

In my last annual report I had to record that towards the end of 1928 we suffered from an outbreak of typhoid fever. The disease again manifested itself in a milder form in June, and one officer and two inmates were removed to the Waikato Hospital. The patients in each case recovered after a short illness and were returned to the institution. For some unaccountable reason there has been a heavier toll of sickness at the institution than in any previous year, and in addition to the typhoid cases mentioned eight other inmates were treated at the Waikato Hospital. Of these cases four were suffering from appendicitis, a disease which was very prevalent in this district throughout the year.

During the year improvements were effected at the institution in building a new baker's oven, and as a result there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the bread baked. While the work was in progress a regular supply of good fresh bread was obtained from Waikune Prison. Other works carried out were the installation of a septic tank and the building of new lavatories, these being connected up with a new system of sewer drainage with water flushing. New drains were also put in for carrying away the storm-water from the main building and yards. The electric-light system was also improved by rewiring and changing over from the 110 voltage to 230 voltage. This work was carried out by officers from the Public Works Department assisted with labour from the institution.

The clay bank on the east side of the main building was finally removed, thus affording greater access of light and air to that side of the main corridor and cell-house building as well as affording a fine playing-area for the recreation classes. The cell house itself was improved by widening the window-spaces and allowing more fresh air through the building. A good deal of work was also carried out in painting and repairs at the main building, at the cottages, and with the farm buildings.

A new road to take vehicular traffic was formed between the main institution and the officers' cottages, making access to the latter much more convenient. A certain amount of work was also carried out on the maintenance of the main road, but the farm absorbed the greater portion of our labour, and further progress was made in draining swamp lands and in clearing portions of the estate from weeds and rough scrub.

By constant attention to the testing and culling from the dairy herds and by top-dressing the pastures a further increase in the revenue from this industry is shown. An average of 312 cows are being milked this summer, and during the past year over £6,000 was received from the sale of milk and cream. From the sale of a little over 200 pigs we realized £734, and the flocks of sheep being gradually increased we have been able to sell this summer 604 fat lambs: 520 of these realized £1 3s. 6d. per head, and 84 brought an average of £1 4s. each, the prices being well above the average for the district. Last year we obtained over £200 for our wool, but although owing to the increase in the flock our output of wool has been greater it is not anticipated that we shall gain much in revenue owing to the general fall in prices this season.

The abnormal wet summer we have experienced has affected several of the crops, and although last year we obtained £500 from the sale of apples it is not expected that we shall do so well this year. The tomatoes and potatoes have also suffered from the excessive rainfall. For our own stock the following crops have been harvested: Hay, 20 tons; oaten sheaves, 80 tons; and ensilage, 200 tons. A few tons of chaff were supplied to Waikune Prison during the past year. Other crops grown are: Mangolds, 16 acres; Belgian carrots, 8 acres; soft turnips, 10 acres; swedes, 200 acres; maize, 8 acres; and artichokes, 3 acres. A steady supply of vegetables has been maintained from the garden for the use of our own and other institutions throughout the year, and some further planting of young trees from the nursery was carried out in the early spring, approximately two thousand trees being planted along the river-banks and in other waste corners. The apiary is becoming better established again, and an increased output of honey is assured.

As the present supply of water at the No. 2 camp is not adequate during a dry period for use for domestic purposes and for the dairy, the District Engineer of the Public Works Department has made a survey of the position and has submitted a report outlining what will be required to put the matter on a more satisfactory basis. It is hoped that this work will be undertaken in the near future.

Although during the previous year many games of football were played through arrangements made by the Waipa Rugby Union, during the last season the Union went further and admitted the Borstal team to the senior grade of its regular competition. Eight teams competed, and our team finished in fourth place, but in a further competition at the end of the season for the Ballastite Cup the Borstal team finished in second place, being just beaten by the champion team by one point in an exciting finish.

During the summer several clubs of the Waipa Cricket Association have visited here and entered into matches with our players. In all games played, in football and cricket, the conduct of the boys both on and off the field has been excellent, and I think our players have merited in some degree the laudatory utterances made by the visitors from time to time on their sportsmanship.

Throughout the year members of the Hamilton Branch of the Howard League have continued their weekly visits to the institution and furnished the inmates with entertaining lectures and concerts. The thanks of the Department are due to this body for its kindly assistance, and also to the members of the Borstal Visiting Committee. This body, comprised of Te Awamutu business men, not only deals with charges of insubordination, but also hears complaints, and from time to time investigates the ration-supplies and sleeping-quarters and other matters concerning the welfare of the inmates.

Under the Schoolmaster night classes were taken on three nights per week, no inmate being exempted until giving satisfactory proof of qualifying for a Fifth Standard pass. A separate report from the Schoolmaster is appended.

Drill classes were taken on five evenings in each fortnight during the year. There are three classes, one for the beginners in the probationary grade, one for the advanced pupils, and one of lesser duration for those working on the dairies or otherwise engaged in longer hours of labour than the average. The drill undertaken consists mostly of Swedish exercises to improve the physical fitness of the trainee, and marching exercises to improve his carriage.