

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NEW JERSEY COMMISSION  
FOR THE BLIND

For the Year Ending October 31

1916

---

Commission Headquarters, 54 James St., Newark, N. J.



TRENTON, N. J.  
MACCRELLISH & QUIGLEY Co., State Printers

1917

New Jersey State Library

## NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

54 James Street, Newark, N. J.

---

MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT, *President*, .....Salem  
MRS. BLANTON C. WELSH, *Recording Secretary*, .....Montclair  
MR. C. R. DIEFFENBACH, .....Jersey City  
MRS. HARRIET FISHER ANDREW, .....Trenton  
WELLS P. EAGLETON, M.D., .....Newark

---

HON. WILLIAM FELLOWES MORGAN, resigned January, 1916; Wells P. Eagleton, M.D., appointed to succeed Mr. Morgan, in February, 1916.

MRS. HARRIET FISHER ANDREW, appointed member of Advisory Board of State Purchasing Commission.

MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT, appointed Budget Officer in compliance with new Budget Act, passed in 1916.

---

### GENERAL STAFF.

MISS ALICE IRENE WOOD, Temporary Executive Sec'y from August 7th, 1916  
MISS J. M. SPRINGER, .....Bookkeeper  
MISS LYDIA Y. HAYES, .....Supervisor to August 7th, 1916

### HOME TEACHERS.

MISS ANNE V. WARD, .....Camden  
MISS M. A. SPRINGER, .....East Orange  
MR. WILLIAM J. ADICKES, .....Hoboken  
MISS BERTHA M. JOHNSON, .....Bridgeton  
MISS MARGARET HOGAN, .....Orange

### TEACHER OF PIANO TUNING AND REPAIRING.

MR. WILLIAM B. SCHOTT, .....Irvington

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

November 1st, 1915, to October 31st, 1916.

### RECEIPTS.

General expenses, .....	\$10,000 00
Preventive work, .....	750 00
Extension of home industries, .....	1,000 00
	\$11,750 00

### DISBURSEMENTS.

#### *General Expenses.*

Salary of Supervisor, Nov. 1, 1915, to Aug. 7, 1916, date of termination of services, .....	\$922 58
Salary of Executive Secretary, from Aug. 7, 1916, date of temporary appointment, to Oct. 31, 1916, .....	181 45
Salary of Clerk (acting in capacity of guide and Private Secretary to Supervisor), Nov. 1, 1915, to Aug. 7, 1916, date of termination of services, .....	395 16
Salary of Clerk, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher, .....	600 00
Salary of Home Teacher (salary increased \$5.00 per month May, 1916), .....	510 00
Salary of teacher of piano tuning, .....	153 00
Salary of Guide to Miss Anne V. Ward (Home Teacher), .....	199 50
Salary of Guide to Miss Bertha M. Johnson (Home Teacher), .....	199 75
Salary of Guide to Miss Mary A. Springer (Home Teacher), .....	169 75
Salary of Guide to Miss Margaret R. Hogan (Home Teacher), .....	210 50
Services of Guide to Supervisor, .....	85
Salary of janitress, .....	180 00
Extra clerical help, .....	54 25
Expressage, .....	145 60
Office furniture, .....	172 66
Office supplies, .....	89 81
Postage, .....	167 26
Stationery, .....	58 99
Telegraph, .....	7 87

## NEW JERSEY COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND.

Telephone, .....	\$97 25
Transportation, .....	1,638 51
Maintenance, .....	864 72
Workshop supplies, .....	114 77
Books, .....	4 25
Sundries, .....	29 24
Gas, .....	22 23
Fire insurance, .....	16 77
Coal, .....	125 00
Water assessment, .....	13 54
Painting, .....	8 00
Masonry, .....	22 60
Plumbing, .....	42 84
Fees for demonstrators, .....	157 00
Assistance in preparation of materials for class and home work, .....	24 30
	<hr/> \$10,000 00

