

6. Miscellaneous. On condition of good conduct. Some prisoners manifest a liking for works of a high class, chiefly scientific; a few prefer religious books; but the general taste runs in the direction of light reading. As far as possible superior books are supplied either from the Gaol library or from outside the prison.

7. Excepting during the wet and cold season of the year, a good night-school, conducted by an educated prisoner under my supervision, is carried on. The good resulting from the instruction there imparted has been very marked. Grown men and boys, ignorant even of the alphabet, have acquired a suprising degree of knowledge of the three "Rs." In a number of instances prisoners have devoted their evenings to special studies, such as languages, phraseography, engineering, &c., every encouragement being afforded them.

8. None.

Moral Effects of Imprisonment.

4. There is a Patients' and Prisoners' Aid Society in Dunedin, the objects of which, as stated in rule 2 of its constitution, are "to supply an agent to encourage and instruct, by means of religious services and otherwise, the inmates of the Dunedin Gaol, Hospital, and Lunatic Asylum, and to aid persons discharged from these institutions to make a fresh start in life." The Society is now in the second year of its existence, and the report of its proceedings for the past year is herewith appended.

J. A. TORRANCE.

CHAPLAIN'S REPORT ON WELLINGTON GAOL.

Religious and other Instruction offered.

2. Since 1856 I have attended the Gaol, giving one service on each Sunday. During the three last years this service has been conducted by the Rev. C. D. De Castro at my request. I only give service on the first Sunday afternoon of each month. The Roman Catholic clergy attend the Gaol—I do not know how often. No other ministers of any denomination attend the Gaol, I believe.

Besides the Sunday services, I have visited the Gaol to attend on the sick, on those sentenced to death, on any who have sent for me.

3. *a.* Difficult to answer, as prisoners leaving the Gaol often leave Wellington. But I know that much good has been thus gained, especially in the case of Collins, executed January, 1861.

4. I have used part only of the Church of England liturgy, with an address, taking care that the whole service shall not last more than three-quarters of an hour. Two hymns are sung.

ARTHUR STOCK.

SPECIAL REPORT OF GAOLEE, LYTTELTON GAOL, OF THE VISITING JUSTICES.

Penal Prison.

Of all important measures the building of a penal prison is most necessary and urgent. No attempt at effective prison discipline can be made until this is done. The number of penal prisoners is, I believe, between 200 and 300, and by their removal from the several gaols a great portion of the old associated sheds now used as prison buildings might be done away with. No effective discipline, no moral reformation, nor scarcely any hope of reform, can be had whilst prisoners are thus herded together. Those who are vile have opportunities of carrying out their evil desires and imparting them to others, and any with good intentions soon have them upset.

I have submitted a plan to the Government of a new penal prison which was being built on my leaving England—the receipt of which plan was acknowledged. 300 prisoners in a penal prison are not too many for proper working of the prison, nor for the carrying on of any important works. Great care will have to be made in properly starting such a place; and I beg leave to say the present prison code of rules would need altering, for whoever has charge will require more power than the present regulations afford, for all depends on its proper management at first.

The need of the erection of a penal prison is so generally admitted that further comment is unnecessary, but those only in charge of the present gaols see daily the great urgency of the matter.

Gaols.

It appears that, in a new country such as this, it is deemed advisable to employ prisoners for the public good on road and other works. I would therefore suggest that prisons be of two descriptions—viz., public-works prisons and close prisons. There is no reason why these should not be attached to each other as one prison building, though kept strictly separate from each other in working. All prisoners on conviction could be committed to the close prison, and those over a sentence of six months' hard labour would be eligible, by good conduct after a stated period, to removal to a public-works prison. Prisoners seriously misconducting themselves in public-works prison to be liable to be transferred back to a close prison for a time to be specified (subject to future good conduct) as part of their punishment for misconduct, which time must be served in addition to any additional periods fixed for continued misconduct whilst in close prison. No remission to be granted for any time spent in close prison, except in any case in which a prisoner may be detained in close prison (after six months) in the interest of the prison service, when his time may be permitted to count towards remission of sentence, as if he had been transferred to a public-works prison.

The treatment in close prisons should be very deterrent, so as to make it a privilege to be transferred to public works. Prisoners sentenced to six months and under should not be removed to public-works prisons, so as to, as much as possible, prevent the prisoners being so fully supplied with the current news of the day. Perfect silence and seclusion should reign in the close prisons. Such would do much to prevent a class of prisoners continuing the system of coming in for short sentences.

Of course such close prisoners cannot be considered remunerative as regards labour. Oakum-picking, grinding by crank, and other monotonous works should be provided, and all in silence.