

As regards escapes, there were 7 escapes in 1943, which is about the average for the past four years. All escapees were recaptured within a short time.

It was mentioned above that 20 inmates who had each served a previous term here had been readmitted during 1943. The offences committed were theft, breaking and entering and theft, and car conversion. In all cases these lads, when released, had jobs to go to or work was soon found for them. From questions asked them on their return it appears that all received good wages. Possibly the unrest due to war conditions and the possession of too much money is the cause of their drifting into crime again. The improvement of the general educational standard of the inmates is considered of first importance. School classes are conducted by outside professional teachers on three nights per week—Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—during the ordinary schools year. The standard reached by inmates prior to admission is varied. A summary shows the following :—

Secondary	..	..	34	Standards I and II	..	6
Standard VI	..	..	43	Illiterate	..	3
Standard V	..	..	37			—
Standard IV	..	..	18			155
Standard III	..	..	14			

The schoolmasters' report is as follows :—

"The efforts of the inmates in their respective groups were well maintained. During the year promotions were made in the various groups when justified. In the three groups the curriculum was prepared to conform with the mental capacity of the inmates.

"In English our aim was to develop accurate oral and written expression, to teach such principles inductively and relate them to daily life, and to ally such work as is done to the lives of the boys.

"In the three groups, special attention was given to poetry, spelling, comprehension, word-building, and oral reading. The *Students' Digest* was used by all the groups to keep the boys informed as to current events.

"Individual work was done with those inmates in the lowest group who were more or less illiterate, and books of various reading grades were used.

"The history and geography of the world, but particularly that referring to the British Empire, formed part of the curriculum. The teachers aimed at supplying topographical, commercial, economic, and scientific facts to give the inmates a stock of information in geographical data. In history our aim was to develop an interest in the past and to unfold the changing story of man, so that it might particularly bear on the development of the history of the British Empire.

"In arithmetic our aim was to teach the boys to perform speedily and accurately all arithmetical problems connected with their life and work. The inmates were taught to set out intelligently and in proper sequence the steps by which problems have to be solved. Most of our work was of the mental type, and a knowledge of the tables and processes of everyday transactions featured throughout the three classes.

"In science, periodic lessons were given throughout the year. Film-strip pictures were shown periodically. Headings of the news in the local papers concerning the conduct of the war were given to the inmates at the beginning of every school period."

Classes in wool-classing and agriculture have been conducted for many years by Mr. T. Mathews, of the Southland Education Board, and each year boys are desirous of joining. In the past, prizes to the value of £4 have been donated by the Reginald Mitta MacKinnon Trust (administered by the Public Trust Office). Word was received that for this year the grant has been increased to £10. This will allow of two distributions of prizes each year. This will be an advantage, because heretofore it has happened that students have been released from Borstal before the examination. The instructor reports as follows :—

"Another most successful year's work has been accomplished. Full classes were maintained throughout the year, and very pleasing progress was made by practically all the students attending, several reaching a very high standard."

The economics and civics class is held once a week, from May to August, under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association. Mr. R. Webb, of the Southland Technical College, carried out the work of tutor. The class is run as a club or association, the boys appointing a chairman, secretary, and committee. Minutes are taken and passed in the usual way. This in itself is quite good experience for the boys. Mr. Webb's report is quoted :—

"I wish to report that the Workers' Educational Association class conducted by me for the inmates of the Borstal institution concluded a session of thirteen nights on 14th August, 1943. The class was conducted on the lines of last year, involving lectures on world affairs, debates, lecturettes by class members, play-reading, and literature readings.

"The boys were exceptionally well-behaved and showed a keen interest in the class activities, as is shown by the splendid average attendance of 70.

"Again the class is indebted to the Marist Debating Club for providing a debating team on the final night to meet a team chosen from the class. The subject debated was 'That Sport looms too largely in the Public Mind,' the Marist Club proving the winners by the narrow margin of 3 points. Thanks are due to Mr. W. Butchers for judging the debate, and to Mr. G. Swift and Mr. T. Newall for providing entertainment. A splendid supper provided by the institution brought a very happy and successful evening to a close."

A perusal of the class minute-book shows that talks were given (by the inmates themselves) on such subjects as "Care of Motor-cars," "Canning of Fruit and Vegetables," "The Making of a Violin," shaping, oiling, varnishing, &c. Two-man debates were held on a variety of themes : "Is it better to be a Farmer or a Business Man?" "Is a Woman's Proper Place in the Home?" "Is the Air Force better than the Army?" "Is it better to be a Private or an Officer?" "Is Town Life better than Country Life?" "Is the Pen mightier than the Tongue?"

The singing and voice-production class is conducted by Mr. Hugh Kennedy Black, F.T.C.L., &c., who writes on the year's work as under :—

"The year has been a most interesting and eventful one as regards the interest being taken in singing. The membership of the choir is entirely voluntary. The largest attendance was 65, but it has averaged about 45. Each voice is tried out separately, and the boys are not allowed membership unless they show a musical intelligence.