

Paparua Prison School: Report of Schoolmaster.

I beg to report on the work of the prison school for the year ending the 31st December, 1927.

The average attendance for the year was 17. With those men who have been in the classes throughout the year good progress has been made. The curriculum consisted of geography, English composition, writing, spelling, arithmetic, commercial correspondence, and book-keeping. The mentality of a few of the prisoners is very low, and little progress was made with these. It was considered sufficient if their reading, writing, and arithmetic were improved. Others progressed from Standard III to Standard VI, and at the end of the year were quite qualified for Proficiency Certificates. Regularly throughout the year debates were held, and these were made a means of improving oral expression and logical thinking. The interest maintained in the work is evidence that the men's time is being usefully employed.

RANGIPO PRISON (LAND-DEVELOPMENT CAMP), TOKAANU.

(Officer in Charge, Mr. A. BANKS.)

There were in custody at the commencement of the year 21 male prisoners. During the year 25 were received, 27 were discharged or transferred, and 1 man escaped, leaving in custody at the end of the year 18 male prisoners.

Our main industry is the breaking-in of virgin country for cultivation. During the year 400 acres have been cleared of tutu, manuka, and fern, and burnt off in preparation for ploughing. About 450 acres were ploughed, disked, and tine-harrowed, of which 370 acres were sown in temporary pasture and 50 acres in oats.

Three miles of boundary and subdividing fences of eight wires, with four posts to the chain, have been erected.

A vegetable-garden was made, and sufficient vegetables for the institution's requirements have been grown.

On the whole the conduct and industry of the prisoners have been very satisfactory.

WAIKUNE PRISON (ROAD CONTRACTING CAMP), ERUA.

(Officer in Charge, Mr. H. W. GLYNN.)

At the beginning of the year there were 92 prisoners in custody. During the year 84 prisoners were received and 92 prisoners were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving 84 prisoners in custody at the end of the year. The daily average number in custody was 80.98.

The general health of the prisoners has been quite satisfactory. There were two admissions to the Taumarunui Public Hospital during the year, one suffering from peritonitis, and the other with an injury to his leg. Another prisoner, who was injured during quarrying operations at Makatote, was successfully treated at the Public Hospital and later transferred to the Auckland Prison infirmary. The most regrettable event of the year was the unfortunate accident at Makatote roadside quarry on the 22nd November last, which resulted in the death of one prisoner.

The conduct of the prisoners has been satisfactory. The number of offences dealt with during the year show a slight increase on the figures for the previous year, but this is attributed to the fact that the number of prisoners in custody at Waikune Prison show a corresponding increase over the preceding year.

The spiritual welfare of the prisoners has been well attended to by the local ministers of the various denominations. At frequent times throughout the year Divine service was held at camp by the clergymen of the various denominations. The members of the Raetihi branch of the Salvation Army also visited Waikune, and besides holding Divine service they rendered a most enjoyable musical programme, which was greatly appreciated by the inmates of this institution. Special thanks are also due to the Rev. Mr. Nicholas for the kindly interest he has taken in the inmates at Waikune.

During the year improvements were carried out with a view to making the camp more convenient. A new residence was erected for the officer in charge and a new range of quarters built for the use of the single officers.

The great majority of the prisoners have been employed continuously on road-construction. Three bridges have been erected on the National Park—Makatote section of the Main South Road. Two miles of roadway were formed, and approximately four miles metalled. There is now a good metalled road from Raurimu to Ohakune.

WANGANUI PRISON.

(Gaoler, Mr. E. CHING.)

There were in custody at the commencement of the year, 29 males and no females, and there were received during the year 162 males and 8 females, being an increase of 36 males and 6 females. At the end of the year there were in custody 32 males and no females.

During the year employment had to be found in our own grounds for any surplus labour, and good work has been done. The garden and grounds have been well kept. There were approximately 12 to 15 men who were able to do very little, if any, work owing to their age and other infirmities. Generally speaking, the health of the inmates has been splendid, only minor ailments requiring attention such as colds, influenza, &c. The Medical Officer visits at least once per week, and every inmate in the institution has to be seen by him, whether they desire to see him or not. The Medical Officer afterwards makes a complete inspection of the premises.