescent romances could later turn into lewd behaviour and prostitution.⁸

Te Oranga was the only juvenile women's reformatory in the country, and as such, received the young women who were considered to be too immoral or uncontrollable for the industrial schools.⁹ Contemporary observers made frequent comments concerning the residents of the institution, invariably describing them as having low moral characters.¹⁰ While such comments may have indicated a bias on the part of the observers, they were also inspired by knowledge of the type of offences the young women committed. The residents of Te Oranga, like those of most other women's institutions, were charged with offences of a moral rather than criminal nature.

Table 1 shows the general reasons for which young women were admitted to Te Oranga between 1900 and 1918. The sample group is 202 out of the total of 278 who passed through the Home. The table indicates that only 32.1% of the group were committed for offences which carried a criminal charge. The majority of the group, 66.3%, were committed for moral offences. These charges included destitution, vagrancy, beggary, associating with disreputable persons and unable to be controlled, corresponding with sections 16 and 17 of the Industrial Schools Act. Another 1.4% were admitted following an agreement between their parents and the Education Department.

⁸ Brenzel, *Daughters of the State*, p.81.

⁹ *AHJR*, 1900, E1, xviii-xix.

¹⁰ For example, *The Press*, 3 December 1901, p.4, 9 December 1901, p.6, 9 November 1907, pp.6-8, 9 April 1908, p.6.

Table 1 - Section of Industrial Schools Act under which residents committed to Te Oranga

<u>16/1</u>	<u>16/2</u>	<u>16/3</u>	<u>16/4</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>
37	1	24	53	19	41	4	3	20

Source: New Zealand Statutes, 1882, Industrial Schools Act, sections 16-22, pp.166-167; Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

The sections of the Industrial Schools Act, 1882:

16/1 - having no means of subsistence, parents in indigent circumstances

16/2 - begging or receiving alms

16/3 - having no home or visible means of support

16/4 - residing in a brothel, or with a confirmed prostitute or drunkard

17 - uncontrollable

19 - convicted by a magistrate of a punishable offence and sent to industrial school

20 - convicted of a punishable offence by two Justices of the Peace

24 - admitted by an agreement between parents and Education Department

25 - sentenced to imprisonment but sent to industrial school

The majority of these residents had not committed any crimes against property or individuals, but had acted in a way which was not considered to be appropriate for young women. For instance, in 1906 New Zealand Truth carried a headline, "A Wild Life - Two Tarts that Took to the Town".¹¹ The report described the actions of two young women, Annabel Major and Maryann Broome, who were admitted to Te Oranga for being idle and disorderly and having insufficient means of support. The two, aged fifteen and sixteen years, had apparently travelled alone from Auckland to Wellington, where it was alleged by the paper, they had been "going it hot". They had led a "wild, hilarious life" in Wellington, "always in the company of spielers, and with those insects had frequented the gambling dens in the city". Major was sent directly to Te Oranga while her companion was sent to gaol for a month before rejoining her.¹²

While the paper provides a colourful portrayal of the young women's exploits, the account suggests that their offences were of a moral rather than a criminal nature.

¹¹ New Zealand Truth, 20 October 1906, p.3.

¹² Nominal rolls, 1906, CW 14.

although they were committed under sections 19 and 25 of the Act. Maryann's and Annabel's experiences indicate a tendency to fit the behaviour of the young women into legal categories. Outrage was expressed at the moral condition of the young women, yet the charges against them were of a criminal kind. The various sections and categories of behaviour defined by the Act were fluid and amorphous and offenders could be charged under one of a number of headings.

The experience of these young women exemplifies the dual functions of Te Oranga, both to reform and to punish. Te Oranga acted as a refuge for young women who had no means of support, or who had been residing in unsavoury surroundings. The institution attempted to protect these individuals from the wider community and educate them in social values and mores. Yet the institution was also a penitentiary for those young women who had broken some law. In this instance, the Home's role was to punish, and protect the community from unruly and criminal individuals. Annabel and Maryann represent a convergence of the two functions of the institution: while their committal may have been prompted by criminal behaviour, they were also confined in Te Oranga for the refuge and treatment it provided.

Annabel and Maryann had crossed the boundaries of appropriate behaviour for both children and women. There was considerable concern over the welfare of children and young persons in New Zealand at the turn of the century, reflected in legislation aimed at "protecting" these groups.¹³ Puberty in particular was believed to be an important time in forming the character of individuals.¹⁴ Adolescent girls who behaved in immoral ways threatened the belief that children should be innocent, dependent and in need of adult protection. There was a particular concern over teenage girls who were sexually experienced, for sexual activity was properly reserved for married adults.¹⁵

¹³ Graham, pp.62-78; McDonald, pp.47-48.

¹⁴ Schlossman and Wallach, pp.82-85.

¹⁵ du Bois and Gordon, p.15.

Maryann and Annabel had also crossed over the parameters of the appropriate behaviour for women. Rather than leading "wild" lives, visiting gambling parlours and associating with unsavoury individuals, women, like children, were expected to be chaste, subdued and moral.¹⁶ Women who crossed the boundary of acceptable behaviour were perceived as threatening to the general social order. The turn of the century was marked by attempts to save and restore New Zealand women to "respectability".¹⁷ Such institutions as Te Oranga were to play a key role in this process.

The committal of many young women to Te Oranga was a means of controlling their sexuality and incipient sexual activities. Schlossman and Wallach have commented on the large number of female juvenile delinquents in Chicago during the Progressive era who were charged under the loose heading of "immorality": the young women had exhibited signs of having sexual intercourse or displayed a tendency to have it some time in the future.¹⁸ While such a blanket description was not made of the residents of Te Oranga, a number of the young women were admitted to various maternity institutions around Christchurch, some of which provided care mainly for women having their second or subsequent child.¹⁹ Moreover, the residents were generally described by the staff of the Home, the Department and public observers as being sexually experienced. During the 1908 inquiry the Commissioner made frequent comments concerning the sexual exploits of the residents, activities euphemistically described as disease, sin, vice and degradation.²⁰ On their entry to Te Oranga, and on their return after absconding, all the young women were given a compulsory medical examination by the manager to check for signs of venereal disease.²¹ A medical officer also noted that masturbation

¹⁶ Gorham, p.6; Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", pp.49,158; Welter, pp.151-174.

¹⁷ Robinson, "Of Diverse Persons", p.265; Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.240. "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", pp.492-494, "Maternity and Morality", pp.28-50.

¹⁸ Schlossman and Wallach, pp.71-72.

¹⁹ Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.501.

²⁰ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, ii.vii.

²¹ *ibid.*, pp.76-77,113.

was frequent and was a "vice" acquired by the young women prior to their committal.²²

Committal to Te Oranga attempted to curb the sexual activity of the young women by placing them out of "danger" and instilling into them the correct notions of propriety and respectability. Once in the institution, contact with the opposite sex was restricted: high fences were erected to keep out peeping "larrikins".²³ Contact with males while at service was also restricted. In 1915 Geraldine Shand was at service in Rakaia. Following "trouble" with a male on the property who looked on the young woman as "fair game", Georgina was sent back to Te Oranga.²⁴ Any signs of masturbation or lesbianism were quickly repressed: residents were not permitted to fidget in bed and any intimate physical contact between the young women was punished.²⁵

The idea that one function of Te Oranga was to control the sexuality of young women is supported by an examination of the age at which the residents were admitted and the number of years they remained. Table 2 shows the various ages at which a group of 202 of a maximum of 278 young women were committed to the reformatory. The residents ranged from eight to nearly twenty-one years of age, although most were admitted in the thirteen to sixteen years age bracket. Table 3 shows the number of years 178 residents remained at the institution, ranging from a few days to twelve years. Most young women remained from four to seven years, being discharged when they reached twenty-one years of age.

²² *ibid.*, p.77.

²³ Branting to Secretary for Education, n.d., CW 41/17.

