

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

AUCKLAND PRISON.

(Superintendent, Mr. J. DICKISON).

At the commencement of the year there were 414 males and 20 females in custody. During the year 1,501 males and 72 females were received, whilst 1,533 males and 81 females were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in the prison on the night of the 31st December, 1928, 362 males and 11 females.

The daily average on the sick-muster was—males, 8.29; females, nil. In view of the fact that the daily average of prisoners in custody was approximately 390 throughout the twelve months, it must be admitted that the health of the inmates has been excellent. Included in the average is quite a number of aged and infirm prisoners who remain under treatment from the time of receipt until discharge, and if, in addition to these, allowance is made for the inclusion of prisoners sustaining petty injuries on the works, it must be conceded that this prison has remained particularly immune from sickness.

The prison school has been under the control of L. Grice, M.A., and his tutorship has produced excellent results, as will be evidenced by the annual examination return at present in your possession. There is no doubt whatever that the annual expenditure incurred in maintaining the school is amply warranted, as the marked progress made by the pupils is very obvious to those in close touch, and is one of the main factors in assisting the backward individual to rehabilitate himself in the outside world.

During the year 125 breaches of the regulations were dealt with by Visiting Justices, whilst a number of minor breaches were dealt with by myself. On the whole the conduct of the prisoners may be considered to have been very satisfactory, as consideration must be given to the fact that quite a number of individual prisoners were dealt with on several occasions.

Evening drill has been continued under the instruction of a qualified instructor, the prisoners participating in the exercises benefiting considerably therefrom.

Work completed and in progress.—Removal of arches adjoining Administration Block: The dismantling of these two arches has resulted in the increased natural lighting of the basement cells, and in addition has reduced the possibility of dampness from lack of sunshine.

Installation of hot-press in prison kitchen: In previous years difficulty has been experienced in keeping the meals hot from the time of serving in the kitchen until distributed into the cells. The installation of the hot-press has resulted in the marked benefit of being enabled to keep four hundred meals heated in such a manner as to be distributed with entire satisfaction to the inmates. The innovation has been greatly appreciated.

Grass-cutting at North Head: This work, as in previous years, has been carried out for the Defence Department with mutual satisfactory results.

Roadmaking at Rangitoto Island: A party of twenty prisoners under the supervision of two officers has been working continuously at Rangitoto Island since November, 1925. Work executed to the 31st December, 1928, is as follows: Road to summit (4 miles 60 chains of road, 20 ft. wide, leading to the summit via the Beacon)—formation completed. Three miles of this road has been blinded to a width of 14 ft., and 2½ miles blinded to the full width of 20 ft. Two miles of road to Islington Bay, to a width of 16 ft., has been formed; 1 mile 10 chains of footpaths, 4 ft. wide, have been formed also.

Approximately 750 yards of scoria has been shifted for the formation of a sports-ground and the area levelled, and 10 chains of road, 10 ft. wide, formed to give ready access to this area. A stone wall containing approximately 200 yards of rock has been built to retain water for swimming-pool.

Institutional Industries.—Garden: This continues to be an asset to the institution, and all requirements of vegetables, excepting the supply of potatoes, have been readily met.

Bootmaking: Under the direction of a tradesman officer, this branch of the prison's industrial activities continues to furnish excellent results, and the requirements of other Departments as well as our own continue to be handled with satisfaction.

Tailoring: A warder instructor is in charge of this workshop, and the output remains at an excellent standard, orders from other Departments as well as our own being handled with expedition.

Repairs to mail and parcel bags: This industry is carried on in conjunction with the tailoring, and the whole of the demands of the Post and Telegraph Department during the past year have been handled expeditiously and profitably to both Departments concerned.

Laundry and repair work (female): With the exception of blankets, the whole of the prison laundering, and the repairs to socks, continue to be executed by the female prisoners, and the small cost to the Department speaks volumes for the capable control of the staff of this division. In addition to the prison laundering, work is performed for the Police and Department of Internal Affairs, whilst "soft" laundering is executed on behalf of the Defence Department's various encampments.

Laundry and repair work (male): The washing of prison blankets, repairs to moleskin shirts, &c., is executed by male labour, and here again the cost to the Department is relatively small. During the past year several thousand blankets were laundered on behalf of the Defence Department, the undertaking proving profitable to this Department.

Quarry: It is pleasing to be able to report that both the crushing plants have been kept practically in full commission throughout the year. Considerable opposition was faced in the competition of outside quarries, but with the assistance of the orders from the Public Works and Railway Depart-