

PAPARUA PRISON.

(Superintendent, Mr. W. T. LEGGETT.)

On the first day of the year under review there were 165 male prisoners in custody. During the year 768 males were received, and 765 were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in custody at the end of the year a total of 168. The daily average throughout the year was 169·48. There were 117 more receptions during this year than during the previous year, and consequently a higher daily average, being undoubtedly due to the prevailing economic conditions.

Generally the health of the prisoners has been good, sickness in most cases being of a minor nature, and in some cases attributive to a condition existing prior to detention. There were eight males sent to the public hospital for treatment during the year, two of these requiring to be returned for further treatment, and five of the cases sent required operative treatment, one death occurring from pleurisy. It is noted that four of the individuals admitted to hospital were suffering from disability prior to conviction, and there was one case remaining in hospital at the end of the year. There were four prisoners transferred to the mental hospital during the year, one dying while at that institution and still in custody.

The conduct of the prisoners generally has been very good, there being one escape and one attempted escape. In both instances the offenders were speedily recaptured. Disciplinary punishment for breaches of the regulations was administered in forty-four cases during the year.

On the whole the prisoners have worked well, and have been employed as far as possible at farming pursuits. Older men and those otherwise unfit have been employed at gardening and domestic duties. A certain number of prisoners have been employed on the maintenance of buildings, and in the manufacture of paving-blocks for sale and fencing-posts for farm use. Surplus labour has been utilized in the production of sand and gravel for supply to Government Departments, local bodies, and cartage contractors, but this industry, in common with like concerns, has had decreased business during the months of depression. Market-gardening and poultry-raising have been continued to supply the requirements of Government Departments and our own institution, and this, with development work to extend the existing gardening operations, has absorbed some surplus labour.

The farm has again been worked to advantage during the year, giving good returns considering the present-day low market values. The sheep section has averaged a clip of slightly over 12 lb. per head, which was sold at prices in advance of those obtained last year. Early lambs were disposed of at Addington market at good rates, and these were always eagerly sought after for local use. Several pens of lambs were exhibited at the Royal show, and of those judged to date, one first and one second prize were obtained in the butchers' classes. The pig-raising industry is being continued, but present market values are not very encouraging. During the last two months of the year the prospect of good cereal yields has been seriously affected by drought. The garden has suffered likewise from the extreme dryness, but sufficient vegetables have been available for our own institution and other Government Departments.

The spiritual welfare of the men has been well cared for by the clergymen of the various denominations, who have held regular Sunday services and given individual visits. A monthly evening Mission Service has been continued during the year.

Concerts have been rendered monthly by Mr. H. J. C. Holmes and friends. These have been excellently arranged and much appreciated by the men. The Workers' Educational Association have continued their weekly Saturday evening lectures during the winter months, and these have been both interesting and instructive. The school classes, covering the full primary course, have been held twice weekly, and every opportunity for mental improvement has been given those attending. This work is covered by a special report from the Schoolmaster.

The institution was again well provided with Christmas cheer at the hands of the Richmond Mission, Rev. F. R. Rawle, Mr. Paynter, and the National Tobacco Co., to whom the very hearty thanks of the Department have been extended.

RANGIPO PRISON.

(Officer in Charge, Mr. A. BANKS.)

There were 41 male prisoners in custody at the beginning of the year; during the year 40 were received, 26 discharged, 7 transferred, 1 drowned while attempting to escape, and 1 died in the Raetihi Hospital, leaving 46 prisoners in custody at the end of the year.

The health of the prisoners has been good, and their general conduct and industry has been satisfactory.

The spiritual welfare of the prisoners has been continuously looked after by Father Wanders, Rev. J. A. L. Carter, Rev. J. G. Laughton, Rev. J. B. Rand, and Mr. J. Moffit.

The following is a summary of the work carried out during the year: 244 acres of virgin land were stumped of tutu and manuka, cleared of fern and burned off ready for ploughing; 200 acres were ploughed and harrowed; 579 chains of fencing were erected; 126 acres of virgin land sown in temporary pastures; 150 acres of virgin land sown in permanent pastures; 50 acres of turnips sown; 1,451 acres of pastures were top-dressed. A heavy yield of hay and ensilage was stacked as winter feed for the stock, and sufficient potatoes and vegetables were grown to meet the requirements of the prison.

The officers carried out their duties in a satisfactory manner.