

Deaths.—Seven deaths occurred in prisons during the year, as against 6 in the previous year—viz., 3 at Auckland, 1 at Hanmer Springs, two at Napier, and 1 at Wanganui.

Admissions.—From Table A it will be found that at the commencement of last year there were 823 males and 56 females undergoing detention in the various gaols of the Dominion, while at the close of the year there were 882 males and 68 females—an increase of 59 males and 12 females. During last year 6,020 males and 616 females passed through the different prisons, as against 5,837 males and 554 females in the previous year—an increase of 183 males and 62 females. These numbers represent only 5,588 separate prisoners (5,160 males and 428 females), each occasion on which a prisoner is received being counted; and of the above totals 451 males and 61 females were received twice, 112 males and 17 females three times, 35 males and 11 females four times, 7 males and 7 females five times, 4 males and 4 females six times, 3 males and 2 females seven times, and 2 males eight times.

Daily Average.—During the year 1909 the daily average of prisoners in the different gaols of the Dominion was 848·45 males and 62·1 females—an increase on the previous year of 65·41 males and a decrease of 7·79 females.

Expenditure.—Details of the expenditure in the various prisons will be found in Table B.

Education.—A reference to the educational Table C shows that, out of a total of 6,020 males and 616 females received during the year, 28 males were of superior education, 4,855 males and 533 females were able to read and write, 64 males and 7 females could read only, while 230 males and 22 females could neither read nor write.

Offences by Prisoners.—There were 113 offences reported, against 64 separate prisoners. Details are given in Table I.

Offences by Officers.—There were 7 reports against subordinate officers, as against 13 during 1908—viz., Hanmer Springs, 3; Lyttelton, 1; Napier, 2; and Wellington, 1.

Habitual Criminals and Offenders.—At the Reformatory Prison at New Plymouth, where the habitual criminals are detained, there were 3 males and 1 female in custody at the beginning of the year. During the year 16 males and 3 females were received, and 4 males discharged, leaving 15 males and 4 females in custody there at the close of the year.

First Offenders' Probation Act.

Table J shows that 80 persons were placed on probation, as against 133 in 1908. Of these, 23 have so far satisfactorily carried out the terms of their licenses and been discharged, 9 have been rearrested, 2 absconded, 1 was granted permission to leave the Dominion, and 45 still remain under the supervision of the Probation Officers.

The amounts ordered to be paid by the various Courts towards the costs of prosecution amount to £291 13s. 3d., of which sum £193 0s. 3d. has already been paid.

Of the 2,193 persons placed on probation since the passing of the First Offenders' Probation Act, 1886, 1,862 have been discharged after properly carrying out the conditions of their licenses, 131 have been rearrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, 53 absconded, 2 were permitted to leave the Dominion, 1 committed suicide, 4 died, and 140 still remain under the supervision of the Probation Officers.

It will therefore be seen that, while a percentage of 84·90 have done well and completed their probation, a percentage of only 2·41 have eluded the vigilance of the police and Probation Officers by absconding.

GAOLERS' REPORTS FOR 1909.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Auckland, 23rd January, 1910.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report on this prison for the year 1909, together with the usual statistics, and returns of expenditure, &c.

On the first day of the year under review there were 263 prisoners in custody, inclusive of 24 females.

The number received during the year was 1,622—viz., 1,507 males, 115 females, making a total of 1,885 prisoners dealt with—a greater number than in any previous year. Consequent upon numerous recommitments, the number received represents 1,306 distinct individuals—1,220 males, 86 females.

The greatest number of both sexes in custody at one time was 359, the least number 245, and the daily average 306·83—males, 289·23; females, 17·6.

Discharges during the same period numbered 1,450 males, 118 females, the total number in custody on the 31st December last being 296 and 21 of the respective sexes, or a total of 317. Three female "habitual offenders" and four male "habitual criminals" were transferred to the Reformatory Prison at New Plymouth. Generally speaking, the health of the prisoners has been very good, sickness in the majority of cases being restricted to colds, and ailments not of a serious nature. Eleven males were sent to the General Hospital for treatment during the year: of this number, 3 were returned to the prison cured, the sentences of 3 expired during treatment, 3 died,