

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

AUCKLAND PRISON.

(Superintendent, Mr. J. DICKISON.)

At the commencement of the year there were 362 males and 11 females in custody; during the year 1,452 males and 69 females were received, whilst 1,455 males and 65 females were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in the prison on the night of the 31st December, 1929, 359 males and 15 females.

I am again pleased to be in the position to report that there were no executions during the year.

There were four deaths during the twelve months—three of the deaths occurred in the District Hospital, and one was a case of suicide.

The daily average on the sick-muster was: Males, 8.9; females, nil. In view of the fact that the daily average of prisoners in custody was approximately 375 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 during the twelve months under review.

The prison school has continued under the control of Mr. Grice, M.A., and his tutorship has produced excellent results, as will be evidenced by the annual examination return. 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. The average attendance of 90 per cent. shows the keen interest displayed by the pupils themselves.

During the year 115 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. With a daily average muster of 375, the weekly number of offenders dealt with shows an average of three for the twelve months.

Evening drill has been continued under the instruction of a Principal Warder, the prisoners participating benefiting considerably from the exercises.

Work completed and in progress.—In terms of an arrangement made with the Defence Department, a number of Ordnance buildings adjoining the prison were dismantled, and a boundary-fence erected. The materials made available by the demolition were taken over by this Department as payment for the services rendered. From materials in hand for general maintenance purposes a new fumigating room was erected, with the result that the work in this connection has since been handled much more expeditiously than previously. Owing to the hot-water service becoming faulty as the result of corrosion, the tanks and pipes were renewed throughout the system, and no further trouble has since been experienced in this connection.

The whole of the requisite maintenance of prison buildings was executed throughout the year. A good deal of work was carried out around the prison proper, whilst quite a number of repairs and replacements were effected in connection with the maintenance of the staff cottages.

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, 1929 is as follows: Summit Road via the Beacon—4 miles 62 chains formation completed, 20 ft. wide; 3 miles of Summit Road blinded, 14 ft. wide; $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles reblinded and blinded to full width. Islington Bay Road—3 miles formation completed to waterfront at the bay, 16 ft. wide; 1 mile 10 chains of footpaths formed, 4 ft. wide. Sports-ground area levelled; approximately 50 yards of scoria rock shifted in this work. Stone wall built to retain water for swimming-pool; approximately 200 yards of rock used at this work. Road to link up Islington Bay Road and Summit Road, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, formation completed. 11 chains of 10 ft. roadway leading to sports-ground formed.

Institutional Industries.—The prison vegetable-garden continues to be a decided asset to the institution, and with the exception of potatoes all requirements of vegetables are readily met.

Under the control of a Principal Warder bootmaking continues to furnish an excellent return, and the requirements of other Departments, as well as our own, are handled with very satisfactory results. Quite a number of the younger prisoners placed in the shop from time to time are inexperienced in the trade; nevertheless, they readily adapt themselves to requirements, with evident benefit to themselves and satisfaction to the Department.

The output from the tailoring factory has been well maintained throughout the year. All orders from other Departments, together with our own requirements, have again been handled expeditiously. An innovation during the period under review has been the manufacture of civilian suits for inmates desiring a new outfit before release. This privilege has been generally appreciated, and a large number of suits were made during the twelve months.

Repairs to mail and parcel bags are 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. For the first time we have this year executed a contract for the manufacture of parcel-bags, and as the result was quite satisfactory we are hoping for increased orders in the future.