## PREVENTIVE WORK.

Clerical work, .....	\$50 00
Expressage, .....	6 86
Postage, .....	56 24
Stationery, .....	16 00
Office supplies, .....	16 04
Telephone, .....	5 00
Transportation, .....	11 34
Maintenance, .....	1 75
Preventive pamphlets, .....	416 55
Charts, .....	98 50
Multigraphing, .....	25 82
Lantern slides, .....	45 90
	<hr/> 750 00

## EXTENSION OF HOME INDUSTRIES.

Workshop supplies, .....	\$924 53
Stationery, .....	1 79
Telephone, .....	70
Transportation, .....	13 35
Maintenance, .....	16 88
Expressage and freightage, .....	4 20
Postage, .....	28
Books, .....	8 91
Sundries, .....	10 48
Cutting and preparing materials for home and class work, .....	18 88
	<hr/> 1,000 00
	<hr/> \$11,750 00

# **APPROXIMATE STATISTICAL SURVEY OF BLIND, AS ON FILE AT COMMISSION'S HEADQUARTERS**

**November 1st, 1915, to October 31st, 1916**

---

Number in State, .....	1,700
Investigated through Commission—	
Males, .....	900
Females, .....	800
Under 20, .....	190
Between 20 and 70, .....	1,060
Over 70 years, .....	450
Teachable blind, .....	600
Under 20, .....	90
Male, .....	47
Female, .....	43
Over 20, .....	510
Male, .....	250
Female, .....	260
Number of blind in educational institutions, .....	90
Of this number there are 24 in public schools.	
Number of blind suitably provided for in own homes, .....	1,200
Number of consignors at Headquarters, .....	105
Number of cocoa and chocolate agents, .....	96
Occupied blind, .....	830
Remuneratively, .....	340
Industrially, .....	170
Housework, .....	250
Chores, .....	70
	<hr/>
	830
Number of blind dependent upon benevolent institutions, .....	100
Number of blind in custodial care (almshouses, prisons, asylums), .....	90
Deaths reported, .....	37

## Report of Commission

---

*Hon. James F. Fielder, Governor of New Jersey:*

SIR—In compliance with the law creating the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, we have the honor to submit to Your Excellency the following report for the year ending October 31, 1916.

This Commission is charged with the important work of ameliorating the condition of the blind in New Jersey. Blindness requires no special advocate to make the general public realize its blighting influence, nor the great handicap it imposes as to education and occupation, both of which are essential to self-support.

The first organized effort of the Commission was the teaching of blind adults in their own homes. This work is largely humanitarian, and, although there is but little pecuniary return for efforts expended, we cannot emphasize too greatly the importance of this work; not only are the lives of the blind men and women brightened by the home teachers, themselves blind, but they regain confidence in themselves, learn to read by use of the tangible types, and are taught various handicrafts for the blind, products of which are marketed by the Commission without cost to the blind producer.

The Commission has held eleven regular and two special meetings during the year; two conferences with the five home teachers, and a conference with the representatives of the New Jersey State Federation of Associations of Workers for the Blind.

The Legislature of 1915 appropriated \$10,000 for the furtherance of the work of the Commission in general. Through the generous interest of the Legislature of 1916, supplementary appropriations of \$750 for preventive work and \$1,000 for extension of home industries and further employment of the blind were made.

A detailed summary of the expenditure of all appropriations granted is included in this report.

As a result of a limited survey of conditions in New Jersey, made by Mr. Gordon L. Berry, of New York, through the courtesy and generous co-operation of the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, of which he is Field Secretary, together with the tabulated statistics giving general causes of blindness in New Jersey, the Commission secured by legislative enactment extension of its powers to include Prevention of Blindness, and to adopt and enforce proper preventive measures.

Realizing the value of and necessity for effective co-operation in this work, and with a view to co-ordinate the efforts of the State Boards, the Commission held a conference with the State Board of Health, the State Board of Education and the Department of Labor, all of which are vitally interested in the subject matter of this act.

