

The institutional school has been continued during the year under the direction of Dr. Dale, M.A., with the assistance of two officers of the Prison staff—Warders Carson and Warner—the latter having been transferred as Assistant Probation Officer. Dr. Dale's report is as follows:—

During the year the numbers attending represented approximately 10 per cent. of the prison population—a figure which appears to be relatively stable, in view of the figures for the last four or five years. Of those who attended during the year, the pakeha was definitely in the minority; indeed, the school was attended towards the end of the year almost solely by Maoris.

It is appropriate, perhaps, that some comment should be made here on the reasons the men desire to attend school. Not all are educationally backward, but each has a problem to which he appears to seek an educational answer. Among such major problems set the school are inadequacy of language and vocabulary; speech defects; poor relationship between written, reading, and speaking vocabulary; inadequate development of "tool" arithmetic; planning for rehabilitation. Each of these is a separate problem and demands individual attention and infinite tact and patience, since the men are "touchy" and cannot be treated as children. The treatment accorded appears to be filling a real want, and whatever success attends the work is best reflected in the personal attitude and social reaction of the men concerned. Those without a personal problem appear to welcome school as one of the avenues to remain mentally alert.

Again I feel I must comment on the number of Maoris attending the school. Of those attending, a large proportion are of a very low educational standard; many appear to have nothing in common with either the pakeha or the Maori. As far as it is possible to judge from their reaction to school and learning, they find themselves in prison because of societal influences they neither understand nor evaluate morally. A man of this type poses an education problem. Should the school attempt to make a "good" Maori, or should it give enough education to assist him to discriminate between the good and the bad influences of pakeha life? If there is enough time the school tries to do both, but, in any case, an attempt is made to show the weakness of blindly following the example of the pakeha with whom he comes in contact. The school has faced up to these problems this year, and feels that it has been not altogether unsuccessful. Many of these Maoris have a poor background—they left school in a low grade at a late age, and they drifted from village to town, where they obtained work at unskilled or semi-skilled trades at the whim of the labour market. In consequence, they have taken over many facets of the pakeha pattern of life without realizing or understanding the implications thereof. Ultimately they appear to overreach themselves, and find society taking action. After studying this matter for some years I am of the opinion that some cases at least, can be attributed to inadequate schooling, others are due to lack of intelligent application to the tenets of living in a large community, while a still greater number are due to disphoria. Such are the problems the Maori inmate poses to the school.

Since the "whole" man comes to the school, an attempt has been made to give socially constructive education as well as "tool" education to those who attend. Beside the "tool" subjects, the men have been encouraged to follow up subjects in which they have an interest. To correct an inadequate concept of the self to society a good deal of corrective work has been done along lines of group discussion. All have been encouraged to think through methods for their own rehabilitation and, where necessary, recast ideas in accordance with their capabilities and mental capacity. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to use visual aids this year as no machine has been available.

With the idea of furthering their education at the technical level three men completed the requirements for the primary school Leaving Certificate.

In concluding this report I should like to place on record the excellent work being done by the Assistant Schoolmaster, Mr. Warner. Mr. Warner handles the Maoris with conspicuous success. The very happy and co-operative relationship between the prison school and the Superintendent has been fostered by the Superintendent, Mr. Lauder, and the Chief Warder. Their understanding has been most helpful, and I am most grateful for their kindness.

The physical-drill class is carried on for the benefit of the younger prisoners under the direction of a member of the staff.

Christmas cheer was supplied from various social organizations and highly appreciated by all prisoners, and more so this year considering the scarcity of foodstuffs.

The spiritual welfare of the prisoners have been looked after by the various denominations by holding Sunday services and by personal contact.

The conduct of the staff generally has been satisfactory, and a satisfactory standard of discipline has been maintained under very trying conditions on account of excessive long hours of duty through staff shortage.

In the industrial activities the officers responsible have maintained a very satisfactory standard of industry in their respective Departments.

The clerical and stores staff have dealt with their phase of institutional matters quite efficiently.