

hanging on the 28th August last is a case in point. He was received on remand simply as a helpless drunk for medical treatment. No hint was given of the signs of mental aberration which he had shown the previous evening which led to his being sent in on the above charge, nor did his condition on admission indicate either helpless drunkenness or lunacy; yet within two hours of his entry he had committed the deed which caused his death. The prison surgeon reported to me it was not a case of helpless drunkenness at all, but a pure case of lunacy from other causes.

The contractors for supplies have given every satisfaction: there have been no complaints.

Religious services were conducted regularly on Sundays. Ladies and gentlemen still kindly continue to give their services as organists, which is much appreciated. I regret to have to state that owing to age and infirmities our much-respected chaplain, Mr. J. A. Torrance, has been compelled to resign his positions. After being forty years chaplain of the prison and thirty years agent of the Patients and Prisoners' Aid Society, his severance from the prison will be greatly felt by those who came in contact with him. Mr. F. G. Cumming, assistant agent and chaplain, has been appointed to both positions.

I regret to have to report the death of Dr. Burns, the prison surgeon. The deceased gentleman was over thirty years medical officer of the prison, and was unflinching in his duties. Dr. Coughtrey has been appointed prison surgeon *vice* Dr. Burns, deceased.

Two hard-labour prisoners, one male and one female, were removed to the Mental Hospital. Both showed signs of mental aberration on admission.

There were 8 reports against subordinate officers, as against 2 in 1906—1 absent from duty, 1 going off duty without being relieved, 2 neglect of duty, 3 absent without leave, 1 absent without leave and drunk. Seven of the reports occurred at Taiaroa Heads, and one at Dunedin Prison. One officer was reported twice, and one three times: the latter was permitted to resign his position in the service.

FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

There were 2 males and 2 females on probation on the 1st January, 1907; 12 males and 1 female were placed on probation during the year. Seven males and 1 female were transferred to other districts; 1 male and 2 females completed their terms of probation satisfactorily; 2 males were arrested and sentenced to terms of imprisonment: thus leaving 4 males, no females, on probation at the end of the year.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

J. H. BRATBY,
Gaoler and Probation Officer.

HANMER SPRINGS PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Hanmer Springs, 5th February, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to report on the working of this prison for the year ended the 31st December, 1907.

In custody on the 1st January, 23 males; 32 males were received during the year, and 22 discharged, the average number in custody being 24.38.

Two prisoners escaped, but were speedily recaptured and sentenced to additional terms of imprisonment.

The rations have been of the best quality, and regularly supplied.

The conduct of the officers has been good.

Work done consisted of clearing scrub, digging pits, planting trees, and general maintenance of plantations.

Summary of work done: Digging pits, 420,000; clearing scrub, 30 acres; trees planted—*Larix Europea* 170,300, *Pinus laricio* 143,539, *Pinus ponderosa* 59,200, *Pinus Benthamiana* 20,400, *Pinus Austriaca* 37,220, *Pinus Jeffreyi* 150, *Pinus contorta* 1,200, *Pinus muricata* 9,650, *Betula alba* 945—total, 442,505.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

J. T. REID, Acting-Gaoler.

HOKITIKA PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Hokitika, 2nd January, 1908.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the annual returns for this prison for year ended 31st December, 1907.

There were 20 males and 1 female prisoner in custody at the commencement of the year; received during the year, 54 males, 5 females; discharged, 59 males and 4 females: leaving 15 males and 2 females in custody at the end of the year.

The health of the prisoners has been excellent, and there has been an almost complete immunity from sickness.

There were 10 males and 1 female received on remand suffering from delirium tremens, all of whom recovered and were discharged on paying costs of maintenance. One male prisoner under sentence of two months, who showed symptoms of mental aberration on admission and gradually became worse, was transferred to the Mental Hospital, where he still remains.

The conduct of the prisoners as a whole has been good, and punishments were few. Two prisoners escaped from the working-party in the vicinity of the prison; both were recaptured and dealt with by the Stipendiary Magistrate, each receiving an additional sentence of six months.

The rations supplied by contract during the year have been of excellent quality, and there has been a complete absence of the usual trivial complaints by prisoners.

The officers have performed their duties satisfactorily. One was transferred to another prison, and was replaced by a probationer who has now been appointed to the service.