

The reclamation-work has been steadily pushed on during the year, about 70 chains of embankment, consisting of about 18,000 cubic yards of material, having been placed in position. I expect to have all tidal and river waters shut off within the next six months, when the drainage and breaking-in of the farm lands could be proceeded with.

The instruction given in the Prison school still continues, with good results. Several of the men who have passed out of the school are continuing their studies and taking up a course with the International Correspondence Schools, thus proving that they are desirous of improving their position.

During the school holidays several prominent citizens of Invercargill have been giving lectures to prisoners, which have proved both instructive and entertaining.

The instruction of prisoners in Swedish drill is still carried on with much success. Those attending are divided into two classes: all begin in No. 2 class, and promotion to No. 1 depends upon the progress made in No. 2. A spirit of rivalry is thus created. Drill instruction is given thrice weekly, and the men evidently take a keen interest in the work, and their conduct has been excellent, for during the past six months there have been no reports against prisoners while attending the classes.

The holding of evening classes of instruction has one distinct advantage in that the young men are kept steadily engaged in healthy mental and physical exercises, instead of being locked up in a cell, which only tends to demoralize them.

I am firmly of the opinion that the methods now in use are giving good results.

FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

On the 1st January, 1915, there were 2 males and no females on the register. Eight males were admitted to probation during the year, and 2 males completed their terms of probation satisfactorily. Five males were transferred to other districts; 1 failed to comply with the conditions of his probation, was arrested, and is at present in custody awaiting sentence, thus leaving 2 males on the register at the end of the year.

KAINGAROA PRISON.

Eleven prisoners were reported for breaches of the regulations during the year, and 10 were subsequently transferred to the Auckland Prison.

With the exception of the 11 prisoners mentioned above the general conduct and industry of the prisoners has been excellent, and the work done on the plantation has been highly satisfactory. Although the men have had a long walk to the planting-area, they have done exceedingly good work. The credit obtained from the Forestry Department for the year's work was £1,795 10s.

The general health of the prisoners has been excellent, there being no serious sickness during the year. Dr. Bertram, of Rotorua, has recently been appointed Medical Officer to this Prison.

Divine service, both for Roman Catholics and Protestants, was conducted periodically throughout the year.

The Prison garden is looking remarkably well, and there will be a plentiful supply of vegetables for the prisoners until next season. There are also under cultivation 10 acres of oats, 2 acres of swedes, and 1½ acres of potatoes. Owing to a long spell of very dry weather the returns will not be so good as they would have been had the season been more favourable.

About 35 pigs were bred during the year, 28 of which were sold for the sum of £31 10s. 10d.

The following is a summary of the work carried out by prisoners during the year, viz.: Pits dug, 2,199,350; trees planted, 1,380,250; heeling in trees, lining out, weeding, clearing for tree-planting, forming fire-breaks, fencing, road making and repairing, and the usual maintenance-work.

LYTTTELTON PRISON.

No deaths occurred in the Prison during the year.

The health of the prisoners has been good. Four cases were sent to the Christchurch District Hospital, 3 for hernia and 1 for appendicitis, and after successful treatment were returned to the Prison.

The conduct and industry of prisoners generally has been good. There was only one case requiring serious punishment.

As in previous years, employment was found in quarrying, stone-dressing, and wall-building for the Lyttelton Borough Council. Another section of the Simeon Quay wall has been finished; also two retaining-walls, about 500 ft. long, with average height of 8 ft., in Upper Canterbury Street, have been completed. A stone-crushing plant has been erected at the new quarry, and is now in working-order and putting through a large quantity of stone for metal and screenings.

The tailoring and bootmaking departments have been exceptionally busy, and have filled large orders for clothing and uniforms, &c., for the prisons throughout the Dominion, also boots and slippers for the Mental Hospitals at Nelson, Christchurch, Seacliff, and Dunedin.

Divine service was held every Sunday by ministers of the several denominations, and on Christmas Day by permission of the Department an entertainment was provided by Mr. Booth and several gentlemen from Christchurch.