²⁴ Interview notes, 9 September 1915, CW 40/3/16.

²⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.2,14,23-24,29,77.

Table 2 - Age at committal to Te Oranga

<u><10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20+</u>
4	2	6	11	26	37	40	31	16	21	5	3

Source: Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

Table 3 - Number of years detained in Te Oranga

<u><1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10+</u>
7	10	24	15	24	32	29	25	7	2	3

Source: Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14; list of inmates discharged and list of inmates discharged 1917, CW 15/2; List of inmates at Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, CW 40/4/10; Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, CW 40/15/4; Johnson to Secretary for Education, 15 July 1915 and 16 July 1915, CW 41/17/3.

Many of the younger individuals were committed for being vagrant or residing with a disreputable person, usually a prostitute.²⁶ Such associations and activities were not appropriate for young women. Wilma Hayes and Ivy Trask, both aged fifteen years, were admitted to the Home in 1909, charged with having no home or visible means of support. Both of the young women were described as confirmed prostitutes: they had been found loitering in the streets at night, visiting sailors and behaving in a promiscuous manner. After having run away from their homes on several occasions, they were admitted to Te Oranga on the request of their parents.²⁷

The committal of young girls to a reformatory not only removed them from heterosexual temptations, but it allowed the institutions to receive young women at a sufficiently early age to attempt to influence their behaviour. Yet there was some criticism that the young women were admitted at the wrong age. The Education Department observed a reluctance to send girls to industrial schools at a sufficiently

²⁶ Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 1909: Pope to Secretary for Education, 31 May 1909, CW 40/4/10.

early age to ensure some reformation, noting that "there are some girls who, if taken in time, could be trained to habits of morality and diligence".²⁸ There was a belief that adolescent girls, unlike their male counterparts, were difficult to influence for the good if left too late. Younger girls were considered to be more amenable, tractable and malleable than older ones.²⁹ Nevertheless, the Education Department and the staff of the institution believed they had some success in reforming the residents, regardless of their age. In 1908 the Commissioner congratulated the staff on their success in "sorting out", "breaking in" and gradually "humanising" the young women.³⁰

Such terms are reminiscent of training wild animals to domesticity and indicate the low regard in which some members of the Home were held. Some of the residents alleged that Branting often called the young women "beasts" and described their behaviour inside the Home and prior to committal, as "beastly".³¹ Such residents as Maryann and Annabel were portrayed as acting in an almost non-human manner in associating with "insects", gambling and leading a colourful life. The animal imagery suggests that one of the primary tasks of Te Oranga was to make these young women into acceptable human beings and specifically, acceptable women. If the residents did not respond to the treatment, the management of Te Oranga could react with a dehumanising form of punishment, such as hair cutting.

Detaining the young women in the schools for a number of years not only increased the possibilities for reform, but it was a way of keeping residents "safe" until their discharge. The lengthy confinement of individuals in other institutions was justified on the grounds that it kept them safe from society, and vice versa.³² Te Oranga detained the majority of the residents from four to seven years and attempted to

²⁸ AJHR, 1901, E3, p.6.

²⁹ Schlossman and Wallach, pp.82-83.

³⁰ AJHR, 1908, H21, vii.

³¹ *ibid.*, pp.14-15, 17.

³² Tylor, p.480.

make them sexually inactive until release. Because of this, the very process of confinement was a form of rehabilitative treatment.³³

However, Te Oranga, the place of safety or place of refuge, was not necessarily so. Some residents who had been sent to domestic service positions returned only to be sent to the Canterbury Female Refuge or the local Maternity Home for the maternity care provided. Mavis Robinson was admitted to Te Oranga in 1905 from Napier, charged with having no visible means of support. Following her return from service in mid-1909, Mavis, aged nineteen or twenty, was sent to the Refuge for eight months. Four months later she was back at service.³⁴ While there was no real supervision over those sent out to domestic service, the young women were still under the nominal control of the reformatory and the managers who selected the positions. Although the Home attempted to curb the sexuality of the residents by committing them at an early age and keeping their virtues "safe" until release, "success" was not guaranteed.

Nevertheless, as an agency for clearing the streets of immoral young women, Te Oranga received public support. The closure of the Home in 1918 generated considerable concern among some groups. In early 1919 the Canterbury branch of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children held a meeting to protest the closure and the dangers of releasing many of the young women to be a "menace" to the community. Later in the year, the group received a report from a deputation of women's groups who had approached the Minister of Education protesting at the closure and presenting "evidence" of residents "who were known to be moral degenerates and who were at present loose in the community".³⁵

Such concern suggests that to some in the community, the operation of Te Oranga was partly concerned with eugenic ideas. The 1909 Industrial Schools Amendment

³³ Schlossman and Wallach, p.76.

³⁴ Nominal rolls, 1905-1910, CW 14.

³⁵ Records of the Canterbury branch of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children, Minutes of Meetings, 8 April 1919, 4 September 1919. Thanks to Dr Margaret Tennant for this information.

Act had allowed for the continued detention of individuals after they had reached twenty-one years of age if their release posed a threat to society.³⁶ Discussion surrounding the 1911 Mental Defectives Bill had also illustrated a concern by some individuals to segregate and institutionalise unfit members of society.³⁷ Some people envisaged the closure of Te Oranga as propagating the spread of the unfit by releasing immoral and defective young women with low sexual morals into the community. The sentiments were repeated in the 1920s. One woman called for the reopening of Te Oranga to prevent an increase in the numbers of illegitimate children.³⁸ During the course of the Committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders in 1923 a number of petitioners demanded that Te Oranga be reopened to control defective, uncontrollable and incorrigible young women.³⁹

Ignatieff has noted that public support for penal institutions did not rest on their capacity for controlling crime, but the part they played in maintaining the social order.⁴⁰ Te Oranga was supported by the public, for its attempt to maintain order by confining morally improper young women, not for its attempt to control juvenile crime. Its role of clearing the streets was both a real and a symbolic act: real for the young women who were committed to the Home, and symbolic for those who were still in the community. Te Oranga's effect did not simply rest on the fact that it confined some immoral young women, for the mythic and symbolic weight of the institution was directed at all women.⁴¹

³⁶ New Zealand Statutes, 1909, Industrial Schools Amendment Act, section 2, clause 1, p.153.

³⁷ Fleming, p.31.

³⁸ The Press, 29 March 1923, p.5.

³⁹ Petitions from Otago Hospital Board, Society for the Protection of Women and Children, Mothers' Union and Addington Visitors. H54/79, Hospital Boards: General, Proposed Treatment of Mental Degenerates, Committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders - Replies from the Medical Profession to the questionnaire, Health Department Files, National Archives, Wellington.

⁴⁰ Ignatieff, A Just Measure of Pain, pp.209-211.

⁴¹ Ignatieff, "Total Institutions and Working Classes", p.169.

There is evidence of a carceral network of penitential institutions in Christchurch at the turn of the century. The centre supported a number of homes for delinquent, homeless and pregnant women, as well as several groups interested in the welfare of women and children. Te Oranga played its part in the network through the interest of these organisations, and by sending young women to other institutions in the city.

Tables 4 and 5 show the extent of the network between Te Oranga and other institutions. Table 4 indicates the institutions to which the young women were committed prior to their admittal to Te Oranga. Of a total of 278 residents in the Home, at least 123 had been transferred there from another institution. Table 5 shows the other institutions around Christchurch to which residents of Te Oranga were sent temporarily. At least 100 of the 278 residents in Te Oranga were transferred to another institution in the city. These figures do not include young women who were admitted to the same institution on more than one occasion.

Table 4 - Admissions to Te Oranga from other institutions

<u>Burnham</u>	<u>Caversham</u>	<u>Chch Rec Hm</u>	<u>St Mary's</u>	<u>Vincent de Paul</u>	<u>Wgtn Rec Hm</u>	<u>Misc</u>
20	45	10	17	6	12	13

Abbreviations: Christchurch Receiving Home, Wellington Receiving Home, Miscellaneous.

