

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, PRISONS BRANCH

(REPORT ON), FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1892.

ALSO

REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF "THE FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT, 1886,"

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1892.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The INSPECTOR of PRISONS to the Hon. the MINISTER of JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Justice Department, Prisons Branch, Wellington, 1st July, 1893.

I have the honour to present this, my twelfth annual report on the prisons of the colony, together with the seventh annual report on the working of "The First Offenders' Probation Act, 1886."

I have periodically visited the various prisons on the dates stated in the attached table marked J, and have at all times found them kept clean and in good condition, every attention being paid to the sanitary arrangements, a high state of discipline maintained, while the management is both effective and economical.

1. I am again happy to be able to state that the First Offenders' Probation Act, as will be seen from Table L, continues to work most satisfactorily.

2. The supplies for the several prisons have as usual been publicly tendered for, and no complaints have been made either by the prison authorities or by the various contractors. The regular custom of all tenders being addressed to, and opened by the Visiting Justices, has been strictly adhered to, and their recommendations as to the acceptance or rejection of tenders invariably adopted.

3. There has been no case of breaking out of prison during the year—one prisoner escaped from the works at Mount Cook, but was, within a few hours, recaptured.

4. A reference to Table A shows that the health of the prisoners throughout the year has been good; the daily average of sick has been 7·87 males and 3·41 females—an increase of 0·40 in the males and of 1·32 in the females, as compared with the previous year.

5. No deaths occurred at any of the prisons during the year, though several cases of delirium tremens of a serious nature have been treated, but thanks to the skill of the gaol surgeons and the attention of the officers, each case has been cured. I quote the following extract from the annual report of one of the gaol surgeons on this matter: "We have had the usual number of inebriates and lunatics. I hope soon to see some arrangement come to with regard to inebriates. It is hard for our officers to do night-duty over them, when we have public hospitals with night-nurses on duty; but until the General Government steps in with a heavy hand and make their wishes the law, or take over the hospitals, I fear my wishes, however just, will not be carried out. Every hospital should be provided with a refractory ward where delirious, inebriated, or lunatic patients could and should be treated till otherwise disposed of."

6. There were no executions, nor were any death-sentences passed in 1892.

7. Table A further shows that at the commencement of the year there were 472 males and 62 females confined in the gaols of the colony, and at its close 435 males and 42 female prisoners, giving a decrease of 37 males and 20 females. In 1892, 3,302 males and 780 females passed through the various prisons, as against 3,452 males and 845 females during the previous year. A total decrease of 215 in cases dealt with.