

KAINGAROA PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, Kaingaroa, 16th January, 1914.

I have the honour to submit to you the annual report for the year ended the 31st December, 1913, and also to forward the usual returns, expenditure, &c.

I took over charge of this prison on the 29th April, 1913, on transfer from Hammer Springs Prison.

There were 35 prisoners in custody on the 1st January, 1913. Twenty-seven males were received during the year; 18 males discharged on expiration of sentence; 12 males released on probationary license; and 8 males transferred to the prison at Auckland; in custody at the end of year, 24 males: daily average, 29.96.

The health of the prisoners has been very good; there was practically no sickness, except of a slight nature, during the year; the daily average on the sick-list was only 0.20, and this number was mainly due to 2 prisoners who were on the sick-list for seventeen and eleven days respectively.

Two prisoners escaped and 2 attempted to escape during the year; all were smartly recaptured by prison officers, and sentenced to additional terms of imprisonment. One prisoner who was charged with inflicting a wound was taken before the Magistrate at Rotorua and sentenced to further imprisonment.

With the exception of the 5 prisoners mentioned above, the conduct of the prisoners has been excellent, and the work done on the plantation has been very satisfactory, in view of the distance of the tree-planting operations from the camp.

The rations supplied to the prisoners have been of the very best quality, consequently no complaints have been made.

A new filter has been purchased for use of the prison, and the water used for drinking purposes is now filtered before being supplied to the prisoners.

The Prisons Board met here on two occasions during the year. The Board interviewed and examined all prisoners sentenced to reformatory detention, and subsequently recommended the release (on probationary license) of 11.

During the past two years the expenditure at this prison has been somewhat heavy. This has been mainly due to the cost of new buildings, fixtures, and other requirements. Fourteen acres of land have also been cleared, cultivated, and manured. This should yield an abundance of vegetables and winter feed for the pigs and sheep. The prison is now complete, and in future, with economical management, the expenditure should be much curtailed.

The Rev. Percy Davis, Church of England minister, who has conducted Divine service at this prison for the past two years, has been transferred to Hawke's Bay. The vacancy, however, has been filled by the Rev. J. L. Greer, who attends here on the first Sunday in every month. The Roman Catholic prisoners have service once a month, conducted by the Rev. Dean Lightheart.

The officers have carried out their duties in a very creditable manner.

The following is a summary of the work carried out by the prisoners during the year, viz.: Pits dug, 1,538,335; trees planted, 1,609,750; trees lined out into nursery lines, 168,973; also forming fire-breaks, clearing, and general maintenance-work. Total area cleared and planted during the year, 591 acres.

I have, &c.,

W. AYLING,

Acting-Gaoler.

The Under-Secretary for Justice, Wellington.

WAIKERIA PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, Waikeria, 31st December, 1913.

I beg to submit my report upon the working of this prison for the year ending 31st December, 1913.

There were 18 prisoners in custody at the beginning of the year; during the year 47 prisoners were received and 26 were discharged: leaving 39 in custody at the end of the year. The daily average was 25.23. All the prisoners were males.

The accommodation at the beginning of the year consisted of one cell-house containing twenty cells. This accommodation was increased by the building, with prison labour, of another cell-house of twenty cells, so that at the end of the year there was accommodation for 40 prisoners. A further extension is being made by the fitting-up of ten two-cell huts. When these are finished the accommodation will have a capacity for 60 men.

The health of the prisoners has been very good, and we have not had to treat any but minor ailments. Owing to the smallpox outbreak and the fact that there were fatalities within a short distance of the prison, all the officers and the prisoners were vaccinated. Several of the men were non-effective for a few days afterwards.

The behaviour of the prisoners has, on the whole, been good. The parenthesis disappears when it is remembered that the institution is a prison. The work of the prisoners has been very good. No men are sent here except those supposed to be able to stand the strain of heavy work, consequently it is possible to maintain a high average standard of work. We have no short-timers and no derelicts: the men have therefore time to settle down to the work and to get into a good stride.

About the middle of the year the work of excavating the site for the permanent building was commenced. In order to complete this work from start to finish some 60,000 yards of clay is to be removed. It is a big work, but more than justified by the excellence of the site to be obtained. It is centrally situated; stands 230 ft. above the sea-level; is well drained on all