

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRISONS

(REPORT ON) FOR THE YEAR 1940-41.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE to HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

Wellington, 23rd July, 1941.

I HAVE the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report on the prisons and Borstals of the Dominion for the year 1940-41.

I have, &c.,

H. G. R. MASON,

Minister of Justice.

THE CONTROLLER-GENERAL OF PRISONS to the Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

I have the honour to present the annual report of the Prisons Department for the financial year ended 31st March, 1941, showing also the criminal statistics for the calendar year ending 31st December, 1940.

This report, on account of the shortage of paper and the present need for economy, is much abridged. The customary reports from officers controlling institutions have been omitted.

These reports show that steady progress has been maintained in the various institutional activities and in the general treatment of prisoners. Appreciative references are made by Controlling Officers to the help given by voluntary organizations, clergymen, and other persons, who have co-operated with the Department in an endeavour to exert a socializing influence on inmates and have assisted in after-care work.

The general conduct of prisoners has been good, with the exception of three instances of assaults on prison officers in attempts to escape. Such incidents, fortunately, are rare happenings in New Zealand.

PRISON STATISTICS.

The statistical tables appended to this report show a considerable diminution in the number of prisoners received into the various prison institutions during 1940 in comparison with receptions in 1939. The figures show that the total number received last year was 3,596, as against 4,055 in 1939, a decrease of 459. The ratio of distinct prisoners received to each 10,000 of general population has also declined, the figures being 13.44 in 1940, as against 15.38 during the previous year. The daily average number in custody last year was slightly higher than in 1939, mainly due to a decrease in sentences under one month with a corresponding increase in terms exceeding one year.

The "receptions," together with the ratio of prisoners to population and the daily average number in custody, during the years 1930, 1935, 1939, and 1940 are summarized in the following table :—

Year.	Total Receptions.	Total Distinct Persons.	Ratio to 10,000.	Daily Average.
1940	3,596	2,201	13.44	914
1939	4,055	2,505	15.38	909
1935	3,409	2,158	13.76	1,212
1930	4,909	2,864	19.19	1,466

LENGTH OF SENTENCES.

The following table shows particulars of the sentences imposed by the Courts during the past three years and the proportion of each group to the total number of persons received :—

Term of Sentence.	Number of Prisoners.			Percentage to Total Number sentenced.		
	1938.	1939.	1940.	1938.	1939.	1940.
Under one month	873	964	774	39·3	38·5	35·2
One month and under three months ..	514	642	527	23·1	25·7	23·9
Three months and under six months ..	291	286	260	13·1	11·3	11·9
Six months and under twelve months ..	161	194	210	7·3	7·7	9·6
One year and under three years ..	287	320	362	12·9	12·7	16·4
Three years and under five years ..	79	76	57	3·5	3·4	2·5
Five years and over	19	23	11	0·8	0·9	0·5
Totals	2,224	2,505	2,201	100·0	100·0	100·0

It will be observed from the above figures that proportionately there has been a steady diminution during the past three years in sentences under one month, while terms of one year and up to three years have increased. In spite of this, however, sentences under three months represented over 59 per cent. of the total number imposed during 1940.

NATURE OF OFFENCES.

The following comparative table covering the past six years shows the number of offences classified under three main headings—offences against the person, offences against property, and miscellaneous offences. It will be observed that although there has been a decrease of 300 in the number of offences dealt with in 1940 in comparison with 1939, there has been little variation in the number of offences against the person or in offences against property.

Year.	Offences against the Person.	Offences against Property.	Miscellaneous Offences.	Total.
1940	238	789	1,174	2,201
1939	238	777	1,490	2,505
1938	197	740	1,287	2,224
1937	191	675	1,125	1,991
1936	189	599	1,002	1,790
1935	175	887	1,096	2,158

NATIONALITY OF OFFENDERS.

The following table covering receptions during the past five years, classified on a nationality basis, shows that the number of New-Zealand-born offenders (exclusive of Maoris) decreased from 1,427 in 1939 to 1,257 in 1940, while the number of Maoris received increased from 310 to 330. It is regrettable that the number of Maori offenders continue to increase from year to year at a rate which is quite out of proportion to the increase in the general population. The large majority of the Maori offenders were under thirty years of age, their offences being mainly theft, assault, and crime of a sexual nature.

Year.	New-Zealand-born (excluding Maoris).	Maoris.	British and Foreign.	Total.
1940	1,257	330	614	2,201
1939	1,427	310	768	2,505
1938	1,248	252	724	2,224
1937	1,383	257	351	1,991
1936	1,022	199	569	1,790

AGE OF OFFENDERS.

