

and were subsequently discharged at the several Stipendiary Magistrates' Courts, with the exception of 1 female, who is now on bail awaiting trial at the next sittings of the Supreme Court here. Six males were received for trial, and acquitted at the Supreme Courts; 16 males were received on transfer from other prisons; whilst 6 passed through *en route* to Waiotapu Prison. One male prisoner was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment in default of sureties to be of good behaviour, but was found on examination to be of unsound mind, and was committed to the Porirua Asylum. Eight male lunatics were received, of whom 5 were, after medical examination, committed to the Asylum. The others were discharged at the Supreme Courts. Four males were admitted to probation during the year, and are so far carrying out the terms of their probation license satisfactorily. Four boys, the youngest of whom was only eleven, and the eldest thirteen years of age, were received on remand. Two of these were for breaking and entering, 1 for theft of money, and an unfortunate little fellow as a neglected child. They were all committed to the Industrial School. After your repeated protests against the sin of these infants being located in prison, be it for ever so short a time, it is quite useless for me to add my protest, however strongly I may feel on the matter. Five males pleaded guilty to various charges at the Stipendiary Magistrates' Courts, and were forwarded to Auckland for sentence. Three males were received for curative treatment, and were handed over to the police at the expiration of their remand, cured at least for the time or until they indulge in another drinking-bout. In the case of one male prisoner tried at the Supreme Court in October last, and found guilty of arson, the jury returned a verdict that the prisoner was of unsound mind when he committed the deed, and the Judge ordered that he be kept in strict custody in the Porirua Asylum until the pleasure of the Colonial Secretary be made known. He was accordingly removed to the Asylum. Forty-six males and 5 females completed their hard-labour sentences, and were discharged. Eleven males earned their remission and accompanying gratuities and were released. Two others were discharged on special remission on account of failing health. One was, on the Prison Surgeon's recommendation, removed to the District Hospital, where he was under special treatment for some time, the Prison Surgeon and Hospital Doctor agreeing that he was suffering from tumour on the liver. The other man was in an advanced state of consumption. The Prison Surgeon considered that this man was a danger to the other prisoners, and on his recommendation he was released on special remission.

The general health of the prisoners (with the exception of the two referred to) has been excellent throughout the year.

The conduct and industry of the prisoners generally has been good, with a very few exceptions.

There were two escapes from the works, and one attempted escape; the first two were recaptured after a few days, and sentenced to further terms of imprisonment.

The prisoners have been employed during the year, principally in the quarry, getting stone for broken metal for concrete walls, and gravel for sale. The quarry is somewhat difficult to work in the winter time, owing to the best quality of gravel being below the level of the creek which runs by its side. Besides what has been used in the construction of the concrete pillars of the gates and division-walls, I have been enabled to supply the Borough Council and private customers with a considerable amount of metal and gravel, so that if a gang of good quarrymen were kept constantly at work in the pit with proper appliances it could be made a good paying concern. The prisoners have kept the reserve on Marsland Hill, the rifle range, and Supreme Court grounds in order, and levelled and dug the grounds around the new quarters built for the sergeant of police. The interiors of the east and south corridors and cells have been painted with a dado of 4 ft. 2 in., adding considerably to the comfort and appearance of the Prison. The plastering and pointing of the boundary-wall has been completed, and satisfactory progress made with the division-walls. A set of very substantial as well as ornamental gate-posts have been erected at the entrance to the Prison-grounds and the Gaoler's quarters. This forms a very effective entrance, and reflects great credit upon the officers who designed and erected it. His Excellency the Governor visited and inspected the Prison and prisoners' rations, and was pleased to say that it was the cleanest and best-kept country gaol that he had ever visited.

The rations throughout the year have been of first-class quality. There has not been one complaint by the prisoners, or indeed any one, and both visitors and Visiting Justices have frequently tested the quality of the supplies. The contract for meat was considered too high, and was only accepted for three months, to enable other arrangements to be made. I was fortunate in being able to arrange a contract with a butcher in Waitara to supply the meat at a very much more reasonable figure than was wanted by the local butchers.

There being no contract for drugs from any of the local chemists, arrangements were made to have the drugs forwarded from Wellington. These arrangements have answered satisfactorily, the cost being less than one-fourth of what it would have been if the drugs had been purchased locally.

One innovation during the year has been the issuing of pipes and tobacco for exemplary conduct and industry to prisoners sentenced to three months' hard labour and upwards. This indulgence has, in my opinion, had a very salutary effect on those who are fortunate enough to participate in it. I find that the prisoners dread the loss or suspension of their tobacco more than any other punishment one can inflict. The one mistake is that it should be issued to a prisoner before the Gaoler has had time to satisfy himself that the prisoner is by exemplary conduct and industry entitled to it.

The conduct and efficiency of the officers have been good.

#### *The First Offenders' Probation Act.*

This Act continues to work satisfactorily, although I am sorry to say that occasionally some undeserving individual is allowed to participate in its benefits. One case in particular came under my notice—a prisoner was admitted here on remand, who, under an assumed name, had managed to worm himself into the good graces of the Probation Officer of a country district, with the result