

adequate distinction can, at present, be made between the treatment of penal-servitude and hard-labour prisoners; and first offenders sentenced for comparatively slight offences are associated with old and hardened criminals. In some gaols young women who had borne good moral character previous to conviction, have been associated with women of utterly depraved character and habits, and juvenile offenders of both sexes have had no separate accommodation provided for them. Classification of prisoners cannot be satisfactory so long as penal-servitude men are confined in the same prisons as other offenders. If a penal-servitude gaol were established, and long-sentence prisoners were drafted out of the existing prisons, there would be room enough, in most cases, to classify the other prisoners; and, with a few improvements suggested in the evidence appended to this report, these gaols would for some time meet the requirements of the country. This would be the most economical and effective mode of providing the further accommodation necessary.

3. The mark-system adopted in 1875 is working well, and has had a good effect on the prisoners, but it cannot be properly carried out until there are opportunities for classification, and regular supervision and inspection to secure fairness and uniformity in the system of marking. The Committee desire to record their opinion that the crank, the treadmill, and other kinds of unproductive labour should not be resorted to; that, as far as possible, the industry of prisoners should be stimulated; that their marks should be gained in proportion to the work they do; and that, as in English gaols, it should be possible to earn a small sum of money by industry, so that a prisoner on his discharge might have some means of starting in life. In the hard-labour gaols, marks and exertion money should be earned from the commencement of the sentence. Those prisoners who from health or early habits are unfit for hard manual labour should be made to work in their own trades, or taught a trade if they have not got one.

4. The provisions for teaching are very insufficient in most of the gaols, and the accommodation for religious services inadequate. In the larger gaols one of the warders should be competent to act as a schoolmaster for elementary teaching.

5. The pay of the gaol officers, and their number in proportion to the prisoners, has been very different in the different provinces; the pay being highest in Otago, and lowest in Auckland. Taking the four principal gaols in the colony, the average cost of official salaries per head of prisoners, as given in the evidence appended to this report, is—

Auckland	£17	9	4
Wellington	25	12	8
Lyttelton	22	16	4
Dunedin	53	5	2

Thus it appears that the cost of official salaries at Dunedin is double that at Wellington and Lyttelton, and three times that at Auckland. These inequalities create a sense of injustice among the officers, and render it difficult to transfer and promote officers from one gaol to another.

As the question of pay has been referred to the Committee, they recommend the following scale of salaries in the four principal gaols—viz., Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, and Dunedin:—

Gaoler, £300 and house, with £5 a year additional for each year of service for twenty years.

Chief Warder	£200	0	0
1st class Warders	160	0	0
2nd class Warders	150	0	0
3rd class Warders	140	0	0

All overseers, trade-instructors, and other officers to rank as warders. Quarters to be provided for officers; where this is impossible, allowance to be made according to locality, not exceeding £25 per annum.

For secondary gaols:—

Gaoler, £200 and house, with £5 a year additional for each year of service for twenty years.

2nd and 3rd class Warders £150 and £140 respectively.

A large number of small gaols, really not much more than lock-ups, but proclaimed gaols for public convenience, to remain under charge of police.

In adopting any general and uniform rule, it will be necessary to take into exceptional consideration the case of a few old provincial officers, who have been for years in receipt of larger salaries.

The number of warders in proportion to the number of prisoners must depend to a certain extent on the position and accommodation of each gaol. As a general rule it will be found that, in existing gaols, warders, including subordinate officers of all kinds, should be in the proportion of one to eight prisoners.

6. There are several questions connected with the discipline of particular gaols to which the attention of the Committee has been drawn, but which it has been impossible to investigate this session. The papers are referred to the Government, with a recommendation that strict inquiry should be made concerning them.

The evidence taken by the Committee is appended to this report.

CHARLES C. BOWEN,
Chairman.

23rd October, 1878.