

PRISONS AND PENAL INSTITUTIONS: EPITOME OF REPORTS OF CONTROLLING OFFICERS.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

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

At the commencement of the year there were 208 males and 8 females in custody. During the year 1,165 males and 55 females were received, whilst 1,193 males and 50 females were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in custody at the end of the year 180 males and 13 females. There was an increase of receptions during the year of 161 males and 11 females. It is also desired to mention that of the 1,165 males admitted, 102 of these were received as second offenders.

The health of the prisoners generally has been good, sickness in most cases being of a minor nature, and in some cases attributable to a condition prior to reception. There were no deaths during the year and there were 11 males and 1 female transferred to the public hospital for operative and other treatment that could not be carried out in the prison infirmary. There were 25 males and 4 females received into prison requiring treatment for venereal disorders. As previously, Dr. Tewsley, as Medical Officer, has given every attention to those prisoners requiring medical attention, thus keeping a low daily average of sick to 2.28 males and 0.19 females. It is pleasing to record the absence of any infection and that the standard of health has been so good taking into account the number of derelicts and physically unfit individuals received here. There was only one individual received under a capital charge during the year, and this case was eventually committed to a mental hospital.

I have to express appreciation of the continued co-operation of the Medical Superintendent of the Auckland Mental Hospital, who has so readily conducted examinations of prisoners showing mental abnormality, thus indicating a suitable line of action in such cases.

The conduct generally of the prisoners has been good, there being no escapes or attempted escapes during the year. Disciplinary punishment for breaches of regulations was administered in 49 cases by Visiting Justices, and the whole of such offences were of a minor nature.

The industrial activities of the prison have been fully carried on during the year with satisfactory results, especially in connection with supplying the requirements of other Departments.

The boot-factory has been fully equipped with modern British bootmaking-machines, and with this plant it is now possible to give technical instruction to suitable prisoners on modern methods of boot and shoe manufacture, thus giving them the opportunity of becoming proficient operatives, and further to fully supply all footwear required by Mental Hospitals Department and to Prisons General Store for distribution to other prisons.

The tailoring workshop has fully met the clothing requirements of the prison and other Departments requiring same. Also the full requirements of the Post and Telegraph Department in laundering and repairing mail and parcel bags has been carried out, and there were 25,000-odd bags dealt with in this direction during the year.

A considerable amount of laundry-work has been carried out for other Departments, including washing several thousand blankets for the Defence Department after use at the various military camps.

Tinsmithing and carpentering work has been actively carried on in the respective workshops, and all departmental requirements have been supplied.

The manufacture of tobacco, principally from Waikeria Farm grown leaf, is still carried on, and the requirements of the whole of the prison institutions, amounting to 3,513½ lb., have been dealt with, and the recent installation of a new tobacco-cutting machine has materially helped in that direction.

Quarry and crushing metal screenings is still carried on, but to a much lesser extent than formerly, and this industry, owing to decreased prison population, is only an outlet for that class of labour not suitable for country prisons or industrial workshops.

The vegetable garden here continues to be a valuable asset and is providing the whole of the institutional requirements of greens and other vegetables, excepting potatoes.

During the year considerable exterior and interior renovation has been given to all prison residences, also extensive interior renovations has been given to prison cells and corridors.

The institutional school under the direction of Dr. W. S. Dale, and assisted by a member of the staff has made excellent progress, as indicated in the schoolmaster's report attached. In addition, there has been evening lectures given periodically under the auspices of the W.E.A., and these have been both educative and instructional.

A first-aid class conducted by the St. John Ambulance Association has been continued, and the lectures were given by Dr. McDougall, assisted by Ambulance Officer Mr. J. Cummings and the Rev. Moreton, of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. Keen interest has been taken by this class, and the majority of the class received very creditable passes.

A physical-drill class is conducted in the evenings twice weekly under the direction of a member of the staff, with beneficial results to those employed in workshops and others requiring physical development.

Monthly entertainments, mostly vocal and instrumental, have been given under arrangement of interested social workers, visiting clergymen, and Salvation Army. A wireless-reception system provided by the Returned Soldiers' Radio Club under direction of Mr. R. Talbot has been installed with speakers to each yard for use at week-ends, also carphones are provided in the cells of long-sentence prisoners for evening use twice weekly.