With the limited appropriation of \$750 the Commission inaugurated a publicity campaign for the Prevention of Blindness. This has been made effective by the co-operation of the various State Boards, Women's Clubs, National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, State and County Medical Boards and other organizations interested in the Conservation of Vision. Since January, 1916, the State Board of Health has furnished to the Commission duplicate copies of all cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum and Trachoma reported to them. Nothing short of eternal vigilance in following up these blighting diseases will suffice to lessen their ravages and prevent the needless blindness that they cause. A conservative estimate of the cost to the State for the education and care of a person blind from infancy is \$8,000; the loss to the State industrially cannot be estimated, while the loss to the individual is inconceivable; from an economic standpoint alone the State should grant the New Jersey Commission its full appropriation for the next year and a supplemental appropriation of \$2,500 for the work of Prevention of Blindness for the current year. In reporting that but one case of blindness has resulted from Ophthalmia Neonatorum in 1915 in Massachusetts that Commission for the Blind has *clearly*

*demonstrated the fact* that with *adequate* funds for the conduct of the work blindness from Ophthalmia Neonatorum *can be prevented*. Are not the children of New Jersey as great an asset to their commonwealth as the children of Massachusetts are to that State?

After seven years' work the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind has demonstrated (1) "that by educating the public and by *strict enforcement* of prophylactic measures a large percentage of eye disablement and blindness can be prevented; (2) that by vigorous co-operation among all the agencies concerned much of the defective vision due to incipient disease, to working under conditions of improper lighting, to overstrain, to lack of glasses and other like causes may be done away with." The Commission for New Jersey begs for the privilege of handling the problem with equal thoroughness, assured that happiness and increased efficiency for those so seriously handicapped must follow such efforts.

The scope of the work for the blind was further extended by a law enabling the Commission to give practical encouragement by loans of capital, of stock in trade, or of tools or apparatus for blind persons desirous of earning a living by industrial occupation or other form of business activity. This law should materially ameliorate the condition of the blind.

It is the purpose of the Commission to make its office a clearing house and bureau of information and employment for the blind of New Jersey. In every aspect of the work in which the Commission is engaged the fundamental importance of co-operation is manifested.

The State of New Jersey is in advance of other States in the provisions made for the education of the blind. The policy of the State is to board and educate such children and youths in institutions for the blind in New York City and Philadelphia, where they are given specific training. The State also provides higher education for the blind in any college, university, technical school or professional school within the State. Special classes for blind children in the public schools are now provided, where there are eight or more attending. This is largely experimental as yet, but the plan has been endorsed by many educators of the



blind. The State further provides for the scientific care and education of blind babies, committing such from babyhood up to eight years to the Arthur Home, at Summit, N. J., under the efficient management of the International Sunshine Society, Incorporated, in New Jersey. This institution has been approved by the various State departments of New Jersey, and has the endorsement of the Commissioner of Charities, who considers that the essentially important "work it is doing by taking the child at the very beginning of its helplessness and preparing it for the higher schools for the blind is to be highly commended." He further states that he has visited the Home, and that the general "management, cleanliness and equipment are highly satisfactory" to the Department of Charities and Corrections.

The education of the adult blind who have lost their sight by accident or disease at an age when the institutional training was not available is, in a measure, provided for through the Home Teaching Department of the Commission. The blind in homes, almshouses, prisons and asylums are reached through this medium.

The Light House at Trenton, managed by the Trenton Auxiliary for the Industrial Blind, incorporated in New Jersey, conducts a workshop for men, and provides a home where they can be properly cared for, as well as maintaining an exchange where the work of other blind people living in their own homes can be sold. The Light House, though not self-supporting, is sustained by contributions of generous-hearted people, and should widely appeal to all those who are interested in the successful welfare of the blind. St. Joseph's Home for the Blind, Pavonia Avenue, Jersey City, has increased its capacity for caring for the blind.

The Commission for the Blind realizes that the appropriation made for the current year is not commensurate with its extended scope of work and activities, and urges an increase for the furtherance of its work.

A material increase is necessary to carry on the work of Prevention of Blindness, as the services of a Field Secretary are absolutely essential for the proper conduct of this department.

The State of New Jersey should not be satisfied until every agency within its bounds, legislative, administrative, public and private, is working in full and intelligent co-operation to stamp out all causes of preventable blindness. This cannot be accomplished without adequate financial aid.