Source: Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14; AJHR, 1908, H21.

Table 5 - Transferrals from Te Oranga to other institutions

<u>Asylum</u>	<u>Mt Mag</u>	<u>St Mary's</u>	<u>Refuge</u>	<u>Sam Home</u>	<u>Gaol</u>	<u>Misc</u>
3	53	25	10	2	2	7

Abbreviations: Mt Magdala, Samaritan Home, Miscellaneous.

Source: Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14; AJHR, 1908, H21; Manager of St Mary's, Auckland to Secretary for Education, 28 September 1909, CW 40/15/4; Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, *ibid*; Johnson to Secretary for Education, 16 July 1915, CW 41/17/3; Interview notes, 9 September 1915, CW 40/3/16.

Most of the individuals who were transferred to Te Oranga from another institution were admitted in the first four years of the Home's opening. All of the thirteen residents admitted in 1900 had been transferred from other schools. Of the twenty-two admitted in 1901, 72% or 16 had been in another institution. By 1910 this proportion dropped to 52% of the total admissions for the year.⁴² The high proportion of transferred residents in the early years of the Home's operation was a consequence of the reorganisation of the industrial school system in 1900 which altered the structure and composition of the institutions. Burnham, initially an industrial school for children and young persons of both sexes, was restructured to become a reformatory for boys and young men. The girls and young women detained at the institution were sent to other schools. The twenty known young women who were transferred from Burnham to Te Oranga were all admitted to the Home between 1900 and 1903.

Yet between 1900 and 1910, the period for which the fullest statistics are available, the residents transferred to Te Oranga from other institutions comprised over half of the annual admissions. These young women were generally those whom other institutions found difficult to manage. During the 1908 inquiry into Te Oranga the matrons of Caversham and the Auckland industrial schools both stated that they sent incorrigible young women to Te Oranga.⁴³ Te Oranga also received young women from a number of private industrial schools. Such Roman Catholic institutions as St Joseph's, Wellington and St Vincent de Paul's, Dunedin, all sent young women to the reformatory. As these institutions were gazetted as industrial schools to cater for boys and girls of any age who did not require reformatory treatment, it can be supposed that the young women sent to Te Oranga were deemed to be uncontrollable.⁴⁴

⁴² Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

⁴³ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.95,99.

⁴⁴ Gibbes to Under-Secretary for Justice, 30 October 1913, CW 40/1A, Special and Industrial Schools System - general.

Te Oranga not only received young women from other schools, but also sent them to other institutions, particularly in Christchurch. The majority of the 100 residents indicated in Table 5 were sent to either the Roman Catholic Mt Magdala Asylum or the Anglican St Mary's Home. Many of the young women were transferred in the first few years of the reformatory's operation. Of the twenty-two new residents admitted to the Home in 1901, nine were sent to St Mary's and seven to Mt Magdala; none of the new admissions of 1910 were sent to other institutions.⁴⁵ The reason for sending out the young women on a temporary basis was the consequence of an accommodation shortage at Te Oranga. The School Medical Officer reported in 1903 that there was sufficient accommodation for only twenty individuals in the reformatory and that the other thirty residents were temporarily housed in Mt Magdala or St Mary's.⁴⁶ Following the completion of new accommodation wings at Te Oranga in 1903 and 1910, and the closure of St Mary's in 1909,⁴⁷ the number of residents sent out to these institutions declined.

However, the decision to send some residents to Mt Magdala in particular was not necessarily motivated by the accommodation shortage at Te Oranga. Although Branting claimed in 1909 that the want of adequate classification at the Home was the sole reason for sending residents to Mt Magdala,⁴⁸ the fact that both Catholic and Protestant young women were sent there, and that the asylum had a sufficient classification system,⁴⁹ suggests that the temporary relocation of some Te Oranga residents was made for disciplinary reasons. Following a fire at Te Oranga in 1915 the worst behaved individuals were sent to Mt Magdala on a temporary basis.⁵⁰ Between 1900 and 1918 this institution became the largest women's home in the

⁴⁵ Nominal rolls, 1900-1910, CW 14.

⁴⁶ *AJHR*, 1903, E3, Education: Industrial Schools, p.14.

⁴⁷ Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.501.

⁴⁸ Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1909, CW 40/15/4.

⁴⁹ Manager of St Mary's, Auckland to Secretary for Education, 23 September 1901, *ibid*.

⁵⁰ Pope to Secretary for Education, 15 July 1915, CW 41/17/3.

country with up to 300 residents.⁵¹ It was gazetted as a reformatory in 1909 allowing those who had absconded from the institution to be imprisoned directly, implying a harsher discipline than at other institutions.⁵²

Individuals who needed a firmer discipline than that provided at Te Oranga were also sent to Mt Magdala. For instance, Irene Eade, a young Anglican woman, was admitted to Te Oranga in January 1905. Described as a "quiet and well-behaved girl" in May 1905, she was soon in trouble at the Home, receiving punishments for fighting, insolence and absconding from service and from the institution. On her return to the reformatory Branting sent her to Mt Magdala until her discharge in 1911.⁵³

Te Oranga also used a number of other institutions around Christchurch to temporarily house individuals. These institutions included the Canterbury Female Refuge, the local sanatorium and gaol, the Salvation Army Maternity Home, the "lunatic" asylum, the Samaritan Home and the Convalescent Home. Many of the residents sent to these institutions appear to have been transferred on a short term basis for health reasons. Adrienne Rush was transferred to Te Oranga from Caversham in 1903. Two weeks after her admission she was sent to the local sanatorium, and then, four months later, to the Salvation Army Rescue Home. In October of the following year she was sent to reside with some friends, where she died from tuberculosis and asthenia a month later.⁵⁴ Maggie Finn was admitted to the Home in 1900 from Burnham to which she had been committed in 1888. In early 1901 she was sent to reside with a local woman, and in June of that year, sent to Mt Magdala. At the end of the year she was sent to the Refuge. A year later she was sent to Mt Magdala again, where she remained until discharged in 1906.⁵⁵

51 Tennant, "Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles", p.501.

52 New Zealand Statutes, 1909, Reformatory Institutions Act, sections 17,25, pp.339,341.

53 List of inmates at Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, CW 40/4/10: AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.135-137: Nominal rolls, 1905-1910, CW 14; Past inmates of Te Oranga, CW 15/2.

54 Nominal rolls, 1903-1904, CW 14.

55 *ibid.*, 1900-1906.

Some residents were sent to these institutions primarily for disciplinary reasons. Annie Green, transferred to Te Oranga in 1905 from the Samaritan Home, was sent to the local "lunatic" asylum for a month in 1906 for treatment after she threatened to commit suicide. Shortly after her return Branting sent her to the Samaritan Home, claiming that Annie was "nervous" and acting in strange ways. Annie maintained that she had found it difficult to control her temper while at the reformatory due to her annoyance with other residents. A staff member of the Samaritan Home noted that Annie looked with "perfect horror" on the thought of having to return to Te Oranga.⁵⁶ Annie's apparent good behaviour during her confinements in the Samaritan Home suggests that the discipline and residents of that institution were more to her liking than those at Te Oranga. The discipline at the Samaritan Home may well have been looser than at the reformatory for the institution housed elderly men and women as well as single mothers having their second or subsequent child.⁵⁷

While Te Oranga was part of a carceral network of institutions in Christchurch, it was also part of the individual carceral networks of the young women detained at the reformatory. For some, Te Oranga was the first of a number of institutions to which they were committed. Vera Walters was sent to Mt Magdala from Te Oranga in July 1915 for her continual misbehaviour at the Home. She was discharged from the institution in 1916. A report of 1920 noted that she was not doing well and was currently in the Essex Maternity Home, formerly the Refuge.⁵⁸ Two other residents, Daisy Cooper and Mere Hautapu, were in the Addington Prison in 1920.⁵⁹ For other residents, Te Oranga was the last of a series of institutions to which they had been committed. Gladys Dunnington was first committed to Te Oranga in 1905 from the Caversham industrial school. On the recommendation of a Departmental

⁵⁶ AHJR, 1908, H21, pp.36,39,109.