A further increase in the number of offenders under the age of twenty years is revealed by the statistics. During the past five years there has been a steady increase in the number of youthful offenders committed to prison institutions, while crime among persons over the age of thirty years shows a tendency to decrease. It will be observed from the table hereunder that offenders under the age of twenty numbered 203 in 1940, as against 96 in 1936, an increase of 111 per cent. This unsatisfactory

state cannot be attributed to any difficulty in obtaining suitable employment on leaving school. The nature of the offences, a matter which will be referred to in another section of this report, would indicate that the cause is more likely to be a lack of discipline and parental control and training.

Age Group.	1935.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.
Under 20	131	96	115	123	178	203
20-25	350	185	303	362	424	348
25-30	321	254	282	321	413	322
30-40	545	437	456	555	612	492
40 and upwards ..	809	715	831	861	875	833
Not stated	2	3	4	2	3	3
Totals	2,158	1,790	1,991	2,224	2,505	2,201

MISCELLANEOUS.

Deaths.—There was one death recorded during the year, that of a prisoner who died at the Waikeria Reformatory as the result of a fatal dive while bathing in the river.

Executions.—Nil.

Floggings.—Floggings were ordered by the Court in respect of four prisoners who brutally assaulted a prison officer in an attempt to escape. No floggings have yet been administered.

Escapes.—During the year twenty prisoners and sixteen Borstal detainees escaped. With one exception all were recaptured.

Borstal Receptions and General Results.—A total of 155 lads and 9 young women were received in direct committals to Borstal, and 4 males and 1 female were admitted by transfer from other institutions.

Of the aggregate number dealt with at Borstal over the past twenty years, just under 15 per cent. have again been convicted after release.

Mental Defectives.—Twenty-three persons certified as mentally deficient were transferred to mental hospitals during the year.

HEALTH OF PRISONERS.

The general health of prisoners throughout the year has been very good. The daily average number on the sick-list was fifteen, representing 1·6 of the daily average number of prisoners in custody. It is noteworthy that prisoners almost invariably improve in physical condition and put on weight under the regular living-conditions and the wholesome diet in prison.

In addition to the care of the general health of prisoners by Prison Medical Officers, this Department has a close working arrangement with the Mental Hospitals Department whereby its psychiatrists are always at call to examine and advise on the treatment of any inmate of impaired mentality. A mental specialist from the Seacliff Mental Hospital attends regularly at a clinic at Invercargill, and full advantage is taken of this for the mental examination of lads from the Borstal. The Medical Officer at the New Plymouth Prison is a qualified psychiatrist. At this institution are segregated all sexual perverts, and the Medical Officer is indefatigable in his efforts to help the prisoners psychologically as well as attending to their physical ailments. He also pays tribute to the local hospital in the following terms :—

“ I would be grateful if, in your annual report, you would make mention of the very great assistance the local hospital staff are to the institution in treating the many obscure disorders with which our inmates become afflicted. Without exception I have found them willing to undertake plans of treatment which are well beyond the scope of their bare duties.”

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

A comparative statement of revenue and expenditure covering a period of ten years is given hereunder :—

Year.	Daily Average Number of Inmates.	Gross Expenditure.		Credits.		Net Expenditure.	
		Total.	Per Head.	Total.	Per Head.	Total.	Per Head.
		£	£	£	£	£	£
1931-32	1,641	152,581	92·93	55,867	34·03	96,714	58·90
1932-33	1,661	142,940	86·04	52,412	31·84	90,528	54·49
1933-34	1,488	138,193	92·88	54,823	36·77	83,370	56·11
1934-35	1,306	137,484	105·25	60,242	46·12	77,242	59·13
1935-36	1,170	144,460	123·47	69,933	59·77	74,527	63·70
1936-37	985	146,314	148·54	68,661	69·70	77,653	78·83
1937-38	852	164,132	192·64	69,075	81·07	95,057	111·56
1938-39	855	152,093	177·89	64,910	75·92	87,183	101·97
1939-40	907	155,333	170·16	74,348	81·97	80,985	88·19
1940-41	905	162,426	179·47	77,908	86·08	84,518	93·39

It will be seen that for the year under review the revenue credited to the vote was £77,908, which, considering marketing and seasonal difficulties, must be regarded as highly satisfactory.

The increase in gross expenditure of £7,000 is largely due to increased expenditure on the farming activities of the Department, coupled with a general increasing cost of maintenance and a more liberal scale of rations and other amenities. The increased expenditure on farming (mainly top-dressing) will be returned in a higher level of production in the future. The increase in the credits is due to an increased farm production of £6,000, offset by lower earnings in the quarry industry, due almost wholly to the general falling off in orders for quarry products.

