

GENERAL

The main object of the Department is to effect the rehabilitation of prisoners through a carefully devised individualized programme of treatment and training so that the prisoner will emerge better fitted and strengthened in resolution to be a law-abiding and self-reliant member of the community. To this end, in addition to the planning of a diversified range of constructive activities, all offenders are classified into groups according to their age, disposition, and character so that they may be dealt with more according to their individual needs. Generally the scheme of classification is as follows :—

The younger group of offenders (fifteen to twenty years) are sent to the Invercargill Borstal, where the range of correctional and instructional activities is the widest ; the group between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-five are sent to the Waikeria Borstal Institution, where a slightly narrower range of activities more adapted to the higher age of the inmates is provided ; the more trustworthy and amendable offenders are sent to the prison farms and camps, which are largely " open " prisons ; the sexually depraved are segregated at New Plymouth. The medical officer of this institution is a psychiatrist who has made a special study of homo-sexuality, and the general routine of this institution is so arranged as to assist the inmates in resolving their behaviour problems ; the aged and infirm prisoners are segregated at the Wanganui Prison, where incarceration, except for security precautions, virtually amounts to hospitalization ; the refractory and less trustworthy prisoners are detained at Mount Eden, which is the " maximum security " prison of the Dominion.

STAFF

The general staffing problem numerically has eased slightly, and several institutions are now up to full complement, but there is still a very great difficulty in arranging duty rosters that conform to the recently inaugurated forty-hour five-day week. At Mount Eden extra amenities in the shape of staff quarters and staff tea-rooms have been provided. The general salary scale for prison staff has been made more attractive. Overtime rates have been liberalized and penal rates for week-end duty have been instituted. Extra leave privileges are now under consideration.

The staff, with few exceptions, have co-operated loyally throughout the year under strain at times and under conditions that by their nature are difficult, and I desire to place on record my appreciation of their help. Amongst certain sections of society there is a prejudice against law-enforcement officers, but they can have satisfaction in knowing that theirs is one of the most constructive public services.

During the year two senior officers retired—Miss B. E. Trevor, Superintendent of the Women's Borstal Institution at Arohata, to get married, and Mr. A. St. P. Jordan, Superintendent of the Wi Tako Prison, on superannuation. Miss Trevor was replaced by the appointment of Miss D. Fairweather, House Matron at the Invercargill Borstal Institution, and Mr. Jordan by the appointment of Mr. R. C. Haywood, Farm Manager at Arohata.

CONCLUSION

I desire to place on record the Department's appreciation of the work of the Visiting Justices, the Official Visitors, and also of the various ministers of religion, officers of the Salvation Army, the several voluntary welfare organizations, and many other public-spirited individuals who have kindly assisted in ministering to those placed in the Department's care. After-care work is an important integral part of the correctional plan, and in this connection I desire especially to thank the Women's Borstal Association, the various Prisoners' Aid Societies, and the Probation Officers.

B. L. DALLARD,
Controller-General of Prisons.