

However, constant touch has been maintained with all of our clients, and we are confident that whatever business has come their way has been passed on to us, in spite of the fact that the exceptional keenness of present-day competition has made our prices generally higher than outside quotations, many of which appear to show no margin of profit, in fact, the acceptance of contracts must result in a loss.

That we have handled the amount of business shown by the returns for the twelve months under review is a marked tribute to the quality of our products and justifies our claim for recognition of this important fact when comparison of prices is so paramount in the matter of tendering.

It might be mentioned in passing that in two of the largest contracts for which tenders were called during the year the conditions of tender precluded any possibility of the supply of metal produced by prison labour. In this connection it should be stressed that the employment of prisoners in productive work is an absolute necessity and is in itself a national economy. Moreover, their employment is a deciding factor in the matter of the provision of maintenance to their dependants during confinement another point worth consideration.

Regarding the loss of business usually handled to the order of local bodies, it must be recorded that the latter have been absorbing as many of the unemployed as is possible on formation work, under the No. 5 Scheme, and this means that the limited funds available are readily expended in insurance costs and the provision of extra tools, equipment, &c., entailed in executing this particular class of work.

However, the roads now being formed will doubtless require metalling in the near future, and there is a hopeful probability of increased business in that direction.

The arrangement with the Defence Department, under which we receive £15 per annum for services rendered in connection with the handling of ammunition to and from the magazines, continues to be profitable to this Department.

Concerts have been held periodically at the prison, the excellent programmes presented being keenly enjoyed by the inmates. Thanks are due to the Anglican Gaol Chaplain (the Rev. G. E. Moreton), Messrs. James Stewart (Official Visitor), and Samuel Falls, who, in conjunction with other social workers, maintain a sympathetic interest in the welfare of the inmates. The Salvation Army has also contributed entertainments of merit, and the various theatrical interests have at all convenient times shown readiness to assist at the concerts arranged.

Lectures under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association, have continued to be given monthly, and have proved both instructive and enjoyable. Mr. N. M. Richmond, Director of the Workers' Educational Association has been mainly responsible for the arrangement of this form of diversion, and his efforts are deserving of much appreciation.

The several organizations which in the past years have provided additional comforts for the inmates during the festive season, again contributed freely, with the result that each individual prisoner received an adequate supply of extras during Christmas and New Year. Such practical sympathy, particularly in a year when depression has been so general, was very deeply appreciated by the inmates, and those responsible for the gifts may be assured that their efforts were well worth while.

Throughout the year the various denominations arranged for services each Sunday, and sincere thanks are due to the interested parties who spare no effort to make these services enjoyable as well as beneficial to the inmates in attendance.

The Anglican Gaol Chaplain (Rev. G. E. Moreton) has again been most assiduous in attending to the needs of prisoners, both during confinement, and subsequent to discharge, and there is no doubt that his efforts have resulted in many a discharged prisoner having an increased chance of making good. In fact, quite a number have been placed in employment shortly after release. Mr. Moreton spares no effort in giving sympathetic consideration to the many and varied calls which are made upon his services throughout the year. It might be also mentioned that Staff Chaplain Holmes of the Salvation Army has at all times shown readiness to assist the prisoners, and has done much good work in this direction.

The conduct of the staff continued to be excellent, and generally a high standard of discipline has been maintained throughout the year, with the result that the various industrial operations and the general prison routine have been carried on as smoothly and as economically as possible.

The staff in the Prison Office, under the control of the Principal Clerk, has dealt with the clerical work of the institution efficiently.

GISBORNE PRISON.

(Gaoler, Mr. H. N. RICHARDSON.)

At the beginning of the year there were 9 males in custody; 115 males and 2 females were received during the year, and 111 males and 2 females were handed to police or transferred to other prisons, leaving 4 males in custody on 31st December, 1931.

The health of the prisoners has been good, there being only one serious case which was sent to Cook Hospital for special treatment.

Divine Service has been held at the prison every Sunday during 1931.

The prison building received a severe shaking on the 3rd February last, but very little damage was done, except to one chimney.

I wish to thank those gentlemen in Gisborne who so kindly helped me to find jobs for discharged prisoners during the year.