

The practice of sending men suffering from the effects of drink to prison for medical treatment is in existence still, notwithstanding all that has been urged against it. Although every possible care and attention is paid to them when in prison, both by the Surgeon and the Prison staff, still, with the utmost desire to do everything possible for their comfort and ultimate recovery, there is this to be said: that there are no trained nurses to be found in prisons, and, as good nursing is a great help to recovery, these men should, when possible, be sent to some suitable building in close proximity to the Hospital, and looked after by trained nurses. Three-fourths of the men received for medical treatment I found to be exceedingly quiet, and I feel satisfied that had they been sent to the Hospital their presence in the ward would not in the slightest degree be detrimental to the patients occupying the same ward. I hope that in the near future some steps may be taken to send the class referred to above either to the hospital, or some other suitable place, which the prison is not.

The conduct of the prisoners has been on the whole good, only a very small percentage having been punished for idleness at work. Apart from a few, all the other prisoners worked well. The health of the prisoners has been good. There has been no case of serious illness during the year, although the average daily on the sick-list has been a fraction over one. Men and women sent here for drunkenness are very often sick for a day or two, and sometimes longer. They add a good percentage to the sick-list.

There were forty-four punishments inflicted during the year, varying from twenty-four hours to three days, and two prisoners being punished by forfeiture of marks.

The contractors for supplying flour, meat, and groceries to the Prison have given the utmost satisfaction. There has been only one complaint during the year, and that as to the quality of the meat, made by a prisoner to the Official Visitor. His complaint was to the effect that he would like to get better meat. The Official Visitor went to the kitchen, inspected the meat, and made the following entry in the book: "Examined meat in kitchen, both roast and boiled; found nothing to complain about."

The conduct of the officers has been very good, with one exception, that of a warder charged with drunkenness; for this offence he was dismissed from the service.

Two warders were appointed on six months' probation. At the end of their term they passed a good examination, resulting in their being permanently appointed to the service.

The regulations as to the privileges granted to prisoners of more frequent visits from their friends and relations is very much appreciated by them, as is also the additional gratuity they receive on their discharge from prison. First offenders are kept by themselves in the Prison; on Saturdays and Sundays they exercise in the shops-yard, and at night are located on the top landings, away from the other prisoners. The boys are kept in the separate divisions, cleaning and picking oakum, and are not allowed to mix with old offenders. I regret that two of these boys are committed for trial for breaking and entering.

The hard-labour prisoners have been employed at Erskine Point, Quail Island, Sumner Road, Search Light, and Sticking Point. At the latter place they have been principally employed. This work has been carried on under instructions from the District Engineer. He visits the works periodically, and has on every occasion expressed himself thoroughly satisfied with the portion of the work completed.

First Offenders' Probation Act.

I have had only one probationer during the year. He has been employed occasionally, but he has not been able to keep his payments up monthly as regular as I would wish, and I have been obliged to give him time to pay. He has been conducting himself very well.

M. M. CLEARY,
Gaoler and Probation Officer.

NAPIER PRISON.

The conduct of the prisoners on the whole has been good; only four punishments for minor prison offences. The health of the prisoners has been good; there were no cases of sickness. The rations supplied were good, and the fact that there were no complaints speaks well for the contractors.

The officers have done their duty efficiently, and there were no reports against any of them. The prisoners finished cutting the stone for the flood memorial erected on the Marine Parade; this work shows what can be done with prison labour when intelligently directed. The drainage in connection with the sanitary arrangements of the Prison has been satisfactorily carried out under the immediate supervision of the Inspector of Works, the prisoners doing the labour. Other work in hand: Stone-dressing for new wall, quarrying, and breaking road-metal. The Supreme Court House and grounds are kept in order by the prisoners.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that the recent classification of officers has given great satisfaction, but something more is necessary to make the lot of the prison officer a pleasant one—some provision for old age by way of a better retiring allowance.

First Offenders' Probation Act.

I have the honour to report on the working of the First Offenders' Probation Act in this district during the year 1900: On the 1st January, there were three males who reported themselves at Napier. Ten males and one female were placed on probation during the year, including one defaulter who was rearrested, brought before the Supreme Court, and again released on the former conditions. Seven were transferred to other districts, and are doing well according to last reports. Six males and one female are still reporting themselves at Napier, and doing well.