

25. The Department has during the year suffered a severe loss by the death of Mr. P. S. Garvey, Gaoler of Wellington. He had served this Department well and faithfully for upwards of thirty years, twenty-two of which he held the rank of Gaoler, and had previously served in the Royal Irish Constabulary. I have also with much regret to record the deaths of the Hon. H. Gourley and Mr. James Muir, both Visiting Justices of the Dunedin Prison.

26. The Habitual Drunkards Act passed last session is already doing good, and should, properly administered, when in full force, prove a necessary and beneficial measure. The report of Mr. R. Welsh Beauthwait, Inspector under the Imperial Inebriates Act, for 1905, recently published as a blue-book, says he is of opinion—“(1.) That the majority of persons who have been sent to reformatories are suffering from obvious and sometimes extreme mental defect. (3.) The increase of original defect and the addition of brain-degeneration are due to long-continued drunkenness practically unrestrained, and to the oft-repeated abrupt stoppage of liquor resulting from innumerable arrests and imprisonments. (4.) That the committal of habitual drunkards to prison has proved useless in that it has failed to cure, deter, or afford protection to the community, and inhumane because it leads to moral degradation, and causes or increases mental defect and removes all hope of reformation. (5.) The only chance of reformation for habitual drunkards depends upon their early committal to special medical treatment, and avoidance of that previous prison routine to which all cases have been subjected hitherto. That chronic drunken recidivists who have become mentally defective, irreformable, and hopeless should be committed to reformatories for full terms, and recommitted thereto as often as necessary, so that detention may be continuous, or as near continuous as the law permits, continuous detention being justifiable on account of helpless condition, danger to the community, and the constant charge such persons are upon public funds.” A reference to the New Zealand Prisons Report dated 1st May, 1900, shows that in paragraph 25 of that report a similar opinion to the above was expressed by me at that time.

#### FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

Table K shows that 101 persons were placed on probation last year, as against 111 in 1905. Of these, 28 have satisfactorily carried out the terms of their licenses and been discharged, 5 were rearrested, 1 absconded, and 67 still remain under the supervision of the Probation Officer.

The amount ordered to be paid by the various Courts was £298 6s. 10d., of which £164 9s. 7d. has been actually paid. The approximate cost of keeping these offenders had they been sent to prison would have been £3,249 7s. 6d., which sum, added to the amount of costs actually paid, totals a saving of £3,413 17s. 1d.

Of the 1869 persons placed on probation since the passing of “The First Offenders' Probation Act, 1886,” 1,567 have been discharged after satisfactorily carrying out the conditions of their licenses, 104 were rearrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, 1 committed suicide, 3 died, 2 were sent to mental hospitals, 2 to industrial schools, 39 absconded, and 151 still remain fulfilling the terms of their licenses.

A percentage of 83·84 have done well; only a percentage of 2·08 have eluded the vigilance of the probation officers and police and escaped. This record speaks for itself, and shows that the Act has been a success from its inception.

I have, &c.,

A. HUME,

Inspector of Prisons.

### GAOLERS' REPORTS FOR 1906.

#### AUCKLAND PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Auckland, 10th January, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the annual returns for this prison for the year ended 31st December, 1906.

The number of prisoners received during the twelve months was 1,204 males and 134 females, a total of 1,338, this being an increase of 49 males and a decrease of 40 females on the number received in the year 1905.

The daily average in prison was 247 males and 22 females; total, 269. This is an increase of 44·75—viz., 44·30 males and 0·45 females.

There were five deaths out of the 1,560 prisoners dealt with. Three of these occurred in the District Hospital, two being old men, who died of long-standing disease, and one as the result of an accident (the first which has ever happened in this prison); of the two others, one was on remand for medical treatment and had contracted pneumonia before admission, the other died of heart-disease. Inquests were held, and satisfactory verdicts returned. The daily average on the sick-list was 3·45 males and 0·05 females. One male spent all the year in hospital, and another one was about eight months in hospital. If, therefore, these men were deducted from the total there would appear to be an almost complete immunity from illness in the prison. I suppose it is quite useless for me to again point out the necessity of providing a fitting place for the treatment of persons suffering from *delirium tremens*. It is quite obvious that a prison is not such a place; it is unfair to the patient, to the officers of the prison, and to the prisoners.