

The INSPECTOR OF PRISONS to the UNDER-SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Department of Justice, Prisons Branch, 31st March, 1910.

I have the honour to present my first report as Inspector of the Prisons of the Dominion.

As a result of reorganization, the administrative functions performed by my predecessor in office were taken over by you, and the duties assigned to me were more exclusively those of visitation and advice.

The arrangement has worked very harmoniously and satisfactorily, and has not unduly trenched on the time occupied by my administration of another Department.

Upon this date last year, Lieut.-Colonel Hume, in the opening paragraph of his twenty-eighth and last report, said, "I am glad to be able to report that the prisons of the Dominion are being handed over in a satisfactory state of efficiency and discipline." To appreciate fully how gratifying it must have been to him to feel able to write this, one has to consider that during his term of office Colonel Hume had seen the prisons evolve from a comparatively primitive condition, that he had initiated a system, and that when, full of vigour, he retired under the age-limit regulation, there were very few officers in the Department whom he had not himself selected. The late Inspector has been appointed a Visiting Justice to all the prisons, and therefore the value of his ripe experience will not be lost.

It will be interesting as a record for future reference to enumerate the penal establishments, with the number of prisoners, male and female, and the number and rank of the staff in each, at the time of Colonel Hume's retirement. This is done hereunder, and contrasted with the return upon this date, showing among other things the changes incidental to the closing as prisons and proclaiming as police gaols of the establishments at Hokitika and Wanganui.

	Prisons at									Prison Camps at			Police Gaols.	Total.
	Auckland.	Dunedin.	Hokitika.	Invercargill.	Lyttelton.	Napier.	New Plymouth.	Wanganui.	Wellington.	Hanmer.	Waioapu.	Waipa.		
On 31st March, 1909,—														
Prisoners—														
Male	268	57	14	37	119	57	48	32	153	16	35	21	10	857
Female	18	8	..	2	11	5	2	6	17	..	..	..	..	69
Total	286	65	14	39	130	62	50	38	170	16	35	21	10	926
Staff—														
Gaoler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	..	9
Chief Warder	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Principal and acting principal warders	4	3	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	..	21
Warders	26	10	2	3	15	4	5	2	23	4	6	3	..	103
Surgeons	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	..	9
Matrons	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	..	9
Assistant matrons	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Officers in charge of police gaols	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27	27
Total	35	18	6	7	23	8	10	6	30	5	7	4	27	186
On 31st March, 1910,—														
Prisoners—														
Male	279	67	..	38	140	40	51	..	152	21	42	18	12	860
Female	23	9	..	..	12	2	9	..	18	..	..	..	1	74
Total	302	76	..	38	152	42	60	..	170	21	42	18	13	934
Staff—														
Gaoler	1	1	..	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
Chief Warder	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Principal and acting principal warders	3	2	..	1	2	1	1	..	3	1	1	1	..	16
Warders	29	10	..	3	16	4	5	..	25	2	6	3	..	103
Surgeon	1	1	..	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
Matron	1	1	..	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
Assistant matron	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Officers in charge of police gaols	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	29	29
Total	37	17	..	7	23	8	9	..	33	3	7	4	29	177