

The work of forming and metalling the road and bridging the various streams still continues to progress favourably, although to a large extent the work has been delayed through bad weather, more especially during the winter, when work was practically at a standstill owing to heavy snowfalls. Four bridges have been erected during the year, and the road is now metalled for a distance of about six miles and a half. A very fine metal-pit has been discovered on the road-line near the Whakapapanui Stream. It is found that this metal makes a much better road than the crushed metal. Tenders for a three-days-per-week motor mail-service from Waimarino to Tokaanu have been called, and it is expected that this will be the means of attracting a great deal of tourist traffic over the Waimarino-Tokaanu Road.

The conduct of the officers has been good.

Rations have been of good quality and regularly supplied.

Divine service has been held on several occasions.

WAIKERIA REFORMATORY FOR MEN.

The conduct of the prisoners on the whole has been satisfactory. There were no escapes throughout the year.

The health of the prisoners has been good. There was one admission to Hamilton Hospital through an accident. While in Hospital the patient contracted influenza, and is still unable to return to the Reformatory. Other cases of illness were of a mild nature and were treated in the Reformatory. While the influenza epidemic was raging in this district every precaution was taken under the direction of the Medical Officer to prevent it getting a strong hold. Thanks to these precautions there was only one case, which was of a mild nature.

A new camp has been established on the north end of the farm to accommodate a number of prisoners and the necessary officers. The prisoners in this camp will be employed clearing and burning scrub and bringing in new land ready for the plough. A second camp under canvas five miles from the main building was also established to enable the metalling of the Tokanui Mental Hospital Road to be carried out. The conduct of the men in both camps is excellent.

Good progress was made with the building of the administrative division of the institution. The fences in one of the exercise-yards have been shifted, and the sanitary arrangements have been so arranged as to allow the prisoners more room to exercise. A large amount of excavating on the site has been carried on, and it is hoped to have the hill levelled off on the west side of the building shortly, also the permanent levels taken and portion of the ground laid out. The electricians have fixed the wires from the power-house to No. 1 camp and dairy: it is certainly a great improvement. A wire was also taken over to the temporary stables, and three lights were fixed. A four-roomed cottage is in course of erection, and should be finished early in the New Year. An addition has been made to No. 4 cottage, and several minor repairs to other cottages. The grounds round the cottages have all been laid out, and the officers appear to be taking a good deal of pride in keeping them in order. Two rooms at the end of the cell-range have been turned into a temporary hospital for sick prisoners.

Two gangs of prisoners have been forming the road through the Tokanui Mental Hospital ground. The formation of the road is now finished. Seven culverts were laid, ranging from 12 in. to 3 ft. The metalling is almost finished; there now remain only 10 chains to do. The procuring of the metal was very difficult, not altogether on account of the long distance we had to cart it, but in one instance a tram-line had to be laid down a steep bank (1 in 1) and a small engine used to haul it up 80 ft. before the metal could be carted on to the road.

Good progress has been made on the farm. The ground is being systematically fenced so that each paddock will have a gate leading on to the roads which are running north and south. Three miles of fencing have been completed. 300 acres have been cleared of fern and manuka and ploughed, and 500 acres burned. A large area has also had the tutu and manuka stumps grubbed out. A considerable amount of farm draining has been done, bringing in valuable land that was covered with water most of the year. This work can only be carried out with any satisfaction in the summer months, on account of the stream rising and backing the water up the drains.

The most important industry on the farm is dairying, and under the present management it is showing very satisfactory results. This year in the month of December our cheque for milk and cream was over £60 for forty cows. A number of cows were purchased early in the year, also a pedigree bull. All these animals are of the Shorthorn breed. The bull and most of the cows have been registered in the Herd-book. In a year or two we should have a very fine herd. The cows are tested monthly, and by this means we will be able to cull out and dispose of all unprofitable animals.

Owing to various causes the pig industry has not yielded as satisfactory returns as in previous years. Provision has been made this year to keep a supply of cereals on hand, and our stock will be increased very rapidly, as there are a number of young pigs coming on.

The amount of crops sown is as follows: 5 acres in barley, 80 acres in oats, 10 acres in potatoes, 3 acres in maize, 50 acres in grass, 1 acre in pumpkins, 2 acres in peas, 5 acres in wheat, 15 acres in mangolds, 10 acres in swedes, 1 acre in linseed, 2 acres in lucerne, 1 acre in carrots, 40 acres reserved for hay. All the crops are showing good growth, though the season was very late. The lucerne and linseed are only experimental crops and appear to be very promising. A large vegetable-garden is also kept in good order.