

The apiary produced almost 5,000 lb. of honey last season from 65 hives, a record crop. This season is not likely to prove as good, but the 3,000 lb. mark should be exceeded.

The weather was not entirely suitable last year for the best tobacco yield, and the crop was not up to expectations. An effort was therefore made this season to increase the yield by extending the area. The dryness following an unseasonable frost in December will probably prevent our hopes from being realized.

The institution garden was able to keep the inmates and some of the staff in vegetables, but this year the prevailing drought is making it difficult to maintain the necessary variety and constant supplies of about 100 lb. of vegetables each day, apart from potatoes. Vegetables are also supplied to Auckland Prison. The frost in December caused severe damage to young pumpkin and tomato plants, and though later plantings were made they will never really catch up the lost time.

The well-being of the staff is a matter of importance, in my opinion, and I aim to promote it by removing causes for discontent. Conditions have been improved during the year, firstly, by the increase in the salary scales, secondly, by the easing of the man-power situation with the conclusion of the war, and, thirdly, by the resumption of annual leave, which had to be stopped on account of the shortage of staff. As efficiency generally is affected by the morale of all members of this little community, I think any factor that can raise it is a step in the right direction. We are trying to obtain a recreation hall through the War Assets Realization Board, but so far have not succeeded owing to the demand for housing. Members of the staff are keen to have grounds laid out attractively to provide facilities for sports such as tennis, bowls, and croquet, and also a play area for children. These grounds could be prepared when labour is available from farm work and no great expense would need to be incurred. Such measures, especially those catering for children, would have very beneficial results.

In conclusion, I wish to record my appreciation of the fact that the staff have shown the same loyalty to myself as was accorded to my predecessor. When I was called upon suddenly to assume the responsibility of the administration of this institution, it helped considerably to know that I could rely upon their support. With the large amount of work ahead, much of it of a developmental nature, we will need the continued co-operation of every one.

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