The policy of making the Department as far as practicable self-sustained is steadily being pursued. The whole of the Department's requirements in vegetables are now grown, and surpluses are made available to other Departments or disposed of in the open market, while milk is supplied to Mount Eden from Waikeria at a considerable saving; and since a pasteurizing and bottling plant has been installed milk is now supplied for use in schools.

The tobacco industry has proved an economical and satisfactory venture, and the transfer and installation of a disused kiln from Pongakawa has enabled a high-grade leaf to be produced.

The farms, in addition to the value of the produce grown, provide a means of healthful and reformatory occupation for prisoners. This latter consideration is, in fact, even more important than the economic one, as at the farm camps the honour system is largely in vogue and the element of trust and the conditions generally make for an expansiveness of outlook and the development of a self-respect that is difficult to attain under the closely-ordered regimen of a city prison.

CONCLUSION.

It is desired to place on record the Department's appreciation of the co-operation of Visiting Justices, who have regularly visited the various institutions, also the work of Official Visitors, the Borstal Committees, the Borstal Association, and other voluntary helpers. Thanks are also due to the Workers' Educational Association and the Country Library Committee for arranging respectively for lecturers and books.

I desire also to record my sincere thanks to the members of the staff for their loyal assistance in carrying out the work of the Department.

B. L. DALLARD,
Controller-General of Prisons.

Table A.

TABLE SHOWING PARTICULARS, FOR EACH PRISON, OF PRISONERS AT BEGINNING AND END OF YEAR, AND RECEIVED AND DISCHARGED DURING YEAR 1940.

	Addington.		Auckland.		Hautu (Tokana).		Invercargill.		Invercargill Borstal Institution.		Napier.		New Plymouth.		Paparaia (Templeton).		Point Halswell.		Point Halswell Borstal Institution.		Rangipo.		Waikeria.		Waikeria Borstal Institution.		Waikare (Brun).		Wellington.		Wai Taka (Trentham).		Minor Prisons and Police-gaols.		Police Lock-ups.*		Totals.		(Grand Totals.							
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.				
(a) In prison at beginning of year :—																																														
Undergoing—																																														
Simple imprisonment, hard labour—																																														
Under three months	32	1	3	..	2	..	7	
Three months and under one year	5	40	1	2	5	..	2	..	27	
One year and upwards	3	83	2	23	2	..	37	..	29	
Detention as habitual criminals	17	2	..	4	
Reformatory detention	12	5	16	16	..	12	
Detention in Borstal institution	3	1	
Total criminals in prison	8	187	9	41	10	..	59	..	80	
For trial or on remand	20	3	..	1	..	4	
Total in prison for criminal offences	8	207	9	41	13	..	60	..	84	
Debtors	2	
Total persons in prison	8	209	9	41	13	..	60	..	84	
(b) Received during the year :—																																														
Sentenced to—																																														
Simple imprisonment, hard labour—																																														
Under three months	13	718	10	61	..	25	..	192	
Three months and under one year	6	159	12	..	4	..	63	
One year and upwards	45	1	4	..	1	..	24	
Hard labour, reformatory detention, and declared habitual criminal	
Hard labour and reformatory detention	17	1	..	2	
Hard labour and flogging	
Reformatory detention only	2	43	6	3	..	1	..	10	
Reformatory detention and declared habitual criminal	
Hard labour and detention in Borstal institution	
Detention in Borstal institution	1	21	1	3	11	
Hard labour and declared habitual criminal	
Detention as habitual criminal	
Death	1†	
Detained until the pleasure of the Minister of Justice is known	
Under conviction for sentence	9	1	5
Total new prisoners received	22	1,015	18	84	..	32	..	307	
On remand or for trial	8	194	17	29	..	25	..	74	
Total	30	1,209	35	113	..	57	..	381	
Debtors	
Lunatics																							

* Deemed to be prisoners under the provisions of section 17 of the Statute Law Amendment Act, 1917.

† Subsequently committed to imprisonment for life.

Table A1.

TABLE SHOWING NUMBER OF PRISONERS AT EACH PRISON OR INSTITUTION IN THE DOMINION DURING THE YEAR 1940.

