

- (b) Accidental offenders and prisoners who are considered reasonably trustworthy and tractable are transferred to the prison farms and camps, where the honour system is largely in vogue. The healthy open-air life and the trust reposed develops self-respect and aids in rehabilitation. The broad open spaces enable a man to draw apart, as it were, and look at life in its proper perspective.
- (c) Those serving long sentences who cannot with proper regard for the safety of the community, and those who are not trustworthy, are detained at Mount Eden, which is the most secure prison in the Dominion. Special classification within the prison is made, having regard to the age and mental and physical condition of the offenders. There are certain prisoners who require to be constantly watched, and others who actually, in the interests of the safety of their fellow-prisoners, require to be placed at special tasks so that they can do no harm. There are certain inmates at Mount Eden who are definitely mentally unstable, but who could not, with safety to the inmates of a mental institution, be transferred there unless with greater curtailment of liberty than that enjoyed in prison. Special variations of diet are prescribed for those long-term men, and conditions are made as non-irksome as practicable. The provision of a special institution for the defective class is now the subject of inquiry and consideration.
- (d) Old and senile offenders too frail and decrepit to work or fend for themselves properly without aid and attention are segregated at Wanganui Prison, where the milieu is suited to their physical condition.
- (e) Sexual offenders showing perversion are sent to the New Plymouth Prison, where the natural facilities exist for close supervision. The Medical Officer attached to this institution is an experienced psychiatrist, and a programme of treatment has been devised calculated to build up the mental and physical condition of the inmates. Understanding and sympathetic individual attention is given to each inmate by the Medical Officer and the Superintendent with exceedingly satisfactory results.

BORSTAL INSTITUTIONS.

The statistics published in the earlier part of this report include committals to Borstal institutions, of which there are three in the Dominion, one being located at Invercargill, for the detention of lads between the ages of fifteen and twenty; one at Waikeria, near Te Awamutu, for young men between twenty-one and twenty-eight years of age; and an institution for young women at Point Halswell, Wellington.

The Borstals were established under the Prevention of Crime Act, 1924, and largely follow the English Borstal system in that offenders are sent to these institutions for training and discipline rather than punishment. Until last year the maximum age for commitment to Borstal in England was twenty-one years, whereas in New Zealand it is twenty-three, but recently the English authorities have brought their Act into line with the New Zealand Act in this respect.

The number committed to Borstal last year by the Courts was 115, comprising 97 young men and 18 young women, and there were 38 transferred to Borstal from other institutions under the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act.

Of the total number of 5,033 young men who have passed through Invercargill and Waikeria institutions since they were established, only 16 per cent. have again been reconvicted; and of the 238 young women released from Point Halswell, slightly less than 11 per cent. have again appeared before the Courts. Of the total of 2,158 persons received into penal institutions during 1935, only 5.7 per cent. had previously been in Borstal.

Detailed reports from the Superintendents of the Borstal institutions attached hereto give an outline of the varied round of activities carried on with a view to inculcating habits of industry and orderliness of conduct that will fit inmates to take their places as useful citizens when released. A wide range of artisan trades is taught under qualified instructors. A specialty is made of the teaching of all phases of farming and agricultural work. Not only are the results eminently successful from a reclamative point of view, but from an economic point of view the Borstal farms and other industrial activities have resulted in a considerable saving to the taxpayer. Great pride has been taken in the quality of production, the institutions being successful in winning a number of prizes for show exhibits at the local agricultural shows.

On the recreational side also the Borstal teams have been successful in the field of sport, winning two football cups in the rugby competitions.

Experience shows that after-care work is an exceedingly important factor, and in this connection the Department is specially indebted to the Women's Borstal Association for their helpful co-operation with the staff for the well-being of the inmates at Point Halswell, and for their sympathetic oversight of released inmates. The comparatively small percentage of failures of young women is due largely to the Association's activities and its after-care arrangements through its members and through the medium of voluntary associates in various parts of the Dominion.

The establishment of the Women's Visiting Committee and the Borstal Association at Invercargill has proved a successful and helpful innovation, both in so far as the visiting and care of the younger inmates is concerned and the arranging for placement of inmates on release.