Statistics from the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness show the following proportion of pupils blind from ophthalmia neonatorum in thirty-one schools for the blind in 1915-16:

<i>Total Pupils.</i>	<i>Blind from Ophthalmia Neonatorum.</i>	<i>Per Cent.</i>
3,501	760	21.7

Public schools in four large cities:

<i>Total Pupils Blind.</i>	<i>Blind from Ophthalmia Neonatorum.</i>	<i>Per Cent.</i>
357	83	23.2

*The astounding fact is that these 843 children are needlessly blind for life; their blindness could have been prevented. Does prevention of blindness pay?*

The Commission recommends:

1. An increased appropriation for the higher education of the blind.

2. That medical inspection in public schools be extended to include an ophthalmologist's examination of all school children with seriously defective eyesight, and that in all institutions for children and adults, whether or not under State control or containing wards of the State, regular visits for examination and treatment be made by an ophthalmologist, as a member of the institution's staff. Errors in diagnosis can be avoided and even blindness prevented.

3. Adequate provision through existing institutions for the care and education of the feeble-minded blind.

4. Extension of present curriculum in public schools, so as to include special training in physical culture, in gymnasium, and lessons in swimming pool, music and extended instruction in typewriting and use of dictaphone.

To enumerate the agencies and individuals that are assisting in the work for the blind would require much space, but to all

legislators, officials, various State departments and local boards, to individuals and organizations, public, private, philanthropic, to physicians, churches and social workers the Commission extends its gratitude and asks a continuation of the support and co-operation extended. To our own workers, past and present, sighted and sightless, we hereby express our hearty appreciation of the devoted and unselfish service to the State and the blind within it.

Respectfully submitted,

MRS. ALBERT T. BECKETT,

*President.*

## Executive Secretary's Report

---

*To the New Jersey Commission for the Blind:*

In the presentation of my report to your Commission it is very gratifying to note the ability of the Home Teaching personnel to cope with the increased quota of work undertaken in the further instruction of the blind throughout the State.

The total number of pupils reported as benefited by scholastic and industrial instruction in their own homes and at headquarters is 275, receiving through the course of the year 3,756 lessons. The total mileage covered by the staff of blind-teachers is 35,000. Unfortunately, the prevalence of the epidemic of poliomyelitis compelled the omission of two weeks in July by two of the force, and of the regular teaching month of September by all. A conference with the home teachers was held on September 26th, at which salesmanship as a vocation for the blind and some of the methods of meeting with home teaching problems were freely discussed.

Miss Anne V. Ward has been appointed on the Uniform Type Committee, a tribute much appreciated by our Commission. The unqualified devotion and loyalty of the six teachers in the studied capabilities and aptitudes of each pupil in hand have been productive of the best results, and such as have attested to the developed efficiency of this splendid corps of workers.

Two of the teachers were particularly fortunate in having the opportunity presented for a course of instruction in a Normal Training Class at the Headquarters of the Blind, Brooklyn Bureau of Charities, which has given an added stimulus to the introduction of new industries at headquarters, the equipment for which could more properly and appreciably be enlarged through an increased State appropriation devoted to such a purpose. The financial relief of the blind can best be served through the adoption of a sound economic policy which has for its object the rendering of such aid to the blind as will most effectively add to their independence and self-support. In addition to crocheting, knitting, sewing and basketry, three classes a week are now operating in three new forms of industries, weaving, willow and brush work, turning out products the artistic and practical merits of which are proving of commercial value. An appropriation of \$1,500 as a Revolving Industrial Fund, from which loans of stock in trade and apparatus are made to the blind as an aid to some form of productive activity, was made possible by legislative enactment.

A standard of quality and excellence with regard to each consigned article is maintained in every possible instance, in the full belief that the highest value and best returns to the blind will the better be yielded by their constant adherence to, and understanding of, the thorough business-like and systematic basis on which they are expected to make consignments.

The service of an auto bus has been secured to convey the blind to and from headquarters, assuring the regularity of attendance upon classes

in session. Another class in Jersey City has been very successfully started by one of the teachers.

