

NEW PLYMOUTH PRISON.

H.M. Prison, New Plymouth, 25th January, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report there were 20 male prisoners in custody (no females) at the beginning of the year, 18 of whom were at hard labour, 1 simple imprisonment, and 1 awaiting trial. Ninety-two males and 3 females were received during the year, a decrease of 25 males and 1 female on the preceding year. Thirteen males were received on remand, and subsequently discharged at the several Stipendiary Magistrates' Courts. Nine males were received for trial, 5 were acquitted at the Supreme Court, and the remainder sentenced to various terms of hard labour. Seven persons were received on remand as lunatics, 5 of whom were males and 2 females; 4 of the former and both of the latter were committed to the Lunatic Asylum, the other male being liberated at the Stipendiary Magistrate's Court. Three boys, the youngest of whom was twelve and the eldest fourteen years of age, were committed to Burnham Industrial School during the year. Five male prisoners were received on transfer from other prisons. Fifty-five males and 1 female were received, sentenced to various terms of hard labour, and 4 males to simple imprisonment. Nine male prisoners earned their remission and accompanying gratuity, and were discharged. One hard-labour prisoner who was suffering from chronic rheumatism was nearly the whole of his sentence on the sick-list; he was an inmate of the District Hospital for four months. The Minister of Justice was pleased to grant him the ordinary remission-marks.

Six prisoners were transferred to Waiotapu, one to Auckland to answer a further charge, and one committed to Auckland for sentence.

There was one admission to the District Hospital during the year, that of a remand prisoner suffering from appendicitis. He was subsequently discharged at the Stipendiary Magistrate's Court.

The conduct of the prisoners has been good with four exceptions, one of whom was a trial prisoner who had volunteered to work. All the cases were dealt with by the Visiting Justices.

The rations throughout the year have been good; no complaints.

The health of the prisoners generally has been very good.

The prisoners have been employed in the quarry and raising the division-walls, which are now complete with the exception of the female division; and a party has also kept Marsland Hill in order, from which a good supply of firewood was obtained from the trees which were felled. A small party was also employed for a time dismantling the rifle range. The warder's cottage at the rear of the Prison was thoroughly renovated both inside and out, and the Gaoler's painted on the outside. There still remains the yards to be asphalted or concreted, as may be deemed best. The work, however, cannot be undertaken until the drainage system is completed. The Public Works Department has lately made a survey of the drains, and I hope to see this very necessary work done before the end of the year.

The conduct and efficiency of the officers have been excellent. One officer was transferred to this Prison from Auckland, and one from here to Auckland.

The First Offenders' Probation Act.

There were two admitted to probation during the year, and one received on transfer from Wellington; one completed his term satisfactorily, leaving two still reporting themselves and doing well. Of the three who were on probation at the commencement of the year, two finished satisfactorily, while the third was sentenced to six months' hard labour on a charge of perjury.

Taken as a whole, the Act is working well.

B. L. O'BRIEN, Gaoler.

WAIOTAPU PRISON.

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

I HAVE the honour to forward report of Prison for 1904.

The industry and conduct of prisoners has, with a few exceptions, been exceedingly good. As the number of prisoners here has been considerably increased, great care should be taken to select only those whose records and good conduct in the past would be a guide to the authorities in sending men to this or other camps.

Planting commenced in June, and was continued until December as the weather was favourable. The number and varieties are as follows: Larch, 143,069; yellow-pine, 79,225; Austrian pine, 101,636; Corsican pine, 5,900; Bentham's pine, 19,300; Aleppo pine, 63,394; Weymouth pine, 11,500; *Pinus insignis*, 69,000; Redwoods, 1,220; Acacia, 1,000; Eucalyptus, 295,499; other varieties, 51,020: total, 863,039. Total planted to date, 1,907,223.

Fencing the new block on south side of present reserve commenced early in the year, and was nearly completed when the party was withdrawn and put on planting. The length of fence erected was 316 chains, or nearly four miles. Road-formation was also commenced on the block, and a considerable amount finished ready for next year's carting.

It having been decided to further increase the number of prisoners to be kept here, accommodation was provided for forty men, and during the months of July and August thirty-eight extra prisoners were received.

The general health of prisoners was good, there being no occasion for medical attendance during the year.

One prisoner left the camp on the evening of the 10th October, but was recaptured in a few days and sent on to Auckland, where he was sentenced to eighteen months' additional imprisonment.

One officer was dismissed the service for misconduct.