Name of Prison.	Sickness.										(c) Number of Distinct Prisoners ill on One or More Occasions, with Number of Occasions, Total Number of Separate Illnesses, Total Number of Days, and Daily Average on Sick-list.														
	Greatest Number in Prison at One Time.					Least Number in Prison at One Time.					Daily Average Number of Prisoners.					(d) Admissions to Hospital during Year.					(e) Greatest Number ill at any One Time.				
	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.	Once.	Twice.	Three Times.	Four Times.	Five Times.	Six Times and Over.	Number of Separate Illnesses.	Total Number of Days ill.	Daily Average on Sick-list.				
Addington (Women's Reformatory)	..	12	12	..	5	5	..	8.76	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	3	20	0.05
Auckland	224	10	234	171	2	173	196.35	5.98	8	13	48	12	2	..	..	..	..	..	78	786	2.15
Hautu (Tokauu)	..	..	41	27	..	27	33.04	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	62	0.17
Invercargill	20	..	20	10	..	10	12.18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27	143	0.39
Invercargill (Boistal institution)	135	..	135	92	..	92	110.16	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	240	1,874	5.12
Napier	22	1	23	7	..	7	14.16	0.03	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	226	0.62
New Plymouth	66	..	60	41	..	41	49.52	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21	598	1.63
Papua (Templeton)	115	..	115	68	..	68	92.55	..	..	3	1	9	2	..	..	..	..	..	13	65	0.18
Pt. Halswell (Women's Reformatory)	..	8	8	..	..	..	..	4.08	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	157	0.43
Pt. Halswell (Boistal institution)	..	16	16	..	10	10	..	12.70	2	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	96	0.26
Rangipo	25	..	25	19	..	19	22.81	..	..	6	..	6	4	1	..	..	..	1	27	121	0.33
Waikeria (Reformatory)	98	..	98	71	..	71	85.80	..	..	8	7	17	9	..	..	..	..	..	35	295	0.81
Waikeria (Boistal institution)	38	..	38	19	..	19	29.70	..	..	5	2	9	..	..	..	1	..	..	13	86	0.23
Waikanae (Fenu)	61	..	61	42	..	42	51.59	..	..	9	..	9	3	2	..	..	..	..	21	163	0.45
Wanganui	19	1	20	10	..	10	14.29	..	..	3	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	7	30	0.08
Wellington	95	..	95	64	..	64	81.43	..	..	5	13	41	3	..	..	..	..	..	47	570	1.56
W. Tako (Trentham)	66	..	66	30	..	30	54.74	..	..	8	4	15	3	..	..	..	..	..	21	149	0.41
Minor Prisons and police-gaols	..	..	..	..	..	..	15.81	0.09	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	46	0.13
Police lock-ups*	..	..	..	..	..	..	18.85	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	882.98	31.64	..	65	6	71	230	79	29	17	2	4	582	5,487	15.00

* Deemed to be prisons under the provisions of section 17 of the Statute Law Amendment Act, 1917.

Table C.

TABLE SHOWING THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF DISTINCT CONVICTED PRISONERS RECEIVED INTO GAOL DURING THE YEAR 1940, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL OFFENCES, BIRTHPLACE, AND AGE.

		Offences against the Person.						Offences against Property.				Miscellaneous.						Totals.			
		Sexual Offences.		Assaults.		Other.		Theft and Deceit.		Mischief.		Drunkenness.*		Vagrancy.†		Other Offences.					
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		
Birthplaces—																					
New Zealand ..		74	..	97	1	11	2	526	14	90	2	193	10	84	9	461	13	1,536	51		
Australia ..		3	..	6	..	..	..	30	1	2	..	26	1	4	1	35	..	106	3
England and Wales ..		7	..	6	..	1	..	53	3	10	..	49	2	12	..	93	..	231	5		
Scotland ..		1	..	7	..	1	..	25	1	3	..	29	..	6	..	33	..	108	1		
Eire ..		1	..	3	..	..	..	9	1	1	..	10	..	8	..	19	..	51	1
Other British countries ..		..	..	2	..	..	..	11	1	..	..	7	1	3	1	6	..	29	3
China ..		..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	7	..	10	..
Other countries ..		5	..	3	..	3	..	3	..	1	..	7	..	2	..	40	..	64	..		
Not stated ..		..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
Totals ..		94	..	125	1	16	2	659	21	107	2	322	14	119	11	695	13	2,137	64		
Ages—																					
15 and under 20 years ..		8	..	12	..	..	..	107	4	35	..	1	..	5	4	25	2	193	10
20 .. 25 ..		14	..	36	..	4	1	130	1	33	..	12	..	15	4	94	4	338	10		
25 .. 30 ..		16	..	26	1	2	..	125	5	13	1	15	..	13	..	105	..	315	7		
30 .. 40 ..		18	..	23	..	6	..	147	4	14	1	74	2	20	1	182	..	484	8		
40 .. 50 ..		15	..	13	..	3	..	96	1	7	..	89	3	27	..	154	4	404	8		
50 .. 60 ..		14	..	14	..	1	1	40	5	3	..	78	5	26	1	101	1	277	13		
60 and over ..		9	..	1	..	..	..	13	1	2	..	53	4	13	1	32	2	123	8
Not stated ..		..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	3	..
Totals ..		91	..	125	1	16	2	659	21	107	2	322	14	119	11	695	13	2,137	64		
Maoris (included above) ..		20	..	35	1	3	..	125	1	17	..	31	..	14	4	78	1	323	7		

