

WAIKERIA BORSTAL INSTITUTION (TE AWAMUTU).

(Superintendent, Mr. D. DUNLOP.)

On the 1st January, 1931, there were in custody 113 Borstal inmates, and 83 were received during the year; the discharges were 4 on expiration of sentences and 73 on probationary license, while 8 were transferred to other institutions, thus leaving 111 inmates in custody on the 31st December, 1931.

In the reformatory section, there were in custody at the beginning of the year 33 inmates, and 59 were received during the year; of these 4 were discharged on the expiration of their sentences, 23 released on probationary license, and 26 were transferred to other institutions, leaving a total of 39 in custody on the 31st December, 1931.

Two separate escapes were effected during the year in which four inmates were involved, all of whom were recaptured after a few days and sentenced by the Court to further detention. The conditions under which the inmates are engaged at farm work are such that it would be quite impracticable to effect a total elimination of escapes, and experience has shown that no improvement could be obtained by increasing supervision. Care is exercised in the selection of inmates who are required to work under limited supervision and control. No trouble is experienced with these inmates. Generally speaking, the conduct and industry of the inmates throughout the year was very good. The varied activities on the farm provide an abundance of useful outdoor work which is of great value to the health and general efficiency of the inmates.

It is pleasing to record that no deaths occurred during the year, and that the general health of the inmates was very satisfactory. Under the direction of the Medical Officer, Dr. J. Robertson, inmates are transferred, when required in the interests of their health, to the Waikato Public Hospital or the Prison Infirmary at Auckland, according to the circumstances of the case. Adequate dental service was provided during the year.

The position which has existed for some time in regard to unemployment makes it very difficult for a young man endeavouring to make a fresh start in life and, especially for those who find it difficult to obtain some form of private assistance, the work carried out by the after-care societies is of incalculable value not only to the individuals concerned, but also to society.

The recreative side of the work was carried on in the usual manner, care being taken to maintain a proper balance between work, discipline, and recreation. Concerts and lectures on various topics were provided by parties from Hamilton and Te Awamutu and were greatly appreciated.

Regular visits were made during the year by members of the Visiting Committee for the purpose of dealing when necessary with disciplinary matters and to inquire into matters affecting the welfare of the inmates.

The night-school classes were conducted as usual with satisfactory results. Drill and exercises also formed part of the curriculum.

A team was again entered in the senior-grade competitions under the control of the Waipa Rugby Union, and did well in the club competitions. The team was successful in winning the "Ballistite Cup" in the final competition. The good clean game played by the Borstal team has been frequently commented on, and this must make its impression on the character of the lads. The team's success in the competition was well received in Te Awamutu. The assistance of outside clubs in providing matches for the inmates is very much appreciated. Thanks are also due in particular to the Waipa Rugby Union for the facilities afforded for matches and to the Rev. Jasper Calder, of Auckland, for the donations of sports material and wireless equipment.

Several cricket matches were played during summer months against visiting teams from Hamilton and the surrounding district with satisfactory results, and a high standard of sportsmanship has been maintained.

The qualification of good conduct and industry enables inmates to join the special class, the membership of which permits of recreation in the evenings. During summer months tennis and cricket practice is indulged in, indoor games being provided in the recreation hall during the winter period.

Religious services were provided during the year by visiting chaplains from Te Awamutu and Kihikihi.

Good progress was made with all farm industries over a difficult period of low prices. Development-work was carried on and a considerable area of swamp land drained and sown down in permanent grass.

At the three dairies, where all milking is done by hand, a large amount of the available labour is utilized. During the season ended 31st July, 1931, an average of 352 cows were milked, resulting in a milk-yield of 2,602,497 lb. at an average test of 4.02 per cent. The average factory cream-test was 39.77, and the average butterfat per cow (including a good proportion of heifers) for the season was 288.6 lb.

Revenue from cream supplied to the factory for the season was approximately £4,852. Complete records are kept of each cow and forty-nine were culled from the dairy herds during the year.

In connection with the sheep industry, a clip of forty-four bales, weighing 17,886 lb. gross, was shorn from 1,770 sheep. During the season 1,682 lambs were reared. A large number of store sheep and cattle is maintained on the property in order to provide for rations for the prison at Auckland and for our own requirements.

Provision was made during the year for an additional number of grazing areas for pigs and increased numbers are now being stocked. During the year 227 pigs, mostly porkers, were disposed of. The cash expenditure on pigs is very low, the fodder being mainly kitchen-refuse, farm produce, and skim-milk from the dairies.