The Commission was also fortunate recipient of the generosity of Mrs. Fuld, of Newark, in the matter of the extended use of her car until the spring of 1916. Co-operation on the part of local department stores, lunch-rooms, and other places of business has been sought with a view to securing chair-caning orders. The expense of the cartage of chairs to and from their destination is being borne, to a certain extent, by the chair owners themselves. The results attained in this department of work are indicated by the fact that 565 chairs were caned this last year by ten caners, who received \$481.00.

The articles consigned by the blind have been disposed of through sales and demonstrations, 21 of which have been held during the year. The work of the blind was demonstrated and placed on sale at the Newark Anniversary Industrial Exhibit from May 13th through June 3d, the generosity of the general management in the donation of free space and admission to the exhibit being greatly appreciated. The co-operation of the Camden Association of Workers for the Blind is further acknowledged in the successful results of a sale at the Industrial Exhibit in their city, also the courtesy of all the churches, organizations and individuals that have freely given of their time and effort to augment the sale of goods.

As a result of sales, \$1,650.00 has been paid directly to the blind for work. Splendid wholesale prices have been secured in the purchase of materials, and the policy of furnishing the blind with goods at the lowest possible cost encourages business enterprise; this advantage of negotiating for materials is well regarded in their behalf. It is the purpose of the Commission to standardize the products of the blind, and thus be assured of a market. A list of articles made by the blind is now being prepared for publication.

Mr. U. B. Brewer has supplied the blind with cocoa and chocolate products at wholesale price, from the sale of which \$1,260.00 in actual profits have been derived. His continued interest is very much appreciated by the Commission and the blind of our State.

Dyeing of all materials for the various forms of industrial work, such as silk, mercerized warp and filling, unbleached muslin, raffia and reed, has been successfully undertaken, and the Commission will continue to supply materials for this department of the work.

Two maps are in use at the Commission rooms, on which the routes of the teachers and the localities of the blind of the State have been traced. Catalogues and reports relating to or bearing upon the work are kept on file.

The library at headquarters, consisting of about 125 volumes, has been catalogued and copies of a classified list prepared for ready reference. The supply of books on hand, however, is supplemented by the Newark, Philadelphia and New York Libraries, which at all times have made very generous response to the requests for reading matter. In addition, numerous magazines have been subscribed for and freely made use of by all blind persons desiring to borrow them.

It is a pleasure to report that our schools and Boards of Education, through special attention called to the matter, are beginning to recognize

the fact that the blind can satisfactorily fill contracts for tuning. A list of piano tuners is now maintained at headquarters, and it is urgently hoped the public will give the preference for such orders to the blind, who can demonstrate, by a given opportunity, their competency to undertake this work. This is regarded as the most remunerative occupation engaged in by the blind. Our tuning class, under the instruction of a competent teacher, and through the stimulus of the co-operation of School Boards in the matter of tuning orders, is proving beneficial to the men desiring to enter this field of the work.

Assured that where real enterprise exists and opportunities are not too greatly circumscribed, the Commission has sought to stimulate and encourage salesmanship by securing agencies in which the individual might be interested. The capabilities of the blind are, just as carefully studied from a scholastic, cultural and vocational point of view as those of the sighted, and wise direction and encouragement in the pursuit of an adaptable occupation is given those who desire to compete with the sighted in any sort of business proposition. A splendid opportunity has been offered any blind man wishing to avail himself of a course on salesmanship, through the courtesy of Mr. Townsend, Educational Director of the Young Men's Christian Association of Newark. One of our men who secured an agency for selling coal recently not only proved his ability to obtain orders by selling eighty-two tons within the first few weeks, but was adjudged by his employer as the best agent he had ever engaged. New Jersey continues to believe in the individual potentialities for self-dependence of its blind, and with the proffered spirit of true helpfulness on the part of the public, many of the obstacles and difficulties now facing the blind will be removed.

