

I regret to say that with two of the officers, owing to repeated differences, there was not that pull-together spirit so necessary for the welfare, good order, and discipline of the Prison.

At this Prison, where the staff is small, one great drawback is the distance from the Prison the married officer is compelled to reside, and the consequent difficulty of communication with him in case of emergency or should necessity arise. As you are aware, there are no Prison quarters for married officers, neither are there houses within even a reasonable distance from this procurable as residences. The house occupied by the Matron contains seven rooms, and if a smaller one was erected for her, adjacent thereto, say, three rooms with lean-to, which should be large enough for requirements, that now occupied by her would be available and very suitable for the married warder. The necessary expenditure would not be great, and the saving to the Department of lodging-allowance would in a short time recoup the outlay.

The First Offenders' Probation Act.

At the end of the year there were no probationers on the Register of this district. Those dealt with during the year were as follows: One was discharged, having completed the term satisfactorily; one was placed on probation and transferred to another district.

T. R. POINTON,
Gaoler and Probation Officer.

INVERCARGILL PRISON.

THE number of prisoners in custody at the commencement of the year was 23 males, no females; the number received was 131—viz., 119 males, 12 females; number discharged, 125 males, 11 females; number remaining at the end of the year, 17 males, 1 female.

There were 22 males, 2 females, received on remand; 5 males, 1 female, were sentenced; 17 males, 1 female, discharged. There were also 11 lunatics remanded—viz., 10 males, 1 female; 3 males and the 1 female were discharged, 7 males were committed to the Lunatic Asylum.

The conduct and industry of the prisoners continues to be very good. They are, as usual, working for the Corporation, building bridges and making improvements in the reserves. They still continue to give every satisfaction.

One prisoner, sentenced to six months' hard labour on the 6th June, was suffering from an internal complaint. Five days after his admission he was removed to the Hospital, where he died on the 9th July. Another prisoner, serving twelve months in default of sureties, was also sent to the Hospital, suffering from chronic rheumatism. He remained there for twenty-eight days. The health of the prisoners has been excellent throughout the year.

During the year 5 prisoners were punished for eight minor prison offences, one prisoner being credited with half the number. A prisoner awaiting trial volunteered to work. He escaped from the prison-works, and was recaptured within an hour of his dash for freedom. Great credit is due to the officer for the promptness and zeal he manifested in following up the escaped prisoner, which led to the speedy recapture of the escapee.

Rations are supplied by contract. They were of good quality; no complaints.

There has been no change in the staff during the year. The conduct of the officers has been good; they performed their duties very satisfactorily.

The 26th June was observed as a Prison holiday. All the prisoners were given a dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, as much as they could eat, and those who were smokers were also supplied with 1 oz. of tobacco, which was very much appreciated. After the 26th prisoners sentenced to three months' hard labour and upwards who are smokers are allowed 1 oz. of tobacco per week. They have their smoke in the yard after their midday meal. This indulgence is working very satisfactorily in this Prison. The prisoners seem more contented; there is not that hankering after tobacco now. If a prisoner's conduct or industry is not satisfactory, the bare threat that his tobacco will be stopped has the desired effect. I recommend that this indulgence be continued.

On the 1st January, 1902, there was 1 prisoner on probation, 7 were received during the year, and 1 discharged, leaving 7 probationers at the end of the year. All are doing well.

J. H. BRATBY, Gaoler.

LYTTELTON PRISON.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the working of this Prison for the year ended the 31st December, 1902.

Received, 638 males and 113 females; discharged, 648 males and 116 females; leaving a balance of 119 males and 9 females in custody at the end of the year.

The male prisoners were employed at the Sumner Road defence-works and at Sticking Point. The latter work has proved to be of a substantial nature, as it has withstood heavy seas during the past year. Two warders' cottages have been erected on the vacant section, and are now occupied. All the work in connection with these cottages has been carried out by prison labour. Female prisoners were employed in washing, &c.

The conduct of some of the prisoners has been very bad. On one occasion a prisoner, who was guilty of gross misconduct and was punished by the Visiting Justice, on his being taken to the solitary division assaulted a warder who reported him, and was assisted by two other prisoners. The warder's eyes were blackened and his tooth broken. For this offence the prisoners were tried before the Stipendiary Magistrate, who fined them marks equivalent to six months' remission of their respective sentences. On a second occasion one of the prisoners who had been punished for the first assault on the warder, with the assistance of a fellow-prisoner made a more determined attack, using a knife, but before they could do any serious injury to the warders they were dis-