

concerned. Mr. Matthews's loss will be felt not only by the officers but also by many of the prisoners, to whom he was always a sympathetic friend. He was possessed of a broad outlook, and was of an optimistic turn of mind. It is chiefly owing to his exertions that the Prisons Department of New Zealand has attained to its present high standard of efficiency, and it is to be hoped that the result of his life's work will still continue to bear fruit.

M. HAWKINS, Controller-General of Prisons.

PRISONS AND PRISON INSTITUTIONS: EPITOME OF REPORTS OF CONTROLLING OFFICERS.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

At the commencement of the year there were 352 males and 13 females in custody; during the year 1,483 males and 107 females were received, and 1,462 males and 106 females discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in prison on the night of the 31st December, 1924, 373 males and 14 females.

Eleven habitual criminals (male), twenty-one reformative (male), one reformative (female), as well as twenty-four hard-labour prisoners (males), were released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board.

Three male prisoners died in the prison during the year, and two males in the District Public Hospital—the customary inquest being held in each case. One male prisoner who was sentenced to death was executed within the prison.

The daily average on the sick-muster was—Males, seventeen; females, nil. The large number of males is accounted for by the fact that in this prison there is always a goodly sprinkling of aged and infirm derelicts who, on account of being too old to work, are placed on the casual list, and are in need of constant medical attention. In addition, an influenza epidemic in the month of November tended to raise the average for the year, for in that month the daily average was thirty-five. The number of "remands" from the Magistrates' Court for medical observation, or treatment, as the case may be, must be taken into consideration. With the exception of a few days' sickness during the whole year the female division has remained practically free from illness.

The Esperanto class continues to be held under the immediate control of a prisoner student, and those attending appear to derive much benefit from this particular study. Continued thanks are due to Mr. Edmanson, of Wellington, for his unfailing interest in the prisoners' Esperanto work.

Two further cottages at Clive Road have been completed, and officers are now in occupation of same. The foundations for an additional two are now under way.

The whole of the interior of the prison has been renovated. A grey plastered dado has been run around all the walls, and the remainder of same has been whitewashed. The ceilings have also been whitened and the floors plastered—the whole effect being very pleasing to the eye when compared with the previous drab colouring of the interior. Furthermore, the renovation has made conditions more sanitary. The external paintwork is also being renovated.

The garden continues to be a good asset to the institution—the quantity and quality has been well maintained, and, as in the previous year, only potatoes were purchased outside.

The bootmaking industry continues active: the installation of modern machinery, mentioned in last year's report, has been fully justified by results. In regard to this industry it must be taken into consideration that the working profit on the output would be greater if the men were all experienced hands. The Principal Warder, who is in charge, is in my opinion deserving of credit for the excellent standard of the output. An addition to the work carried on during 1924 has been the repairing of postmen's and messengers' satchels for the Post and Telegraph Department, the work being carried out satisfactorily and expeditiously.

The tailoring industry is being continued with satisfactory results to the Department. The requirements of our own and other Departments are being met, in spite of the fact that a number of the hands are inexperienced. One feature of this industry is that men not suitable for heavy work can be profitably employed at tailoring. During the year we were able to effect repairs to 4,526 mail and 3,453 parcel bags—credits against material and labour being £1,634 11s. 6d. for the twelve months. The work has grown greatly, and the repairs for the whole of the Dominion are effected with satisfaction and expedition, although many of the bags received are in a very poor condition.

An excellent concrete roofing tile is being manufactured from the special material available from the prison quarry, and we are now ready to meet a large order from the Education Department. During the twelve months 36,978 tiles were made at a value of £482 12s. 10d.

Excellent results have been obtained from the prisoners employed at concrete-block making both in respect of the quantity and quality of the output. During the twelve months 34,400 blocks were manufactured, the value being £2,014 1s., and we have already received payment of £1,523 7s. 4d. for blocks supplied to the Education Board.

The prison quarry, which is the principal means of employing our prisoners, continues to thrive under the management of Mr. Meehan, and an excellent standard has been maintained in connection with this industry. The return for the current financial year should be in the vicinity of £20,000 in respect of metal sold to local bodies, &c.