

Two officers—one warder and one Acting Principal Warder—were transferred from this to other prisons, and were replaced by others of the same rank. The conduct of the officers has been good, and, generally, they have carried out their duties satisfactorily.

Inclusive of those prisoners in custody on the 1st January instant, 90 of both sexes were dealt with during the twelve months. Of this number 78 were discharged. The largest number in custody at one time was 31, the smallest number 12, and the daily average a fraction over 20 prisoners. One debtor was received; no lunatics. Two males and one female suffering from alcoholism were admitted for curative treatment. All paid the costs of maintenance, &c., as ordered by the Court.

The general health of prisoners has been good. There were no admissions to hospital. One male prisoner serving a sentence of three months for vagrancy, having shown symptoms of mental derangement, was medically examined, pronounced insane, and was transferred to the local Asylum by direction of the Colonial Secretary. One long-sentence prisoner was transferred to another prison. He had an affection of the eyes, and it was deemed advisable to remove him in order that the advice of a specialist, if considered necessary, might be obtained, there being none in this district.

Prisoners on the whole have worked well, and their conduct, with one or two exceptions, has been satisfactory. Three were punished for idleness by Visiting Justices. There were no aggravated prison offences. There have been no complaints about the quality of the rations and other necessities supplied by the contractors, all articles being of good quality. As in the previous year, the potatoes and vegetables issued as rations have been grown in the prison garden and paddocks. There were no tenders for drugs; what medicines are required are dispensed in the Asylum, a system which works admirably.

Prisoners have been mainly employed on the Prison Reserve, fencing, digging, draining, and trenching the ground. A new fence was erected on the Arahura Road boundary; also new dividing-fences in some of the paddocks. A very considerable item of labour was the procuring of firewood. From the Buckland Road, adjoining the Asylum and Prison Reserves, a supply was cut, carted, and stacked, sufficient not only for the past year's consumption, but for the current year's requirements.

The roadway in front of the Prison and Gaoler's quarters has been enclosed by the erection of an ornamental fence and entrance-gates, and adds very materially to the appearance of the prison's surroundings. The gateposts were designed and made by the Acting Principal Warder, the fence being erected under his supervision, a work that reflects the greatest credit on the officer in question. The usual work at the rifle range, at the Law Courts, Customhouse, Police Camp, and Hospital has been attended to as required. A little work has still to be done at the Hospital—viz., the cutting-down of a short length of road that has been regraded, and one or two other odds and ends, which will be put in hand very shortly. Repairs to the prison have been carried out where necessary. The roof and exterior of the prison have been painted, likewise the offices, kitchens, officers' dormitory, and the southern and western boundary-walls. The female prisoners have, as usual, been employed washing and repairing clothing and cleaning their quarters. There have been none in custody since the end of September, the last having been discharged on remission on the 29th of that month.

The First Offenders' Probation Act.

One male was admitted to probation during the year, and ordered to pay the costs of the prosecution. The offender having paid these, probation ceased in terms of the order.

T. R. POINTON, Gaoler.

INVERCARGILL PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Invercargill, 26th January, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report as follows on the working of this Prison during 1904.

Received: 160 males, 8 females: total, 168. Remaining: 16 males, 1 female: total, 17.

A male prisoner, after serving a sentence of three months, was found to be insane. He was detained on remand for medical examination, and transferred to the Asylum. Three other lunatics were received on remand, and finally transferred to the Asylum. The majority of the prisoners received were for short sentences or remand.

The conduct and industry of the prisoners were good, only three males being awarded secondary punishment.

The health of the prisoners was very good. A male prisoner received on remand for medical treatment (alcoholism) was found on reception at 7.45 p.m. to be in a state of collapse. By direction of the Gaol Surgeon, he was immediately removed to Hospital, where he remained for thirty-four days. This was a bad case. One other case of delirium tremens (the same man) was received during the year. A hard-labour prisoner was removed to the Hospital to undergo an operation for a tumour. The operation was successful, and he returned after twenty days.

The supplies received were of good quality, and no complaints were made.

Two warders were transferred to other prisons, one warder on transfer, and a probationary warder replaced them. The probationary warder was reported for misconduct, tendered his resignation, and absented himself. His resignation was accepted. The vacancy was filled by another probationary warder. With this exception, the conduct and efficiency of the officers was very good.

The actual site of the new prison was cleared to plan-level early in the year, but as no instructions were received to go on with the foundation, the prisoners were employed draining and reclaiming the low-lying portion of the reserve, an occasional visit being paid to the post-