

first given as a composition. In this way an attempt was made to develop the reasoning-powers, and as the work progressed considerable improvement was noticeable.

In conclusion, I may state that the work as a whole has tended to develop their mental powers, and to give them greater confidence in their outlook on life.

Waikeria Reformatory.

There were 113 inmates in custody on the 1st January, 1923, and 69 were received during the year. The discharges were 11 hard-labour and 2 reformative-detention prisoners on expiration of sentence, while 26 hard-labour and 46 reformative-detention prisoners were released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board, and 14 were transferred to other prisons, leaving a total of 83 remaining in custody at the 31st December. The daily average number of inmates in confinement during the year was 98.68.

There were three escapes during the year. Inmate R. Boyton left his work in the garden, but was captured within ten minutes. Inmate Thomas escaped from a party working at the old orchard and was recaptured within two hours. Inmate A. A. C. Scott, who escaped while in charge of a team, succeeded in eluding capture for twelve days.

In regard to work, our main energies are, of course, directed to the farm, and here we have had what I think might be reasonably regarded as a successful and satisfactory year.

The administration was modified in February, 1923, in the direction of making each dairy as far as possible self-contained, so that inmates acquired experience not only in milking, but in all operations occurring on a dairy farm, such as harrowing and top-dressing pastures, growing summer and winter feed for the cows, &c. The success of the plan has not only been in the way of teaching inmates more, but has manifested itself in added interest in the work and increased butterfat returns. The dairy herds have been doing well so far, and I think that results at the end of the season will furnish interesting data on the effect of even one year's culling.

The work of inmates on the Mental Hospital property has been continued throughout the year, and the co-operation between the Departments carries with it mutual advantages. I would respectfully urge that this interworking between the Departments be continued, and even increased if opportunity offers. During the year the work carried out under this arrangement comprised, besides ordinary agricultural rotational work which included the preparation for and sowing and harvesting of 147 acres of oats and the working of the land for and putting in of 220 acres of swedes, such items as fencing, rabbiting, road-repair, &c. Then there was the autumn sowing to grass of 302 acres of virgin country prepared during the previous winter and summer, and the clearing and ploughing of a further 350 acres of new land for autumn sowing in 1924.

In addition to these activities concrete-block making has been carried on at No. 1 Camp.

Work in the garden has gone on smoothly, and the tomato crop, the largest source of revenue, promises well. Unfortunately, the whole of the plants were cut down by frost last season, and this necessitated replanting, resulting in a loss of the earlier and more profitable markets. This crop calls for a great deal of attention over the busy time of the year. Where surplus labour is available it supplies a good outlet, for the work is carried on under direct and uninterrupted supervision. However, situated as we are, we can employ our inmates on necessary work in connection with the general work and development of the place. Furthermore, our distance from the chief consuming centres places us at a disadvantage in marketing. In these circumstances it would probably be advisable to reduce this branch to the dimensions of a side line.

The school erected by the Education Department for the children is completed, and work will be begun in it after the midsummer holidays. This departure will be advantageous from every point of view.

The health of the inmates has been very good. One inmate who fell down while white-washing at the dairy was removed to hospital with symptoms suggesting spinal injury, which, however, fortunately proved after a few days to be only a severe concussion. Another inmate who received an injury to a finger while working with the chaffcutter was also treated at Hamilton Hospital.

The general conduct, I think, gives cause for satisfaction. The vast majority of offences dealt with have been minor breaches of discipline.

Another year's review of the "honour" system adds further evidence of its success. There are, of course, set-backs and disappointments. These are inevitable, but they do not detract from the advantages which this method of treatment confers on the majority of inmates, who react gratefully to the trust reposed in them.

Schoolmaster's Report.—Since my appointment as schoolmaster I have found that I am able to report definite progress, increased interest, better work more cheerfully done, and, above all, an earnest desire to please and make progress among those who attend the school regularly, in striking contrast to dull apathy and indifference when they started. When we take into consideration the fact that these men have already done a hard day's toil, and in the ordinary course of events would have a couple of hours' quiet reading in their cells, to come to school cheerfully and willingly, and in some cases to actually apply to come to school (not to mention extra and purely voluntary work done for me in their cells), most certainly shows a better spirit, and a real desire to take full advantage of the opportunity thus afforded them.

Regarding the effect of the work on the inmates, I have observed three things: In the first place, there is marked reluctance on the part of the men to start where they left off at school. If a man says that he is in Standard V, I find on testing him that in all probability he will have to start in Standard III, or even lower; his progress from there is hampered because he thinks he knows the work and for some unexplained reason is being purposely kept back. If I were to start him where he wished he would work hard, but futilely, as he has no grounding in the back work. In the second