

place, I find it impossible to measure progress on the same basis as even dull school-children. At first the men are so much slower and obtuse that any progress seems impossible; but after a month most of them go ahead, and prefer to work things out for themselves rather than be shown their errors. With them the first step forward is the hardest; after that guidance more than actual instruction is what they need. The third thing I have noticed is the query of usefulness. Almost invariably a man asks of what practical use certain instruction may be to him in after-life. As long as I can prove usefulness he is satisfied, and works with a will—he is keen to get something that will help him afterwards.

Wanganui Prison.

This prison, which is now used for the purpose of housing old and derelict male offenders, requires a few structural alterations, and these are being put in hand forthwith. Electric light has been installed and is a great improvement upon the former inferior gas service. All prisoners that are able to work are fully employed in keeping the grounds tidy and in carrying out a number of works for the local Borough Council.

In view of the class of inmates at this prison it is remarkable the little sickness we have. It is only on rare occasions that the old men require medical attention.

Waikune Prison Camp, Erua.

As in previous years, a considerable amount of road formation and metalling has been carried out by prison labour, under the direction of the Public Works Department. The gang quartered at Makaretu Camp continued with the task of forming and metalling the Raurimu-Waimarino Road. A great deal of formation work has been carried out, and the road has been metalled a further one mile and a half. This gang also carried out a certain amount of road-formation work for the Raurimu County Council. The old quarry at Makaretu was worked out during the year, but the Department was fortunate in locating another deposit of metal a short distance from the main road. This pit is estimated to yield an unlimited supply of metal. The road has been formed to the new pit, and arrangements are being made to have the crusher transferred to the new site.

During the period under review a stone-crusher was installed near Waikune Camp, and a metal-pit opened out. The men are now becoming more accustomed to the work, and better results are being obtained. Several concrete culverts of large dimensions have also been put down on the section of the road between Erua and Waimarino.

The Waimarino-Tokaanu Road maintenance was taken over by the Prisons Department in May, 1923. A gang of men has been continually employed on this work, save for a short period when suitable accommodation was not available. A considerable portion of the road has been repaired and graded. Repairs have also been effected to bridges on this road. The road is now in first-class condition, and travellers speak very highly of the work carried out by the Prisons Department on this section.

Sawmilling.—An up-to-date sawmilling plant, capable of cutting 10,000 superficial feet of timber per day, has now been installed. Opinions are freely expressed by practical sawmillers that the Department has now one of the finest sawmilling plants in the King-country. Quite recently the new plant cut 7,500 superficial feet of timber in a space of seven hours.

A considerable amount of work was also undertaken for the Tongariro National Park Board. Two large accommodation-huts were erected, and repairs effected to the mountain-track and foot-bridges. A start has also been made with the formation of the Bruce Road.

The health of the prisoners has been good. During the month of October there was a mild outbreak of influenza, fortunately with no complications. Accidents were very rare. Two men received minor injuries that required medical attention.

The conduct of the men undergoing sentence at this prison has been very good. The industry continues to be satisfactory. The "honour" system at Waikune still obtains good results; more especially in the bush-work and carting to Otuku.

Wellington Prisons.

There were in custody at the commencement of the year 77 males. During the year 880 males were received, and 841 were discharged. In custody at end of year, 116 males.

Of those discharged, 486 were on expiration or remission of sentence, 226 transferred to other prisons or to the police, 11 on recommendation of the Prisons Board, 16 debtors, 1 died, and 2 were executed.

The conduct and industry of prisoners have been exceptionally good. No offences of an aggravated nature occurred, and the minor offences meriting punishment, and dealt with by the Visiting Justices, numbered 16. Two prisoners charged with murder, and found guilty, were sentenced to death by hanging, the execution taking place on the 19th April and the 16th June respectively.

The health of prisoners generally has been good, but, as in previous years, many cases of sickness, contracted previous to admission to the prison, had to be sent direct to the Public Hospital for treatment. Five such cases had an aggregate of 508 days in hospital, where one, a Maori suffering from gunshot wounds, died about nine months after admission. Excluding the cases sent to hospital, the number sick three days or over was seven—a very small percentage when the class of inmate received at this prison is considered.

At the Terrace the demolition of the north wing was commenced in June, and early in September the excavation work was proceeded with, the spoil being tipped in the garden at the back of the prison. A tile-making plant having been installed, concrete tiles and ridging are now being manufactured, and a sufficient number to cover the roof of the cell-house and outbuildings on Watt's Peninsula have been