⁵⁷ Tennant, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles'", p.501.

⁵⁸ Johnson to Secretary for Education, 14 September 1915, CW 40/3/16: List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2; Tennant, "'Magdalens and Moral Imbeciles'", p.501.

⁵⁹ List of inmates discharged, and list of inmates discharged in 1917, CW 15/2.

inspector who considered Gladys to be a "good little girl", she was transferred to the Wellington Receiving Home to be with her sister. Gladys was readmitted to Te Oranga in 1910, again transferred from Caversham. Her residence in institutions ended with her discharge from the reformatory in 1913.⁶⁰ For some young women, confinement in the reformatory was their only recorded encounter with institutional life. Lucy Hunter was committed to Te Oranga from Christchurch in 1904, convicted of a punishable offence and was described by Stewart in 1905 as not a "naughty girl". She remained in the institution until her discharge in 1911. A report of 1920 noted that she had married and was doing well.⁶¹

Of the 278 residents who were committed to the institution, more detailed information has been collected on forty-seven who were committed between 1906 and 1910. The survival of scattered pieces of data for this period has enabled a more complete picture to be drawn of some of the young women in Te Oranga.

Table 6 shows the character of the parents of forty-seven individuals committed to the Home between 1906 and 1910. The young women's parents were slotted into one of a number of behavioural categories drawn up by the Education Department. These categories included both a physical and a moral judgement of the parents concerned, and the inclusion of the category "unfit" suggests an influence of eugenic ideas on the Education Department. That some parents were listed as dead or unknown may have been an obvious fact to any observer. Yet the categories of good, bad, questionable, and mentally and physically unfit or disabled imply a moral assessment of the parents' character on the part of the individual collecting the information. Such terms as "good" or "questionable" can encompass a vast range of meanings, depending on who is providing the descriptions. The terms are, in fact, meaningless, and say more about those collecting the information than the subjects.

⁶⁰ Nominal rolls, 1905-1910, CW 14; List of inmates of Te Oranga, 25 May 1905, CW 40/4/10; List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

⁶¹ *ibid.*

Table 6 - Character of parents of residents of Te Oranga, 1906-1910

<u>Deserter</u>			<u>Dead</u>			<u>Unfit</u>			<u>Good</u>			<u>Bad</u>			<u>Unknown</u>			<u>Questionable</u>		
B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F
0	0	0	1	4	7	0	0	1	19	11	6	1	1	3	3	2	1	1	4	4

B=both parents; M=male; F=female.

Source: Character of state of parents of children admitted to Te Oranga 1906-1910. CW 15/6. Particulars precedent to admission.

Despite the shortcomings of these character assessments it is significant that most of the parents were described as being of good character. This evidence does not support the frequent comments made by the Education Department that one of the major causes of growing juvenile delinquency in New Zealand was poor parenting.⁶² Yet the "examples" set by parents to their children may have been seen as important. Barbara Brenzel has noted the significance of the examples provided by the mothers of young women committed to reformatories. Mothers were supposed to provide good role models for their daughters. Those who defied such prescribed familial roles were considered to be more of a bad influence on their female offspring than inadequate fathers.⁶³ Table 6 indicates that mothers figured more prominently than fathers in the categories labelled as unfit, dead and bad. Mothers also appeared less frequently in the category labelled as good. Although the differences here are not substantial they do suggest that some residents were coming from homes and mothers whom the Department considered to be less than adequate.

Table 7 shows the legitimacy of the parentage of the same forty-seven residents. Once more, these figures do not support the Department's contention that the young women were coming from illicit backgrounds, for only seven of the cases were noted as illegitimate. Of these seven, only one's parents were noted as bad, the

⁶² AHJR, 1900, E1, xviii, 1917, E1A, p.3.

⁶³ Brenzel, Daughters of the State, p.118.

remainder being listed as either good or unknown.⁶⁴

Table 7 - Parentage of residents of Te Oranga, 1906-1910

<u>Legitimate</u>	<u>Illegitimate</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
39	7	1

Source: Character of parents of children admitted to Te Oranga 1906-1910. CW 15/6.

There appears to have been no immediately obvious reason for the Department to collect this information, for such details were seldom noted by either the staff of the Home or the Department. However, it may be that the information was collected to act as a guide to explain the subsequent behaviour of individuals in the reformatory. For example, Annie Green, as noted earlier, was admitted to the local asylum in 1906. The staff at Te Oranga were not surprised by this, for it was known that her mother had died a "raving lunatic" in a similar institution.⁶⁵ Esther Phillipps was transferred to Mt Magdala in 1915 on account of her continual bad behaviour at Te Oranga. Johnson noted that Esther was a "violent, defiant girl" who was continually threatening to "do away" with herself. Esther's father was described as a "respectable" man who had married again; Esther's mother was a "very bad" woman.⁶⁶

The character categories and their use in assessing the behaviour of the residents suggests an influence of eugenic ideas in the Education Department. Several officials connected with Te Oranga or the Department were interested in eugenic theories. Hogben was a member of the Wellington Eugenics Education Society and H.W. Bishop, the commissioner of the 1908 inquiry, was president of the Canterbury branch. Two Education Ministers, Fowlds and Hanan, were also sympathetic to the

64 Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga, 1906-1910, CW 15/6.

65 Nominal rolls, 1906, CW 14: AJHR, 1908, H21, p.38.

66 Johnson to Secretary for Education, 19 July 1915, CW 41/17/3.

eugenics movement. The Department also gave permission to Miss Macgeorge, the secretary of the national Eugenics Education Society, to deliver talks on heredity and eugenics at Te Oranga.⁶⁷ Officials of other institutions were aware of the alleged importance of heredity in influencing the behaviour of offspring. The officials of the Christchurch Samaritan Home were cognisant of the possibility that dissolute parents could taint the character of their children, and it was noted that some of the women entering the institution to give birth to their second or third illegitimate child were themselves the illegitimate children of unfit parents.⁶⁸

No case studies or case books have survived on the residents of Te Oranga. Although the managers of all industrial schools were expected to maintain a daily register of the number of residents in the institution, a punishment register, a medical journal, a visitors' book and a school record book, they were not expected to keep detailed files on all of the residents.⁶⁹ Because of this, a superficial reconstruction of case studies of a number of individuals committed between 1906 and 1910 has been drawn from a variety of sources. The subjects of the studies have not been chosen at random, for they do not purport to draw a general picture of life for all in the institution. Some have been selected for the ample evidence available: some have been chosen as the "success stories" of the administration while others portray the failure of this; some others have been chosen for the fact that they attest to the pathetic and unfortunate life led by some individuals committed to Te Oranga. Whatever the motives behind the selection, the case studies still stand as reflections of the management of the institution.

Two of the studies, Annabel Major and Maryann Broome, have already been discussed in another context. Both of these young women went on to lead a chequered life in Te Oranga. Maryann was the only resident admitted to Te Oranga

⁶⁷ Fleming, pp.18,21,73.

⁶⁸ Tennant, "Indigence and Charitable Aid", p.314.

