

NEW PLYMOUTH PRISON

(Superintendent: Mr. T. STOCKER)

There were 43 male prisoners in custody at the beginning of the year. During the year 77 male prisoners were received and 80 male prisoners were discharged, leaving 40 male prisoners in custody at the end of the year.

Our industries have been carried on in much the same manner as in former years. Gardening is our main occupation and gives employment for the majority of the men. After supplying our own requirements, the surplus vegetables were sold at auction, also to the New Plymouth Hospital and to the boys' high school.

Our potato crop was sufficient to supply our requirements for about four and a half months of the year, the balance being obtained from other institutions. Sales of vegetables for the year January to December amounted to £432 0s. 6d., and a quantity of root crops were also grown for pig-feed.

Work in the quarry has been continued and finds employment for that class of prisoner whom it is necessary to keep under strict supervision.

The pig industry has proved a success and is continuing to expand, and with the ample quantities of offal received from the public hospital, in addition to the refuse from our own kitchen, we were able to bring the pigs to the baconer stage very quickly.

Purchases of cows for rations are now being made through the Farmers' Co-operative Association with very satisfactory results and the meat is of uniform good quality and reasonable in price. Killing is done by prison labour on the premises.

Boot-repairing has been carried on as usual and has provided useful employment for one man throughout the year. A considerable quantity of soap has been made, and, in addition to meeting our own requirements, a quantity was sent to Wanganui Prison.

Work in the laundry has provided employment for several men in washing prisoners' clothing in addition to towels and dusters for local Government Departments. The washing of blankets, which was done in the past for the Army Department, has now ceased.

The cooking and water-heating arrangements continue to give satisfaction. All meals have been well cooked and of ample quantity, our supply of vegetables contributing greatly to their excellence. The menu has been raised by the addition of fresh fish when the supply has been available and is eagerly looked for by the men. We are still fortunate in having a first-class prisoner bread-baker who supplies us with excellent bread. Apples supplied by Waikeria Reformatory in season were a welcome addition to the dietary scale and were much appreciated. Our meat-house, which was erected for the storage of fresh meat on the drying-grounds, is proving satisfactory and there has been very little cause for complaint regarding its efficiency, considering our low muster and the consequent length of time between killings.

The social activities of the prison have continued in the same manner as in former years. The people of New Plymouth continue to take an interest in the welfare of the men and have provided concerts on numerous occasions which have been much appreciated. In addition to concerts, we have physical drill and games on two evenings each week, badminton once a week, a class in first aid once a week, and cards once a week. The radio is also made full use of at the week-ends, and in the evenings when other activities are not in progress. The Tui Cribbage Club have also visited us and engaged the men in friendly card games.