

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF SUPERINTENDENTS, GAOLERS, AND OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF INSTITUTIONS FOR THE YEAR 1919.

ADDINGTON REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN.

A significant change has been made in general order, and a marked improvement in every branch of working. No effort that may tend towards the reinstatement of individuals is being spared either by the Department or those whose duty it is to carry on the work of training them. Numbers have been greatly reduced by transferring less hopeful cases to northern prisons, thus allowing the staff to give almost uninterrupted attention to the younger members. Encouraging interest is taken in every branch of domestic science—cleaning, cooking, nursing, and sewing. Grateful and commending mention must be directed to Mrs. E. Gardener, instructress in domestic science, Technical College, Christchurch, and to Mrs. S. Watkins, Lady Superintendent of St. John Ambulance Corps, Avonside, Christchurch, for the time and pains they have given in these branches of our work.

An additional interest has been introduced and profitable means of spending the evenings afforded by allowing inmates, according to their ability, to knit, sew, crochet, embroider, &c., the proceeds being credited to them in the institutional deposit account and paid to them on release. The Official Visitors and ladies of Christchurch interested in social work have helped by securing orders and disposing of articles.

Duty hours and dietary for inmates have been altered and improved.

In addition to electric lights throughout the institution, gas-cooking arrangements are being installed. The work in connection with this and other proposed improvements and extensions has been held up owing to short supply of cement and to labour conditions.

The gardens, vegetables, and flowers have been, with the exception of the potato crop, most successful. The inmates work with zeal, and strive for results.

The usual work of the institution, including gardening, sewing, knitting, darning, laundry, cooking, and cleaning, is being well carried out.

Supplies of rations—meat, bread, milk, &c.—have been excellent in quality and measure, and punctually delivered.

The usual concerts and recreations according to the seasons are eagerly looked forward to and heartily enjoyed. Peace Day and Christmas Day were amply provided for.

Divine services have been held by Canon Bean, Revs. Percy Revell, Father Long, and the Salvation Army. Visiting Justices and Official Visitors have rendered noteworthy assistance. The Revs. Frank Rule and Percy Revell visit weekly. The latter has been appointed by the Anglican Bishop to take up the duties of the late Mr. T. I. Smail, Prison-gate Mission, and is commencing a series of short lectures chosen to meet the average intelligence and assist the neglected education of young offenders.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

There were three deaths during the year, one in the Prison and two at the General Hospital, to which the patients had been removed. The usual inquest was held in each case.

There were two escapes, one from the quarry party during the day and one from the interior of the Prison during the night. Both escapees were recaptured and dealt with by the Courts. Three males and one female were certified insane and were committed to the Mental Hospital.

The number of punishments is considerably in excess of previous years, the number of reports totalling 236, against 172 individual prisoners. 102 cases were dealt with by the Superintendent and 134 by Visiting Justices and Magistrates. Several prisoners who persisted in refusing to work had to be punished a number of times before they would turn to.

The daily average on the sick-list was 6.25 males and 0.09 females. This fairly large daily average on the male side is accounted for by some individuals being on the sick-list for a lengthy period—some of them the whole year—several consumptives being quite unfit for work, merely swelling the sick-list.

The new workshops have been in occupation the greater part of the year. Bootmaking machinery driven by electric power has been installed. The shops are bright and airy, and work can now be turned out much more expeditiously than under former conditions.

General work for the year has been the usual quarry-work and stone-dressing for the long-sentence prisoners employed inside the walls. A large quantity of road-metal has been crushed and sold, but a complete modern quarry plant is required before it can be made a payable industry.

A portion of the reserve facing Clive Road has been levelled in order to provide space for the erection of officers' cottages. They are to be built of stone and concrete blocks. Most of the blocks, and stone sufficient for at least one cottage, has been got ready, but we have been subjected to various delays and have only just been able to commence building operations.

The habitual criminals have for several months past been employed in levelling for a football ground about 2½ acres of the Prison Reserve given to the Grammar School Board. A large portion of this ground consists of solid rock, and it will be a considerable time before the work is completed.

Electric light has been installed in the West Wing of the Prison. Half the Prison is now lighted by electricity, and I recommend that the other half be done also. There is always trouble with the gas, and the electric light is cleaner, handier, and less expensive.