⁶⁹ Regulations under Industrial Schools Act, pp.1294-1296.

between 1906 and 1910 whose parentage was unknown. It was uncertain if she were legitimate or not, a reflection of the fact that her father was listed as unknown and her mother as bad. Maryann, a young Roman Catholic, was admitted to the Canterbury Female Refuge four months after her committal to Te Oranga: she returned to the reformatory seventeen months later. At the end of 1909 she was sent to service, returning in October 1910. The day after her return from service she committed suicide by phosphorus poisoning through swallowing matches.⁷⁰ Annabel had a similar background to Maryann. She was a young Roman Catholic whose parents were unknown. She was sent to Mt Magdala at the end of 1906 where she remained for three years. She absconded from the institution at the end of 1909 and was written off the roll.⁷¹

Maryann and Annabel were two of several young women admitted to the Home who had unfortunate, shocking and even fatal experiences. Janet Larkin was admitted to the reformatory in January 1906 from Auckland, committed for having no visible means of support: she was illegitimate and the character and whereabouts of her parents unknown. Upon her admission to the Home she was sent to the Refuge, returning to Te Oranga ten months later. Just three months after her return Janet received the first in a long series of punishments for infractions of the rules. Most of Janet's offences were minor: indecent talk; insolence; impudence; insubordination; refusal to work; threatening to abscond; and frequent fighting with the other residents. Between March 1907 and February 1908 Janet was punished on eighteen separate occasions, the most frequent of any individual in the Home at the time. Not surprisingly perhaps, Janet was variously described as a bad influence on others and the most insolent resident in the reformatory and was placed in the third division. A report of 1920 noted that she had married after leaving the institution.⁷²

⁷⁰ Character of parents of children admitted to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/6: Nominal rolls, 1906-1909, CW 14.

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² Nominal rolls, 1906-1910, CW 14; Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/6: *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.136-137; Letters of residents to Branting, 8 October 1910, CW 40/4/10; List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

Astrid Swain was admitted from Christchurch in 1906 aged fifteen years, having earlier been confined in Mt Magdala from where she had absconded. She was a young Roman Catholic, illegitimate, although her parents were described as good. Several months after her committal Astrid absconded from the Home and did not return. She was written off the records following the notification of her marriage in 1907 when she was aged sixteen years.⁷³

Beagle and Brenzel have both noted that the marriage of discharged residents signified a successful reformation.⁷⁴ While the management of Te Oranga often viewed the marriage of the young women as a successful reformation, this was not always so. Katherine Blair was committed to Te Oranga from Hastings in 1910 aged fifteen years. She was a legitimate Roman Catholic and both her parents were described as good. Six months after her admission she was sent to the local Refuge. She was discharged from the Home in 1914. A report of 1920 noted that she had married but had gone bad.⁷⁵ For Katherine, marriage was not a sure sign or opportunity of reformation.

These young women could be described as some of the Home's failures, individuals who were not obviously "reformed" by the training and teaching provided. There were other residents who may be seen as "success stories" of the administration. Myrtle Johnson, a fifteen year old, was committed to Te Oranga from Wellington in 1907: she was legitimate and her parents were dead. Myrtle was interviewed by the Commissioner during the course of the 1908 inquiry and questioned about her impressions of the Home. Unlike many other residents interviewed, Myrtle painted a rosy picture of life in Te Oranga. She claimed that she always had plenty to eat, plenty of clothes, ample play and that she wanted for nothing; in fact, she would just as soon stay in the institution as go back to her home. Following her discharge

⁷³ Nominal rolls, 1906-1907, CW 14: Branting to Secretary for Education, 17 October 1910, CW 40/15/4; Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/2.

⁷⁴ Beagle, p.200; Brenzel, Daughters of the State, p.164.

⁷⁵ Nominal rolls, 1910, CW 14: List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

Myrtle moved to Australia where it was reported that she was doing well.⁷⁶

While Myrtle was a "success story", dependent on the institution and content with her life there, there were other residents who can more properly be labelled as a success for the administration. These were the young women who had bad records prior to committal and while at the institution, but who eventually "did well" after discharge. Effie Emmerson was admitted to Te Oranga in 1907, aged fifteen years and charged with having no means of subsistence. She was legitimate and both her parents were described as good. Effie was not a model resident at the institution: at the beginning of 1908 she was given three strokes of the strap as punishment for attempting to abscond, and in 1915 was one of the unmanageable residents sent to Mt Magdala. At the time of her transfer, Effie was over twenty-two years of age, and may be assumed to be one of the young women the Department felt compelled to retain after they had reached twenty-one years, the normal age for discharge. She was eventually released, aged twenty-two or twenty-three years, having been detained for ten years. A report of 1920 noted that she had married, was doing well and had adopted a child.⁷⁷

Gracie Brock, admitted in 1910, had a similar experience in Te Oranga. At fourteen years of age she was admitted to the Home from Christchurch for being uncontrollable: she was legitimate, although her father was listed as questionable and her mother as bad. By the middle of 1911 Gracie had been placed in the third division. In May of that year she received a punishment of twenty-four hours in the cell and two meals of dry bread for refusing to work, threatening to run away or commit suicide, misbehaving for a considerable period of time and surreptitiously writing a note to another resident. A report of 1920 noted that Gracie was married and doing well.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Nominal rolls, 1907-1910, CW 14: Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/6; AJHR, 1908, H21, p.70: List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

⁷⁷ Nominal rolls, 1907-1910, CW 14: Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/6; AJHR, 1908, H21, p.137: List of residents admitted to Mt Magdala, 16 July 1915, CW 41/17/3; List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

⁷⁸ Nominal rolls, 1910, CW 14: Character of parents of children committed to Te Oranga 1906-1910, CW 15/6; Scale to Secretary for Education, 22 May 1911, CW 40/4/10; List of inmates discharged, CW 15/2.

The Department of Justice noted in 1968 that "the law which is invoked against females, and particularly adolescent girls, is in many cases an attempt to regulate sexual behaviour by legal sanctions".⁷⁹ This was a trend which was not confined to the late twentieth century, for the laws invoked against the residents of Te Oranga at the turn of the century have also been shown to be attempts to regulate incipient and precocious sexual activity. In receiving young women committed for such "offences", Te Oranga played its part in attempting to maintain a social order which required women and children to be chaste, innocent and respectable. The institution received the support of the public for its role in this. The reformatory was considered to be the best place for immoral young women, for not only did it protect them from the dangers of society, but perhaps more importantly, it protected society from them.

⁷⁹ Department of Justice, Crime in New Zealand, Wellington: Government Printer, 1968, p.235.

CONCLUSION.

The management of Te Oranga operated on three levels: to protect, punish and reform delinquent young women. There were inconsistencies and conflicts between and within each of these levels. Some of the problems were due to conditions in the Home, or Departmental ideals, while other tensions arose from the nature of institutionalisation.

An examination of how Te Oranga was managed illustrates the gap between the aspirations of the Education Department and the actual administration of the institution. The Department's aspirations were expressed most fully in the reorganisation of the industrial school system in 1900 and the issue in 1902 of the regulations governing the management of juvenile institutions. Yet neither the reorganisation of the schools nor the regulations took into account the varieties between institutions and the problems inherent in their management. The administration of reformatories was to be judicious, kindly and homelike. These conditions were difficult to emulate at Te Oranga, prison-like in appearance, surrounded by a high fence and cut off from public view. Hogben called for the strict classification of individuals in institutions, yet the accommodation shortages at Te Oranga made this impossible until 1910. The regulations which were to guide the managers of schools were often insufficient and staff were compelled to formulate their own rules, such as Branting's restrictions on correspondence between the young women and relatives.

Goffman's model of total institutions is useful in explaining some aspects of the management of Te Oranga. The institution attempted to fully subjugate the individual and achieve a measure of uniformity among the residents. The young women of Te Oranga were left with some decision making powers - as infractions of the house rules suggest - but most daily decisions were made for them: how to

dress, when to sleep, when and what to eat, with whom to associate, what to read, when to speak, how to behave. One purpose of the rules was to make the young women dependent on the institution for guidance and eventually lead to their reform.

The staff in Te Oranga were as much subjugated as the young women under their charge. The attendants, like the residents, were instructed when and what to eat, when and where to sleep, and they could be called to duty at any time. The regulations of the institution equally affected the attendants for their participation in hair cutting and corporal punishment could be just as humiliating to them as to the residents.

