

There were in confinement on the first day of the year under review 128 males and 10 females; 583 males and 81 females were received, making a total of 802 prisoners dealt with. The numbers received represent 511 and 63 individual prisoners, 54 and 12 of the respective sexes having been recommitted from two to six times.

The total number of prisoners discharged was 572 males, 76 females, leaving in custody on the last day of the year 139 and 15 of the respective sexes. The daily average number of prisoners was 149·13, as against 136·51 in the previous year, an increase of 12·62. The greatest number of prisoners in confinement at any one time was 177, and the least number 127.

The number of habitual criminals in custody (11) and received (3) declared, and 1 on transfer, during the year was 15, all males. Upon the expiry of the definite portion of their sentences 7 were transferred to New Plymouth, leaving 8 here at the close of the year.

Reformative-treatment prisoners dealt with during the same period numbered 35 (males 32, females 3). Receipts accounted for 11 males and 2 females; the discharges were 15 males, inclusive of 2 released on probation; leaving 20 males and 3 females in this class on the 31st ultimo.

The quality of rations issued to prisoners was excellent, resulting in no complaints being made. The several firms supplying material for manufacture and other articles to the Prison gave every satisfaction.

The health of prisoners generally was very good, some 61 cases of sickness, mostly of a trifling nature, being recorded. Five prisoners (3 females and 2 males) were sent to the Christchurch Hospital for medical treatment. The females were suffering from cirrhosis of liver, cellulitis of left hand, and appendicitis respectively. The term of imprisonment of two of them expired while there; the third one was cured, returned to the Prison, and discharged when her sentence expired. Of the two male prisoners sent there, one died some three weeks after being admitted. A post-mortem examination and inquest was held, the Coroner recording a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony, that death was due to pyæmia. The second one is still an inmate of that institution, suffering from tubercular disease of the dorsal vertebræ.

The daily average sick was 1·75. Two prisoners on the sick-list for 242 and 72 days respectively were mainly responsible therefor. One remand female, an epileptic, was sent to the Mental Hospital, as also were two male prisoners who had developed suicidal tendencies. On examination they were found to be of unsound mind. One was returned to the Prison cured after a detention of four months and a half; the other one is still undergoing curative treatment.

There were no aggravated prison offences, nor was there any escape or attempt thereat. There were, however, 258 breaches of the Prison Regulations against 158 prisoners, all minor offences, dealt with by the Visiting Justices. The number does not compare favourably with that of the preceding year, and was in a great measure due to some 80 prisoners acting in concert to defy authority and refusing to work. The ringleaders and those who took a more or less prominent part, 28 in number, were punished. The cases against offending prisoners were disposed of as follows: Sentenced to bread-and-water diet, 35; the same with forfeiture of marks, 13; to forfeiture of marks, 16; cautioned, 94. Except for the foregoing, prisoners, generally speaking, were fairly well behaved, and their industry, with a few exceptions, satisfactory.

Prisoners employed in the workshops turned out very good work, both in quantity and quality, under the supervision of the shoemaker and tailor warders. In the tailors' shop, where 14 prisoners were daily at work, 5,589 articles of clothing, &c., and in the shoemakers' shop, with a daily average of 7 prisoners, 1,242 pairs of boots and slippers, were made; much repairing was also done in each of these shops. I attach hereto a return of articles manufactured therein, and some of the repairs effected. Good work was also done by the matmakers, carpenters, tinsmith, and blacksmith.

For the Lyttelton Borough Council prisoners were employed quarrying, breaking road-metal, dressing stone for wall-building purposes, and erecting a massive retaining-wall on the Simeon Quay roadway near the tunnel-mouth, to be, when completed, about 5 chains in length and 35 ft. in height. A party of prisoners was also at work for the Defence Department painting the interior of the Artillery Barracks, completing the drainage-work there, excavating, quarrying, &c., dressing stone for retaining-walls, and on occasion, when required, painting and doing other work at Fort Jervois Battery, Ripa Island. The female prisoners, as heretofore, were employed at laundry-work, sewing, knitting, and keeping their division clean.

Divine service was held every Sunday, and thanks are due to the ministers of the several denominations and others attending to the spiritual needs of prisoners; to Mr. Smail, agent of the Prisoners Aid Society, for his indefatigable efforts to befriend, find employment for, and in many other ways assist prisoners on discharge; also to several donors of books and magazines to the prison library.

The conduct of officers and the manner of discharging their various duties was, generally speaking, fairly satisfactory. The services of one temporary officer were dispensed with, as he was wanting in tact and discretion in dealing with prisoners.