

FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

Table J shows that 108 persons were placed on probation, as against 80 in 1909. Of these, 24 have so far satisfactorily carried out the terms of their licenses and been discharged, 24 have been rearrested, 9 absconded, 3 were granted permission to leave the Dominion, and 68 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 £465 17s. 1d., of which sum £260 3s. 3d. has already been paid.

Of the 2,301 persons placed on probation since the passing of the First Offenders' Probation Act, 1886, 1,980 have been discharged after properly carrying out the conditions of their licenses, 141 have been rearrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, 57 absconded, 5 were permitted to leave the Dominion, 1 committed suicide, 5 died, and 112 still remain under the supervision of the Probation Officers.

It will therefore be seen that, while a percentage of 86·04 have done well and completed their probation, a percentage of only 2·47 have eluded the vigilance of the police and Probation Officers by absconding.

GAOLERS' REPORTS FOR 1910.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, Auckland, 24th January, 1911.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on this institution for the past year, and also to forward the usual returns of expenditure, statistics, &c.

On the first day of the year under review there were 317 prisoners (296 males and 21 females) in custody. During the year 1,689 prisoners (1,564 males and 125 females) were received. This shows an increase of 67 (57 males and 10 females) as compared with the previous year. The number of individual prisoners received was 1,245 (1,162 males and 83 females). The previous offenders having from two to eight previous convictions numbered 444 (402 males and 42 females).

The number of prisoners in custody during the year who had been declared habitual criminals was 28; 12 received their sentences during the year, and 1 was received here on transfer. Six habitual criminals were transferred to New Plymouth upon the expiry of the definite portion of their sentence, and 1 was transferred to the Wellington Prison before such expiry. At the close of the year 19 prisoners were in custody who had been declared habitual criminals.

The daily average number of prisoners was 288·49, as against 306·83 in 1909, a decrease of 18·34. The greatest and least number of prisoners in custody at any one time was 341 and 224 respectively. During the year 1,778 were discharged (males 1,645 and females 133), leaving 215 males and 13 females in custody on the 31st December last.

There were no complaints from prisoners about the quality of the rations issued to them, and I consider that the contractors carried out the conditions of their contract in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. The same may also be said of those supplying material for manufacture and other articles. There were 117 breaches of the Prison Regulations, all minor offences except two, dealt with by the Visiting Justices as follows: Cautioned, 19; bread-and-water diet, 33; to forfeit marks, 7. The two aggravated offences were heard in open Court by a Stipendiary Magistrate, and punished by forfeiture of marks. It may therefore be reasonable to say, considering the large number of prisoners received during the year, that the general conduct of prisoners has been good. Their health, on the whole, has also been good, notwithstanding the increase in the daily average of sick as compared with that of the preceding year.

During the year 14 males and 1 female were sent to the Auckland Hospital, the daily average of sick prisoners in that institution being 1·63. Five males underwent successful operations there—1 for hæmorrhoids, 1 for chronic ulcer of the lip, and 3 for hernia. At the close of the year 1 male was in the Auckland Hospital undergoing medical treatment.

There were three deaths, all males—1 at the hospital, and 2 at the prison. These latter died suddenly and before medical assistance could be summoned. In each case a *post mortem* examination and an inquest was held, and the jury, in accordance with the medical testimony, brought in verdicts that death in the respective cases had resulted from "pleurisy," "tuberculosis," and "fatty degeneration of the heart," all due to natural causes.

With few exceptions—drones are always more or less in evidence—the industry of the prisoners has been good.

The following is a review of the more important work performed during the year: (a.) Tarring the floor of the church (first time). (b.) Retarring and disinfecting the entire floor-space of the stone building, including cells, lavatories, balconies, corridors, north wing basement passage, the adjoining workshops, stores, &c., right round to the new prison kitchen; also retarring the exercise quadrangle, ovals, footpaths, and boundary-walks. (c.) The completion of the new kitchen, erection of boilers, &c., putting in cement floor, water and drainage services, sinks, &c. As required by the regulations, the walls and ceilings of the cells, rooms, passages, &c., used by the prisoners in both the stone and wooden buildings have been limewashed twice; and, where required, the paint-work has been renewed. This work includes the painting of the roof of the Gaoler's quarters. (d.) Apart from the foregoing and