Several levels of control operated in Te Oranga. The young women were accorded a certain amount of self-control in making some of their own decisions. The residents were controlled by the attendants who, in turn, had to answer to the manager of the institution. Although the manager was responsible to Education Department officials, she had considerable administrative freedom. The Department's administration of Te Oranga was answerable to the wider community. At times the regime of the Home was seen to be too harsh - such as hair cutting and corporal punishment - and the Department was compelled to answer to the public, sometimes through an official inquiry, and give reassurance that the institution was managed adequately. Public support for Te Oranga rested partly on the belief that the institution was run along just, humane lines.

The levels of authority operating in Te Oranga suggest that the Goffman model of total institutions may not be completely applicable for the reformatory. The Department's responsibility to the public and justification of its administration of the institution reflects a certain degree of public anxiety over the role of the Home. While society approved of incarcerating the young women, their treatment had to be just, suitable for women and in accordance with normal social rules and patterns of behaviour. However, the public was never content to let the Department have complete authority. The informal checks of Official Visitors, clergymen, women's

groups and interested individuals as well as the formal checks of public inquiries served to keep some level of public supervision over the administration of the institution. Society may have been eager to erect total institutions to house deviant and dangerous groups, but these institutions were never allowed to become completely total and divorced from the wider community.

Although Te Oranga was separated from the community by both physical and symbolic barriers, the institution did not operate in a vacuum. Many of the Home's management procedures were formalised social norms. Yet occasionally, the management devised rules not generally reflected in the wider community. Such punishments as hair cutting, the punishment dress and extensive solitary confinement were perceived as unusual and even unnecessary by many members of the public who clamoured for an end to the practices. That the institution was not completely free to formulate such procedures supports the contention that the New Zealand public was not fully comfortable with the idea of total institutions.

Te Oranga served a number of functions and played a variety of roles in society. The institution had a welfare function, acting as a refuge to care for destitute, neglected and indigent young women who were seen to be in need of some form of protection from the wider community. The Home was a penal institution, confining young women who had been in prison, or who had been committed to the reformatory in lieu of imprisonment. In this role, the Home incarcerated and punished criminal young women who were perceived to be posing a danger to society. Te Oranga was also a reformatory, receiving young women who had broken some unwritten social law and crossed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. The institution sought to reform these young women through a programme of discipline and education in normal social values and activities.

The institution's reformatory role can be labelled as social control. The Education Department attempted to regulate the behaviour of one sector of society, female juvenile delinquents, seen to be deviating from an accepted social norm. Committal to Te Oranga was an indication that society was not prepared to tolerate "immoral"

and unacceptable behaviour from young women. This message was sent to all young women, not only those confined in the reformatory. The institution stood as both a symbol and a reality of the state's power.

While it is simple enough to state that the management of Te Oranga represented an example of the attempted social control of female juvenile delinquents, the reasons, motives and purposes of this need to be explained. In analysing the reasons for the control of delinquent young women, the purposes behind the actual establishment of the institution become more clear.

To suggest that the management of Te Oranga was an exercise in social control is not to suggest that the techniques used to supervise the residents were successful. The fact that a comprehensive disciplinary system was devised to maintain a semblance of order suggests that the controls did not necessarily work effectively. The fact that some residents did not become the "successful" members of society sought by the management again suggests that controls may have been imposed on, but were not always fully accepted by, the young women. In the absence of sufficient details on the "success" in reforming individuals, it is not possible to comment on the effectiveness of the controls. However an inability to gauge the relative success of the treatment should not rule out analysis of the controls which were attempted. Endeavours at controlling groups considered to be deviant reveal just as much about society and social order as those attempts which were successful.

Mayer has noted a number of reasons suggested by historians to explain the concept of social control. The motives of those attempting to impose controls have been interpreted in one of three ways. Firstly, the dominant groups in society attempt to control less powerful groups for nostalgic reasons, imposing a lost social order. Secondly, a group broadly labelled as capitalists, asserts control over another group to ensure the maintenance of a stable labour pool for industrial enterprises. Finally, a rising professional middle class attempts to control others in order to enhance their prestige and status in society.¹

1 Mayer, "Notes towards a working definition of social control", pp.18-19.

It is possible to identify some of these motives behind the establishment and subsequent management of Te Oranga. The training techniques and programmes employed at the institution have nostalgic overtones. Education and industrial training schemes both attempted to turn back the clock and convince young women that the household was the best place for them. The training programmes attempted to blinker the young women and direct them to domestic service, marriage and motherhood. The regime did not encourage the residents to broaden their horizons and look beyond "traditional" women's work. In following such a programme, Te Oranga was part of a New Zealand wide movement which concerned itself with eugenics and racial purity, represented by attempts to restore the women of the country to family life. The training techniques employed at Te Oranga were not forward looking but were rooted in traditional and stereotypical images of women's "proper" role in society.

Furthermore, both the training schemes sought to provide a ready labour pool of domestic servants for New Zealand housewives. The ubiquitous domestic servant issue was of great concern for New Zealanders at the turn of the century. Such women's institutions as Te Oranga provided the facilities and human resources to train domestic servants and attempt to ease the shortage of good, reliable, docile workers.

Yet there are more obvious reasons for the establishment of Te Oranga. The major purpose of the institution was to confine criminal and immoral young women, protecting both them and society. The institution endeavoured to teach the young women self-control, and attempted to transform them into respectable citizens. More specifically, the management of Te Oranga sought to mould the residents into good, respectable women.

While these motives go some way in explaining the purposes of the establishment and management of Te Oranga, they do not provide a complete answer. Nicole

Rafter, using gender as a tool of analysis, observed that the social control of women as women takes many forms, all of which are directed towards influencing those who do not adhere to their prescribed social roles. Women's prisons, refuges and reformatories formalise this control. She goes on to note that the management of women's reformatories was not only to rescue and reform the residents, but was concerned with the definition of gender and the proper social role of women.² Te Oranga's role was to protect and punish, and to produce good women.

Te Oranga was a reformatory for delinquent young women, a group perceived as distinct from delinquent young men.³ Taking consideration of gender rather than class, one can discern four distinct motives behind the social control of the young women at Te Oranga. The residents were encouraged to become "normal" or non-deviant; they were taught to become domestic; they were encouraged to become dependent; and primarily they were taught to become feminine, good women.

A major aim of Te Oranga was to make the young women into normal, good citizens. This aim was not confined solely to women's institutions. By virtue of their titles, such institutions as prisons, workhouses, psychiatric hospitals and reformatories were established to receive and treat groups and individuals labelled as problematic, deviant and abnormal. Te Oranga received young women perceived as aberrant and attempted to transform them into normal, acceptable members of society who took heed of established standards of behaviour appropriate to women.

The staff of Te Oranga and the Education Department generally considered the young women to be abnormal individuals who needed the type of treatment the institution provided. The attendants often resorted to an all-embracing definition when referring to the residents. For instance, the staff maintained that the behaviour of the young women was so bad that they could not be controlled without recourse

2 Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", pp.288,307.

3 For example, see AHJR, 1903, E1, xxii.

to corporal punishment.⁴ Moreover, the attendants did not believe that any of the young women could be trusted with proper library facilities, as they would most certainly tear out the pages of the books and write obscene messages on them.⁵ Yet there were individuals who were described as good, and others whose behaviour was exemplary, but who were detained in the institution until they reached twenty-one years. In general, the residents were portrayed as abnormal and in need of reformatory treatment. After all, Te Oranga was established for uncontrollable and vicious young women: as noted by Goffman, if not uncontrollable or vicious, why would they be there? The blanket tag of abnormality seemed to justify the institution's role in the maintenance of the social order.

The concept of normality is, of course, difficult to define, for it changes over time and between individuals. Matthews observed that such deviances as madness are unable to be defined: "any and all behaviour can be called mad, depending on the social context, the values held by and the relationship of power between the judge and the judged".⁶ The attributes of normal behaviour are never elaborated.

