

the training of youthful offenders—surely a profitable work, both to the State and to the individual prisoners engaged in the work.

At Waikeria, where the Department has some 1,500 acres of land, the first prison farm in New Zealand has been established, and, although only a short time has elapsed, some 300 acres have been cleared and brought into cultivation. Concrete-block making has also been started there, and the prison and farm buildings will be built by prison labour with blocks made on the spot, there being a large quantity of splendid material available in the river bounding the property. Blocks will also be supplied for the erection of the main buildings of the Mental Hospital, which will be located not very far away.

The acquirement of an area of farm land in Canterbury, on which an up-to-date prison can be built to replace the unsuitable building at Lyttelton, will afford further opportunity for the extension of the policy decided upon of providing for the employment in agricultural pursuits of prisoners, who are mostly derived from the unskilled class; and the training of youthful offenders in an occupation which will enable them to obtain suitable employment on their release.

The prisoners at the tree-planting camps are doing work which will ultimately be of great value to the community, but it is, of course, not immediately remunerative. Its value from a reformative point of view is recognized.

There is, however, a large proportion of prisoners—what may be called the floating prison population, persons who are continually in and out of prison on short sentences, many of them derelicts—for whom it will always be difficult to find profitable employment. In time, however, something may be done even for these.

It is from the prison farms that the best results may be expected, and, properly directed and carried on, these institutions will without doubt in time become more than self-supporting and relieve the community of a large portion of the cost of maintenance of prisoners, who, like the poor, will, I am afraid, be always with us.

*Staff Matters.*—I regret that, owing to his duties as Inspector-General of Mental Hospitals requiring his whole attention, Dr. Hay has found it necessary to relinquish the position of Inspector of Prisons. Dr. Hay took a keen interest in the welfare of the prisons, and his retirement from the position of Inspector will be generally regretted by the Prison service. I desire to take this opportunity of placing on record the appreciation of the Department of the very valuable advice and assistance which his special knowledge of institutional management has enabled him to give during the time he was connected with the prisons.

The prisons staff has continued to show a praiseworthy desire to co-operate in improving the prison system, and I have to thank the Gaolers and officers generally for their loyal assistance in this direction.

C. B. JORDAN,

Under-Secretary.

#### THE INSPECTOR OF PRISONS TO THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Department of Justice (Prisons Branch), Wellington, 12th May, 1914.

In submitting the thirty-third annual report on the prisons of the Dominion, I must of necessity confine myself to what will amount to little more than a continuation of the statistics published in previous years, and a brief *résumé* of the work of the year that has just concluded, as the recent date of my appointment to the office of Inspector of Prisons precludes a general review of the operations of the Department during 1913.

From Table A it will be seen that in spite of the industrial troubles that disturbed the Dominion towards the end of the year the daily average of prisoners confined in our gaols was below that for 1912. The departmental figures prove, however, that the majority of the commitments took place too late in the year to materially affect the average for the whole period. The actual position is, perhaps, more clearly shown by the statistics in Table No. 1 (Prison Population).

#### PRISON POPULATION.

The following table shows at five-yearly intervals, and also for the past three years, the number of persons in prison per 10,000 of the general population :

No. 1.

| Year.      | Estimated Population<br>on 31st December. | Persons actually<br>in Prison on<br>31st December. | Number of Persons<br>in Prison per 10,000<br>of Population. |
|------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1881 .. .. | 500,910                                   | 690                                                | 13.77                                                       |
| 1886 .. .. | 589,386                                   | 625                                                | 10.60                                                       |
| 1891 .. .. | 634,058                                   | 534                                                | 8.42                                                        |
| 1896 .. .. | 714,162                                   | 550                                                | 7.70                                                        |
| 1901 .. .. | 787,656                                   | 713                                                | 9.05                                                        |
| 1906 .. .. | 908,726                                   | 891                                                | 9.80                                                        |
| 1911 .. .. | 1,025,406                                 | 873                                                | 8.51                                                        |
| 1912 .. .. | 1,052,627                                 | 866                                                | 8.22                                                        |
| 1913 .. .. | 1,084,662                                 | 919                                                | 8.47                                                        |