

WAIOTAPU PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Waiotapu, 16th January, 1904.

THE work done here has been most satisfactory and up to the standard of previous years. Accommodation for the increased number of prisoners having been provided, 16 men were brought here on the 6th January; they were transferred from Dunedin, Lyttelton, Wellington, Wanganui, and Auckland Prisons. I regret to have to report that some of them were not of the class suitable for this place: many were old offenders from Australia, but, being unknown to the police here, were classed as first offenders. I had trouble with several, and eventually one (an old offender in New South Wales, where he had received sentences aggregating thirty-four years) tried to escape. He was caught and sent to Auckland, where he was tried in Court and received four months' additional imprisonment. Since then greater care in choosing men has resulted most favourably, and the recent arrivals could hardly be improved on.

The clearing and pitting of the ground was continued until June, when planting was commenced, and continued until the end of October, during which period the undermentioned varieties and number of trees and seeds were planted: Walnuts (*Juglans regia*), 13,084; yellow-pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), 67,694; Austrian pine (*P. austriaca*), 167,828; *P. benthamiana*, 6,985; Corsican pine (*P. laricio*), 67,670; silver-birch (*Betula alba*), 11,542; acacia, 8,467; Oregon pine (*Abies douglasii*), 33,828; Menzies' spruce (*Abies menziesii*), 15,625; lofty pine (*Pinus excelsa*), 2,650; larch (*Larix europæa*), 48,950; redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), 3,055; Spanish chestnuts (seeds), 52,552; filberts (seeds), 995; sugar-maple, 50; *Catalpa speciosa*, 50; laurel, 1,125; red-gum (*Eucalyptus teretifolia*), 78,413; peppermint-gum (*E. amygdalina*), 49,530; mountain-ash, (*E. stuartiana*), 12,207; oaks (acorns), 16,998; Italian poplars, 250; blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), 1,256; *Pinus insignis*, 4,199 (for breakwinds); walnut-seeds, 5,015: total number of trees and seeds planted, 671,987. Area cleared, 300 acres. A block to the south of the present reserve has been surveyed, and is to be fenced as soon as the necessary materials can be procured; the line of fence has been cleared the whole way round. Roads have been formed through the reserve to enable the wagon to take trees to where the planting is being done.

The sheep-paddock has been ploughed and sown in grass, but the recent frost destroyed the young grass and also a large number of trees. This frost appears to be usual at this time of the year, as the records show 10° on the same date during last and previous years. The garden is still producing enough vegetables to supply the camp, although the increased number tax it greatly, and we shall have to enclose another piece of ground shortly to insure a constant supply of vegetables throughout the year.

The health of prisoners is good, there being no serious cases of sickness. One man was sent to Rotorua for treatment as he was suffering from an internal complaint, and eventually he was sent back to Auckland Prison.

With the exception of the cases mentioned in a previous paragraph the general conduct of prisoners has been good.

The rations are of good quality, and the contractors continue to give satisfaction. Complaints have been made about the bread arriving in a crushed condition, but the baker is not responsible for that, as during the tourist season the coaches are so crowded that the bread is forced into as small a space as possible. I have arranged for a daily delivery during the summer months, and hope that will prevent the crushing.

The conduct of the officers has been good, and the manner in which they performed their duties has greatly assisted in the success of the camp. The Forester in charge of the works was appointed a probationary warder, and the difficulty *re* control and reporting of prisoners by him is thus overcome.

J. C. SCANLAN,

Principal Warder and Acting-Gaoler.

WANGANUI PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Wanganui, 15th January, 1904.

REPORT on the working of this Prison for the year ending the 31st December last:—

The number of prisoners received was 267 males and 21 females, as against 161 males and 14 females for the previous year, which, as will be seen, was a large increase of both sexes.

The number in custody on the 1st January, 1903, was 19 males and 1 female; on the 31st December the numbers were 23 males and 2 females: the daily average being 29.79 males and 1.98 females; total average, 31.77.

The conduct of the prisoners has been good, only 7 having been punished as against 13 last year, which, considering the large increase in numbers, is, I consider, very satisfactory. This improvement is undoubtedly largely due to the Acting Principal Warder and to an extra warder having been added to the staff.

The prisoners have as a rule been fairly industrious, only one having been reported for idleness. They have been employed during the year in the reserves.

The health of the prisoners has been very good considering the large number in custody for the greater part of the year. One man (a returned trooper), who had been badly wounded, was sick during the whole term of his sentence (four months). One long-sentence prisoner was removed to the Hospital suffering from a tumour in the buttock, and was returned to the Prison cured. Another three-months man brought in measles. Every precaution was taken, and though the prison was very full at the time only one other case occurred.

The rations have been uniformly good, and there were no complaints of any importance.

The conduct of the officers has been good. There were no escapes during the year.

The complete repainting of the Prison was completed this year; and everything in the Prison is in good working-order, with the one exception of the drainage, which I am expecting to have authority to commence any day.