The young women in Te Oranga were considered deviant for they had committed crimes and crossed the boundaries of usual behaviour for both women and children. However, not all the young women were criminals and some laws they had broken were unwritten rules. The residents were morally aberrant, and as such, they threatened the smooth operation of the social order. The detention of such young women at Te Oranga was not only to make them normal and attempt to inculcate respect for and obedience to society's rules and norms. The establishment of Te Oranga was also an attempt to lodge the young women firmly in a place in society. Specifically, the residents were encouraged to adhere to a traditional view of women's natural role.

⁴ AJHR, 1908, H21, iii.

⁵ Walker to Secretary for Education, 11 June 1914, CW 40/42/1, Libraries.

⁶ Matthews, pp.21-22.

One way in which the management of the institution attempted to turn the residents towards a more traditional view of women's sphere was by encouraging them to become domestic. The emphasis on domestic training and domesticity was an important feature in all women's institutions in New Zealand and other countries. While such training may be seen as an attempt to alleviate the shortages of reliable domestic servants, it was also an attempt to encourage the young women to become good homemakers.

In New Zealand during the early twentieth century domesticity, motherhood and family life were held by some to be the most important and most suitable occupations for women.⁷ The stress on domestic training, termed by some historians as the "cult of domesticity", was espoused for two major reasons.⁸ The turn of the century was marked by eugenic concerns and one of the reasons for New Zealand's alleged racial inferiority and declining birth rate was held to be the increasing entry of women into the paid workforce and the subsequent apparent neglect of family responsibilities.⁹ An emphasis on domesticity and motherhood through education was believed to be a way of encouraging and directing women to this path.¹⁰ A related reason for the stress on women's domesticity was that work other than that of traditional labour was held to "unsex" women and make them unfit for motherhood. Moreover, such work as factory labour or academic occupations was believed to threaten feminine virtues of chastity, submissiveness and innocence.

The Education Department slanted the academic curriculum at Te Oranga towards homemaking and domestic skills. This training was complemented by the industrial education which directed the young women to domestic service and marriage as the only suitable careers. The residents of Te Oranga were not encouraged to look beyond these limited horizons, for the institution provided instruction in no other

7 Olssen, "Women, Work and Family", pp.174-175.

8 Olssen and Levesque, p.9.

9 Fleming, p.9.

10 Olssen, "Women, Work and Family" pp.167-169.

occupations. Unless they were unsuitable, all residents over fifteen years were sent out to service.¹¹ The Department did not consider other forms of employment, such as factory or clerical work to be appropriate. The school appears to have suited its description as a school which endeavoured to produce reliable slaveys.

The emphasis on domestic training was believed to make the residents more womanly. Not only did it provide them with such feminine skills as cooking, sewing and cleaning, but it was held to put pure thoughts in their minds.¹² As such, the domestic training can be seen as part of the process of transforming the residents into normal young women, equipped with skills possessed by other women in society. The educational and industrial training was not revolutionary or forward looking, but looked to the past and a perceived ideal of women's proper role in society.

The attempt to make the residents into normal, domestic young women was complemented by attempts to curb their independence and transform them into dependent individuals. Even in adulthood, women were to remain child-like - innocent, dependent and in need of male guidance and support.¹³ The attempt to keep women dependent on men for sustenance and guidance was as much an endeavour to define women's place in society as it was an attempt to maintain the dominance of men.

One of the aims of Te Oranga was to make the young women dependent individuals who looked to the institution for guidance, as they would later look to their parents, spouses or employers. In the attempt, the institution sought to regulate as much of their activity as possible, a feature noted by Foucault in other penal institutions.¹⁴ The Home was run along a strict timetable and from morning rise at seven o'clock

¹¹ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.132-133.

¹² *ibid.*, pp.81,82,112.

¹³ Gorham, p.6.

¹⁴ Foucault, pp.149-156.

to bedtime between eight or nine in the evening, the activities of all residents were prescribed.¹⁵ While the institution did not control all areas of daily life, the staff made most of the daily decisions in the lives of the young women. In this way, the residents were encouraged to look to the regime of the Home and the attendants, and supposedly respond positively and change their behaviour. Prior to their committal to the institution, some of the young women had been without family support and had been living off their own earnings and making their own decisions.¹⁶ Independency was cited as a major cause of growing juvenile delinquency in New Zealand.¹⁷

The institution used a number of techniques to encourage the residents' dependency. Control of many decisions has been noted. The management also fostered dependency by treating all the residents as young children. Rafter observed that the infantilisation of individuals was a feature of women's institutions which attempted to make their charges dependent.¹⁸ The staff of Te Oranga spoke of, and treated, the young women as girls and young children, despite the fact that the Home consistently housed young women of eighteen years and older. The residents were given no choice in deciding their personal appearance, for all wore similar clothes and dressed their hair in the same austere fashion.¹⁹ All young women, regardless of age, were subjected to corporal punishment by being strapped through their nightgown. The strapping of older residents in particular aroused a considerable degree of public outrage during the 1908 inquiry, as the public considered the institution to have crossed the bounds of decency and respect in strapping young women of twenty years of age. The process of infantilisation and treating the young women as children served to reinforce the idea of their need for protection and guidance.

¹⁵ AHJR, 1908, H21, p.139.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, vii.

¹⁷ AJHR, 1900, E1, xviii, 1917, E1A, p.3, 1918, E4, Education: Special Schools and Infant Life Protection, p.2.

¹⁸ Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", p.299.

¹⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.8.

The attempt to make the residents dependent was stated most emphatically in all facets of the training provided at the institution. The occupations to which the young women were directed, domestic service and marriage, were based on an idea of the dependence of women on others. Domestic service was seen as a particularly suitable task for the young women of Te Oranga, for it taught them the correct morals and values of deference, humility and service to others in addition to household skills. Furthermore, domestic service was akin to a family environment in which the servants were the junior, and thus the dependent and obedient, members.²⁰

Even after their release from Te Oranga, many of the young women remained dependent on the Home for companionship and guidance. The continued dependency of the young women on the reformatory after release was a natural and inevitable consequence of their incarceration in the institution. Separated from their own families, the young women were forced into surrogate family relationships with other residents and the attendants. To some residents, the manager was their mother and the institution their preferred home.²¹ Others formed close relationships with members of the institution, planning futures together after release or upon absconding.²² Some individuals who settled in Christchurch maintained a correspondence with the Home, or visited it periodically.²³ In one instance, an ex-resident sent the institution part of her wedding cake.²⁴ While these gestures may have been prompted by favourable memories and experiences in Te Oranga, they were also the consequence of confining the young women together and forcing their dependence on each other and the institutional regime.

20 Rafter, "Chastizing the Unchaste", p.299.

21 AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.57-70.

22 *ibid.*, pp.5.7.8.16.20-21.

23 *ibid.*, pp.57-70.

24 The Press, 19 November 1907, p.8.

The three forms of social control evident at Te Oranga - normality, domesticity and dependency - were part of an attempt to make the residents into good, feminine women who knew their place in society. Incarceration in Te Oranga was more than just an attempt to curb female juvenile delinquency and immorality. The emphasis on normality, domesticity and dependency combined in an attempt to transform the wayward young women into ideal, good women who possessed all the skills, habits, virtues and requirements necessary for women to be accepted in society.

The staff at the institution all maintained that their primary objective was to teach the residents to become good women. Each attendant was interviewed during the course of the 1908 inquiry and each affirmed the role of the institution to be transforming the residents into respectable women.²⁵ Yet neither the Education Department nor the attendants elucidated the definition and requirements of the good woman. The training and emphasis of the institution suggested that a good woman was domestic, normal, law-abiding, dependent and aware of her place in society. The residents were to be trained to appreciate and aspire to the virtuous life. One aspect of this was to restrict and control the young women's incipient sexuality. Another was to expose them to womanly refinements. One Departmental official commented that the best way of influencing the young women for the good was by cultivating their sympathy with the higher and purer life. He recommended that lady visitors should teach the residents singing and piano, as well as singing, reading and playing to them.²⁶ The school regularly received visits from women who gave talks on eugenics and heredity,²⁷ botany and social conversation,²⁸ as well as singing and music lessons.²⁹ In addition, the young women spent several hours each week in prayer, religious services and bible classes.³⁰ The residents' views of

²⁵ AJHR, 1908, H21, pp.74-89.