Social use is made of the rooms at headquarters, where the blind enjoy musical and other recreations contributed by them and their friends. Through the generosity of Mr. Franklin Conklin, a number of the blind enjoyed Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners; a Christmas tree was provided at headquarters for the children of the Newark Class for the Blind by another generous friend. To Mr. Franklin Conklin grateful thanks are also due for the use of the building occupied by the Commission the past year. Acknowledgment is made of the invitation of the Oratorio Society to the Messiah in Newark, and to the Young Men's Christian Association for their kindness in providing tickets to Asbury Park in July and August. All other courtesies in the matter of the conduct of sales, preparation of materials for industrial work, and other contributions, are acknowledged with sincere appreciation.

The Commission, realizing the fundamental need of, and persistence in, the furtherance of a State-wide publicity campaign in the work of the prevention of blindness, has secured the co-ordinated efforts of the State Boards of Health, Labor and Education, Women's Clubs, and other bodies manifesting any degree of interest in this vitally important phase of the Commission's work. During the past year over 50,000 pamphlets have been purchased from the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, and 8,000 in seven languages, from the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, for gratuitous distribution at sales, and through these departments and organizations 10,000 or more pamphlets have been distributed. The Na-

tional Committee has rendered invaluable assistance in making the Commission's extended efforts possible. Under the auspices of the Commission a very appreciable number of lectures have been given throughout the State. One hundred and thirty-eight lantern slides have been purchased for lectures illustrating the visual harm which follows in the wake of ignorance and neglect of the knowledge of causes and means of prevention of blindness. Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Midwife, Industrial Accident, Wood Alcohol and Trachoma exhibits, consisting of five panels each, have been purchased from the National Committee and have been loaned to the Child Welfare Exhibit in Trenton and elsewhere, and it is planned to display these unique charts, in which a manifest interest has been taken, in public libraries where such permission may be obtained. The matter of the use of envelopes with partially opaque inserts, which have a possible deleterious effect upon the eyesight of letter carriers, is one worthy of our consideration.

In order to secure data regarding the recognition of State provisions as related to medical examinations in schools, and the reporting of cases of ophthalmia neonatorum and trachoma, circular letters have been addressed to over 500 local Boards of Health, medical societies, and the same number of principals, medical inspectors and superintendents of schools throughout the State, following up all such reported cases, ascertaining just what localities would be benefited by lectures and securing the enforcement of laws and provisions pertaining to this phase of the work. The statistics received from these sources present actual existing conditions, and upon such the Commission will base its efforts for the further prevention of blindness. At a conference held on June 21st with the State Boards, each department, in presenting its survey of present conditions, expressed interest and willingness to further the necessary constructive work in hand. Industrial accidents resulting in blindness in one or both eyes are reported directly to the Department of Labor, and statistics are furnished monthly in cases of ophthalmia neonatorum and trachoma. During the year 53 cases of trachoma and 44 of ophthalmia neonatorum have been brought to the attention of the Commission through the State Department of Health. These cases are followed up by the Commission in so far as possible with its limited appropriation. One hundred and twenty-two towns report 234,000 school children inspected 1915-1916, of which number 20,000 are indicated as in need of eye treatment. Surely these statistics alone point to a situation wherein even a rudimentary knowledge of the conservation of vision on the part of school pupils would prove not only of incalculable benefit to the individual affected, but to schools and State authorities which are interested in the future welfare of these children. Sustained co-operation should result in the support and initiation of legislation which will adequately provide for more rigid oversight of conditions and add to the financial strength of the Commission's endeavors and united activities in the eventual elimination of many of the causes of blindness in our State.

With the increased scope of preventive work and the labor contingent upon the close follow-up of all cases in hand, and the accurate maintenance of the records of the blind, the services of a field worker would prove of inestimable value.

The compilation of statistics received in the matter of the conservation of vision in schools points to the necessity of securing clinical facilities for the treatment of needy children whose opportunities for receiving charitable attention are practically nil.

The field of endeavor for the workers of the blind in the State of New Jersey is a wonderfully exhilarating one, replete with still greater possibilities for lasting good, and in proportion as we secure the co-ordinated and whole-souled efforts of all, just so will our activities prove indispensable in the great humanitarian interests at heart, and our full measure of success be assured.

Respectfully submitted,

ALICE IRENE WOOD,  
*Executive Secretary.*