* It must be remembered that drunkenness is punished more by fine than by imprisonment, so that the figures in the gaol tables do not represent the full number of persons punished for that offence.
† Including importuning, consorting with rogues, &c.

Table D.

PRISONS.—NEW-ZEALAND-BORN PRISONERS RECEIVED, 1940.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF DISTINCT NEW-ZEALAND-BORN CONVICTED PRISONERS OF EACH SEX (INCLUDING MAORIS) RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR 1940, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO AGES AND OFFENCES.

Offences.	15 and under 20.		20 and under 25.		25 and under 30.		30 and under 40.		40 and upwards.		Not stated.		Totals.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Offences against the person—														
Sexual offences	8	..	12	..	14	..	15	..	25	..	..	..	74	..
Assaults	11	..	29	..	19	1	17	..	21	..	..	..	97	1
Other .. ..	..	..	4	1	1	..	4	..	2	1	..	..	11	2
Offences against property—														
Theft and deceit	101	4	110	1	97	5	115	2	102	2	1	..	526	14
Mischief	32	..	31	..	10	1	11	1	6	..	..	..	90	2
Drunkenness	1	..	11	..	11	..	52	2	118	8	..	..	193	10
Vagrancy*	5	3	13	4	12	..	13	1	41	1	..	..	84	9
Other offences	15	2	69	4	67	..	137	..	173	7	..	..	461	13
Totals, 1940.. ..	173	9	279	10	231	7	364	6	488	19	1	..	1,536	51
Totals, 1939.. ..	144	7	325	13	303	17	406	8	493	19	2	..	1,673	64
Totals, 1938.. ..	109	4	288	11	245	7	375	5	436	23	2	..	1,455	50
Totals, 1937.. ..	98	8	235	15	215	5	333	8	433	31	2	..	1,316	67
Totals, 1936.. ..	74	12	238	16	192	6	273	6	371	31	2	..	1,150	71

*Including importuning, consorting with rogues, &c.

Table E.

PRISONS.—MAORI PRISONERS RECEIVED, 1940.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER, AGES, AND OFFENCES OF DISTINCT CONVICTED MAORIS (MALE AND FEMALE) RECEIVED INTO THE VARIOUS GAOLS DURING THE YEAR 1940.

Offences.	15 and under 20.		20 and under 25.		25 and under 30.		30 and under 40.		40 and upwards.		Not stated.		Totals.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Offences against the person—														
Sexual offences	2	..	5	..	5	..	1	..	7	..	..	..	20	..
Assaults	2	..	14	..	8	1	5	..	6	..	..	..	35	1
Other .. ..	..	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
Theft and deceit	31	..	42	1	24	..	21	..	7	..	..	..	125	1
Mischief	1	..	10	..	2	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	17	..
Drunkenness .. ..	..	..	4	..	4	..	9	..	14	..	..	..	31	..
Vagrancy	1	1	7	3	5	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	14	4
Other offences	3	..	21	..	18	..	25	..	11	1	..	..	78	1
Totals	40	1	104	4	67	1	66	..	46	1	..	..	323	7

Table F.
PRISONERS.—AGES AND SENTENCES.

TABLE SHOWING THE AGES OF DISTINCT PRISONERS RECEIVED UNDER SENTENCE DURING THE YEAR 1940, WITH INFORMATION AS TO LENGTH OF SENTENCE.

Age.	Total Length of Sentence.																				Totals.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
	Under 1 Week.		1 Week and under 1 Month.		1 Month and under 3 Months.		3 Months and under 6 Months.		6 Months and under 9 Months.		9 Months and under 12 Months.		1 Year and under 2 Years.		2 Years and under 3 Years.		3 Years and under 4 Years.		4 Years and under 5 Years.			5 Years and under 7 Years.		7 Years and under 10 Years.		10 Years and under 12 Years.		12 Years and under 15 Years.		15 Years and under 20 Years.		Other In-definite or not stated Periods.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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15 and under

* Subsequently committed to imprisonment for life.

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