²⁶ AJHR, 1903, E3, p.15.

²⁷ Fleming, p.12.

²⁸ AJHR, 1904, E3, p.8.

²⁹ AJHR, 1908, H21, p.99: Scale to Secretary for Education, 3 October 1912, CW 40/4/10.

³⁰ AJHR, 1904, E3, pp.7-8, 1908, H21, p.139: The Church News, 1 April 1912, p.8, Church House, Christchurch; Scale to Secretary for Education, 3 October 1912, CW 40/4/10.

these attributes are not recorded, although many interviewed during the 1908 inquiry believed that the purpose of their incarceration was to enable them to become good women, a task seen by some to be successful.³¹

While no firm details are available on the success of the institution in transforming the behaviour of the residents, the Education Department believed itself to be successful in the task. One of the duties of the Commissioner in 1908 was to assess the extent to which the Home had been successful in reforming the residents.³² He noted that between 1900 and 1908 a total of sixty-two young women had passed out of the institution's control. Of these, thirty-two were described as good, thirteen as fair, eight as bad, three were missing, three were "mental defectives" and three had died.³³ While the judgements of good or fair were not defined, the Department considered the results to be very good. At the closure of the Home in 1918 the Department provided another assessment of its success in making good women of the residents. Prior to the closure, the manager had instituted a policy of placing out at service as many individuals as possible to reduce numbers in the Home. By the end of 1918 a total of thirty residents had been licensed out, twenty-three of whom were described as satisfactory. Of the remainder at service, two had been imprisoned for theft, one had given birth to a child and four had been sent to the Caversham Industrial School. Between January 1918 and June 1919 sixty-eight residents were completely discharged. Of these, sixty-three were described as doing well, nine of whom had married. Of the remaining residents discharged, three were in prison and two were at the Salvation Army Maternity Home. A total of twenty-eight young women had been sent directly to Caversham on the closure of Te Oranga. Of these, seven were still in the institution, fifteen were doing well at service, one was at Mt Magdala and five had been sent to reside with relatives. Of these five, three were doing well, one had given birth and was returned to the institution and one had returned of her own accord.³⁴ The Department was satisfied

³¹ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.3.8.18.23.30.59.64.67-69.

³² *ibid.*, i.

³³ *ibid.*, vii.

³⁴ *AJHR*, 1918, E1, p.48, 1919, E4, *Children's Welfare and Special Schools*, p.6.

with these results.

Several historians have noted that the incarceration of women differed markedly from the incarceration of men, both in the purposes of confinement and the management of the institutions.³⁵ The differences were illustrated in New Zealand juvenile institutions. The Burnham reformatory was managed quite differently from Te Oranga. The men's institution was larger, with more land, buildings, facilities, staff and residents.³⁶ Unlike Te Oranga, almost half of the residents at Burnham had been convicted of a punishable offence.³⁷ For that reason, the disciplinary system was harsher than at Te Oranga, with corporal punishment extensively employed in favour of such other punishments as badges of degradation - hair cutting or the runaway dress.

The purposes of Burnham were also distinct from those of Te Oranga. Burnham was run along semi-military lines: the young men performed drill with model rifles, and the manager conducted holiday camps for the members of the first division in a military fashion.³⁸ The daily routine of the institution was also militarised: buglers woke the residents and the manager held several formal military-style parades during the day.³⁹ An ex-British Army Sarjeant-Major administered the detention yard where the attendants sent the most incorrigible individuals.⁴⁰ Burnham, it seems, sought to make transform its residents into fit, obedient and masculine figures through a programme of harsh discipline and military drill.

A number of historians have studied the development of the concept of the good or true woman. Barbara Welter noted that the true woman possessed four primary

³⁵ Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge, p.1: Estelle Freedman, "Their Sisters' Keepers: An Historical Perspective on Female Custodial Institutions and their Use 1870-1900", Feminist Studies, 2 (1974), pp.84-91; Schlossman and Wallach, pp.65-91.

³⁶ AJHR, 1906, E3B, pp.4-7.

³⁷ Beagle, p.107.

³⁸ AJHR, 1902, E3, p.13, 1905, p.8.

³⁹ J.S. Cupit, "Child Welfare Work in New Zealand before 1925 - III Old Burnham", New Zealand Child Welfare Workers' Bulletin, 1:5 (June 1951), pp.9-10.

⁴⁰ Beagle, p.122.

virtues of piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity: "put them all together and they [spell] mother, daughter, sister, wife - woman".⁴¹ The management of Te Oranga attempted to instill in the residents these four virtues. They were embodied in all aspects of the education and training at the school which indicated that to be a good woman, one should be domestic, morally proper, dependent and submissive.

Matthews has interpreted these virtues as femininity, a concept seen by some to be the major element in women's submission since the end of the eighteenth century.⁴² It has been indicated that women who crossed the boundaries of acceptable feminine behaviour were seen to be abnormal and not proper women. Those women who committed crimes and offences were regarded as aberrations and often diagnosed as mentally weak. Crime, immorality, independence and assertion did not form part of the concept of femininity. The administration of Te Oranga sought to make the residents feminine and womanly by encouraging them to be passive, submissive and demure. The rules of silence in the institution can thus be seen as something more than a means to keep the residents under control and facilitate the role of the staff: silence or meekness was a part of the concept of femininity which called for women to be passive partners. Those individuals who did not adhere to the Home's rules were seen to be acting in an unwomanly manner, and on some occasions, were described as "beastly".⁴³ These young women were accordingly treated in an unfeminine manner, such as having their hair cropped short.

However, the amorphous and undefinable qualities of femininity and goodness mean that their successful pursuit is impossible. Matthews described the idea of femininity as an empty shell: "it purports to be the truth, the essence, the absolute meaning of being a woman. But, instead, it is a concept waiting to be given meaning by whoever conjures it into use".⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the young women at Te Oranga were encouraged to approximate to one ideal of a good woman. Some parts of New

⁴¹ Welter, p.152.

⁴² Gorham, p.5.

⁴³ *AJHR*, 1908, H21, pp.14-15,17.

⁴⁴ Matthews, p.7.

Zealand demanded that women be chaste, moral and domestic; others decried women's entry into the paid workforce; some expressed concern over the apparent neglect of the ideals of motherhood and family life; others demanded that young persons be equipped with practical skills, such as domestic service for girls; still more demanded that action be taken to check the apparent growing tide of female immorality: Te Oranga attempted to answer all of these demands and produce the good woman that society demanded.

The committal of young women to Te Oranga and the instruction given there was training in the process of becoming a woman in New Zealand. Such womanly qualities and skills were paramount in the instruction provided at the Home: the residents were to be normal citizens, domestic, dependent, morally pure, chaste and submissive as well as being able to sew, cook, clean, communicate and do the grocery shopping. Combined together, these attributes constituted one ideal of a good, feminine woman, a concept that is both illusory and indefinable. As Matthews observed

the process of becoming a woman is the pursuit of femininity, the attempt to live up to the various standards of her society, the struggle to behave like and to be a good woman according to her own and society's standards. Because femininity is an idealised and illusory quality, and because it is composed of inconsistent and contradictory parts, its pursuit is doomed to failure. She cannot please all of the people all of the time.⁴⁵

While the pursuit of femininity and the attempt to become a good woman are impossible, the Education Department and the management of Te Oranga did not necessarily see it in this light. As far as the Department was concerned the role of Te Oranga was to transform wayward girls into good women who were morally correct, dependent, domestic and who knew their place in society. In the Department's view, Te Oranga fulfilled its function.

⁴⁵ Matthews, p.8.

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