

Wi Tako.—Accommodation for over fifty male prisoners has been provided here, with offices, stores, staff quarters, &c. An electric-lighting plant is being installed. The work of draining and cleaning the large swamp has been put in hand. A cottage for the use of the officer in charge is being built. Steps are also being taken in the direction of establishing brickworks on a large scale to take the place of the brickworks formerly worked at Mount Cook Prison by the Prisons Department. As there is suitable clay in abundance and a railway-siding near the property, the establishing of such a useful industry should materially help at the present juncture, when bricks are so scarce as to be practically unobtainable excepting at a prohibitive price. Taken altogether, *Wi Tako* promises to be one of our best investments.

Paparua.—During the latter half of the year building operations have been more or less at a standstill owing to the difficulty of obtaining cement: several additional cottages have, however, been built, and work on the farm has progressed rapidly. This property is fast becoming one of the best in the district, and still further serves to demonstrate that farming is the best possible employment for prisoners.

Invercargill Borstal Institution.—A great deal of useful work has been carried out here during the past year. Work on the new rifle-range embankment has occupied an average of about fifty of the inmates daily throughout the year. This work will take till the end of 1920 to complete. In addition to providing one of the finest sites for a rifle range in the Dominion this embankment when finished will reclaim about 350 acres of the finest land, all of which will have been wrested from the sea, and the whole of it can be used for grazing or other purposes. The work of building a fine block of buildings, comprising kitchens, laundry, bathrooms, &c., is being gone on with at the main institution. Various yards and grounds for recreation purposes are being made, and much is being done to provide for the moral welfare of the inmates of this institution. Much, however, still remains to be done. I am confident that *Invercargill* will eventually become one of the finest institutions of its kind in the Dominion. Work on the farm, consisting of over 2,000 acres of land, part of which is freehold and part leasehold, and held by the Prisons Department and Borough Council in conjunction, is being pushed on apace. Miles of roads and drains have, however, to be constructed, the main drains being in some cases 24 ft. in width. Much of this work is of necessity of an arduous, unpleasant nature, but once the cutting of the drains has been completed much of this will disappear. Your intention to use machinery for the purpose of digging the main drains will also materially help. No doubt there is much requiring to be done before this valuable property can be deemed to have become fully developed, but once such is the case there can be no two opinions as to the soundness of the whole project.

Roto-ava.—A fair amount of work has been carried out on this road during the past year. The climatic conditions, however, militate against good progress being made, and great difficulty is being experienced in the matter of keeping up the necessary staff. While the camp was near the Main Trunk line the officers were content to remain, but now that the camps are situated, one sixteen and the other twenty-four miles from Waimarino, it is a difficult question how to keep up a sufficient staff. About the end of September should see this road far enough advanced to permit of through traffic being maintained, provided the formation-work, which has already been given a full coat of punice, is looked after by the local bodies interested. Up till the present the Prisons Department has been called upon to effect all maintenance repairs.

New Plymouth.—Quarrying and preparing road-metal for sale is the only work carried out at this prison, and such finds a means of employment for the whole of the inmates. A ready sale is found for the whole of the output at a fair price.

Kaingaroa.—Tree-planting and looking after plantations already in existence is, as usual, being carried on at this prison. As you have already indicated your intention of closing down this camp during the present year and removing the remaining prisoners to a farm prison where their labour can be utilized to greater advantage than is at present possible, further comment is unnecessary.

From the foregoing report it is possible to gather that much useful work is being carried out by the inmates of our prisons and institutions. As time goes on it is being found possible to utilize prison labour in many directions formerly considered impracticable. This has been made possible only by treating the prisoner as a rational human being, and by placing a certain amount of confidence in him and giving him credit for at least a desire to make good if given an opportunity of doing so.

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Inspector of Prisons.