

the time they were reported as missing. In the other case the prisoner, who was employed in a trusted position on the farm, absconded on Christmas Day, but voluntarily returned to the institution four days later.

At this juncture I desire to record my appreciation of the assistance afforded to the Department by the Visiting Justices to this prison, who, in addition to being available upon request to attend to matters connected with the maintenance of discipline, also manifested a keen interest in the welfare of the prisoners generally and in the carrying-on of the various industrial activities. I also record, with deep regret, the passing of Mr. J. Leslie, who for a number of years capably filled the position of a Visiting Justice to this Institution.

The food-supplies have been of first-class quality. Ample quantities of vegetables, of sufficient variety to permit of frequent changes in the menus, were made available from our own garden, while meat for rations was provided from stock fattened and killed on the institution farm. Bread, produced in the prison bakehouse, continues to be of excellent quality.

The institution school, maintained for the purpose of assisting those prisoners whose general education has to some extent been retarded, was carried on successfully during the year under the direction and guidance of Mr. P. Schroeder as Schoolmaster. The school was held on two nights each week, and Mr. Schroeder, in reporting on the work of the year, mentioned, *inter alia*, that, owing to the interest aroused and sustained, discipline throughout had been highly satisfactory, and that the syllabus had been planned with due regard to usefulness as well as to moral and intellectual progress.

During the winter months a series of lectures, seventeen in all, were given under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association. A wide range of subjects was covered by the lecturers, and keen interest was aroused in the discussion of the various topics. I wish to congratulate the executive of the association and the lecturers on the marked success achieved.

At regular intervals throughout the year concerts and similar forms of entertainment were provided for the prisoners by sympathizers acting in a voluntary capacity. The entertainments so given were keenly looked forward to and undoubtedly appreciated by the men, and it is pleasing to have to mention that a high standard of conduct on the part of listeners continues to be the rule at these functions. For the work entailed in organizing the entertainments we are indebted to Mrs. Holmes, the Salvation Army authorities, and the Working Men's Club, while thanks are also due to the many helpers and performers for the excellent entertainment provided.

Immediately prior to Christmas, functions appropriate to the occasion were kindly provided by Mrs. Holmes and party and by the Salvation Army, and were an undoubted success. Thanks are due to the above, and also Mr. A. Paynter and the members of the Richmond Mission, for their kind thoughts in the provision of various forms of Christmas cheer for the prisoners.

Early in the year a wireless-receiving set, presented to the prison through the kind offices of Major Thorne, of the Salvation Army Men's Industrial Home, was handed over by the Mayor of Christchurch, Mr. J. W. Beanland, on behalf of the donors, at a special function arranged for that purpose. The innovation has proved to be a most successful one, and due care is being taken in the selection of suitable broadcast subjects.

The spiritual needs of the prisoners have been catered for by the representatives of various religious organizations, all denominations receiving adequate service in this respect.

The industries of the institution have been maintained as far as possible at a state of efficiency compatible with the labour force available, but with the continually declining muster over the past few years the production returns, particularly in the case of the quarrying industry, have of necessity been somewhat restricted when comparing the results achieved with those of "good" years. Authority has now been obtained for the addition of a mechanical leader to the quarry plant, and when this is received and placed into commission a marked increase in production and sales returns should be achieved. Notwithstanding this, the output from the quarry has been fairly satisfactory under the circumstances, and a good net profit should accrue from the working of the industry. The various quarry products have established a good reputation for quality in Christchurch and the surrounding districts, and at times difficulty is experienced in meeting the demand.

The garden and poultry industries have been successfully carried out during the year. In addition to fulfilling our own requirements, a considerable portion of the produce is supplied to the Queen Mary Hospital at Hanmer and to St. Helens Hospital. Any surplus finds a ready market at satisfactory prices. The cultivation of nursery trees, run in conjunction with the garden industry, has been the means of providing numbers of young trees for planting out on the farm as shelter-belts for stock as well as ornamentation purposes.

Farming operations have been carried out successfully during the year under the direction of Mr. H. S. J. Wilson as Farm Manager. Activities on the farm are in the main directed towards the cultivation of root and cereal crops, and the rearing and depasturing of sheep.

In the sheep industry, the result of shearing operations was a return of 48 bales of wool, shorn from 1,475 sheep. Notwithstanding a definite drop in selling-prices when compared with the prices ruling in the previous season, a satisfactory return was achieved, the whole clip realizing £743. The lambing percentage was slightly under 118.5 per cent. Good prices were received for the first draft of new season's lambs sent to the local freezing-works.

A considerable portion of the farm is set aside for the growing of crops, and the following were harvested during the past year: Potatoes, 145 tons; wheat, 2,082 bushels; oats, 1,600 bushels; oaten sheaves (for chaff), 65 tons; lucerne hay, 80 tons; ensilage, 10 tons; mangolds, 300 tons; swedes, 860 tons; and peas, 600 bushels.

In the pig-raising industry, good progress was made, 159 pigs being disposed of throughout the year.