

One probationary warder is now in training and promises to pass the necessary examination. The practice of placing officers on probation is a good one. Two probationers have already passed their examinations here, giving satisfactory results in the performance of their duties.

First Offenders' Probation Act.

Two have been placed on probation during the year, one being in previously, making three in all for the year. One has made all his payments in full and is otherwise complying with the terms of license; the second paid the full amount required by the prosecution and then absconded, since which time I have not been able to ascertain any information as to his whereabouts; the third is making his payments regularly, has employment, and is otherwise doing well.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

M. M. CLEARY,
Gaoler and Probation Officer.

NAPIER PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, Napier, 29th January, 1902.

In compliance with instructions received, I have the honour to report on the working of this Prison for year ended the 31st December, 1901.

In prison on the 1st January, 24 males and 2 females; received during the year, 166 males and 19 females; discharged, 166 males and 2 females; in custody 31st December, 1901, 24 males and 2 females.

The health of the prisoners has been good; no sickness except bad colds. There were a few cases of men received suffering from drink, but a few days' treatment set them right again. A man received from a country district under sentence of a month's hard labour was in such a weak state that he was sent to the Napier Hospital, where he served his sentence.

There were no deaths in this Prison.

The rations were good, and there were no complaints.

The conduct of the prisoners was good, there only being seven punishments for minor prison offences.

During the year the prisoners were employed quarrying, stone-breaking, stone-dressing, asphaltting prison-yards, and keeping Courthouse and grounds in order. Amongst the improvements is a new shelter-shed in the trial yard, which is a great boon to prisoners waiting trial. A concrete wall has been erected at foot of Coote Road, and a parade-ground levelled off for Volunteers between the Garrison Hall and new wall. This work was under the supervision of Warder McNamara, and I think it will be admitted it does himself and all concerned credit.

The fire service has not been laid on, nor has the boundary-wall been commenced. The wooden fence round the female division needs repairing.

Everything in connection with this Prison went on satisfactorily. The Visiting Justices visited regularly, and have greatly assisted in maintaining discipline. The Surgeon has been successful in his treatment of medical-treatment cases. Mr. Tanner holds Divine Service on Sunday mornings for Protestants, and Rev. Father Bell for Catholics in the afternoon. Several Napier ladies and gentlemen have kindly sent parcels of books for Prison library.

There were no reports against officers, who cheerfully did their duty without a grumble, notwithstanding the long hours they have to be on their feet. Discipline has been maintained without harshness. One officer, whose health broke down, had to retire on compensation.

It is to be hoped that during next session of Parliament something will be done for this branch of the public service. A pension scheme would give satisfaction.

First Offenders' Probation Act.

On the 1st January six probationers were reporting themselves at Napier. Four males were placed on probation during the year, and one female was received from another district.

Three males finished their terms satisfactorily, three were transferred to other districts, leaving four males and one female still reporting themselves at Napier. One male finished his probation on the 20th June, 1901, but was behind in his payment. He paid £7 5s. out of £11, which leaves £3 15s. in arrears. He has been excusing himself that he could not get constant employment. I have had some trouble with him, as he goes from one station to another cooking or doing any jobs he can get.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

MICHAEL FLANNERY,
Gaoler and Probation Officer.

NEW PLYMOUTH PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, New Plymouth, 29th January, 1902.

In compliance with circular memorandum (No. 1900/8) of the 1st December, 1900, I have the honour to report for your information that on the 1st January, 1901, there were in custody here one imprisonment and eleven hard-labour prisoners (males). No females.

During the year 108 prisoners were received, of whom 104 were males and four females. Of the males twenty-two were merely passing through *en route* to Waiotapu Prison; whilst forty-three were sentenced to various terms of hard labour, one to simple imprisonment, and two admitted to probation for twelve months, the two latter for horse-stealing. One, a half-caste Maori youth, was transferred to the care of the Probation Officer at Opunake, where he belongs, and is, I understand, carrying out the terms of his probation satisfactorily. The other, a lad of nineteen, is still under my supervision, and reports himself regularly by letter each month. He requested that he should be allowed to do so in preference to having to report himself to the