

The washing and repairing of mail-bags for the Post and Telegraph Department has been continued in conjunction with the tailoring shop, and the manufacture and repair of satchels has been under the supervision of the bootmaking shop, and all requirements have been met in this direction and good inter-departmental service given.

The whole of the soap requirements for laundry and cleaning work has been manufactured here from waste kitchen fat and from supplies from Waikeria Borstal Institution.

The tobacco-factory under advisory guidance of the Tobacco Instructor from the Department of Agriculture has been able to meet the tobacco requirements of all prison institutions. A considerable quantity of the leaf used was grown at Waikeria Borstal Farm and was of very good quality.

The quarry industry has been continued during the year, but under more restricted conditions than previously owing to the diminished prison population here, but nevertheless satisfactory results were obtained. The quarry output was mainly disposed of to local bodies and Government Departments for road formation and maintenance work.

The prison garden has been able to fully supply all vegetable requirements, including ample supplies of green vegetables.

The food-supplies are good and ample. The meat is supplied from the Waikeria Borstal Farm and of excellent quality, and the bread is produced in the institutional bakery and has been of excellent quality and favourably commented on by visitors.

Maintenance of prison buildings has been carried out, and interior renovations to cells and corridors is in progress. Modern cooking facilities by the instalment of a new oil-burning range in the institutional kitchen has so far proved both efficient and economical.

I am pleased to report that the officers of the prison have performed their duties in a satisfactory manner and have taken a keen interest in the carrying-on of the various industries and work, and have evidenced tact and judgment in dealing with their charges, often under trying conditions.

I regret to record the loss to the staff by the death of Principal Warder W. R. Childs, and the Department thereby has lost the services of a valuable and conscientious officer. The services of the Quarry-manager, Mr. W. J. Meehan, has also been lost to the Department by his retirement owing to ill health, and this officer likewise had given good service over a number of years.

GISBORNE PRISON.

(Gaoler, Mr. H. N. RICHARDSON.)

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ending 31st December, 1936. In custody at the beginning of the year 5 males, during the year 91 males and 3 females were received, and during the same period 88 males and 3 females were discharged or otherwise disposed of, leaving in custody on 31st December, 1936, 8 males.

One prisoner had to be transferred to Cook Hospital suffering from epilepsy. The health of the prisoners generally has been satisfactory.

The men have been employed at gardening, laundry work, and repairing clothing during the year.

Divine service has been held regularly during the year, Mr. D. C. Morris and D. Hefferman, jun., conducting. (Plymouth Brethren.)

HAUTU PRISON.

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

At the commencement of the year there were 61 males in custody. During the year 33 males were received, whilst 62 males were released or otherwise disposed of, leaving in prison on the night of the 31st December, 1936, 32 male prisoners. The greatest number in custody at any one time during the year was 61; the least 32; the daily average being 44.3.

The health of the prisoners has been very good, sickness in most cases being restricted to colds and minor ailments. One prisoner was removed to public hospital for operative treatment, and after a short sojourn in hospital he was returned to prison fully recovered in health. The Prison Medical Officer, Dr. W. J. Feltham, visited the prison at regular intervals and gave every attention to inmates requiring medical treatment.

The dentist was in attendance at intervals throughout the year and attended to those prisoners requiring dental treatment.

The conduct of the prisoners generally has been satisfactory. Disciplinary correction by the Visiting Justices or myself for minor breaches of the regulations was required for 18 individuals.

The food-supplies were of excellent quality, with a plentiful and varied supply of vegetables from the prison garden. Good-quality bread was manufactured in the institution bakery. The meat-supplies were obtained from the farm. Forty-nine head of cattle and sixteen sheep were slaughtered for ration purposes.

The spiritual welfare of the men was well cared for by visiting chaplains from Waihi, Taupo, and Taumarunui.

Ample reading-matter for all the men was available from the prison library.

Our special thanks are due to the Rev. J. S. R. Carter, Presbyterian Minister, Taupo, the Christchurch Branch of the Howard League for Penal Reform, and Mr. C. Lowe for the supplies of cake, fruit, lollies, tobacco, and cigarettes for distribution amongst the inmates at Christmas-time; and to the President of the Mayoress's War Memorial Library League, Auckland, for the supplies of reading-matter received during the year.

Owing to the marked decrease in the prison population some difficulty was experienced in keeping the farm gangs at No. 1 and No. 2 camps up to working-strength. Later it was found more economical to close down No. 2 camp, transfer the prisoners to the main camp, and manage all the labour gangs from the main camp. No. 2 camp was vacated on the 31st March last, and since then the huts have been removed to Waikune Prison.