

One habitual criminal (male) was liberated on probation for two years. I had considerable difficulty in obtaining a situation for him, as people are naturally very reluctant to take them into their employment. I regret to say this man did not appreciate the consideration shown him by the consultative committee in recommending his release; he left his employment after a couple of months, and has since been arrested and sentenced to two years' hard labour for false pretences.

Four hard-labour prisoners (males) and 1 female completed their terms of imprisonment, and are detained as habitual criminals in the portion of the prison set apart for that purpose. One of the males has since been transferred to Auckland to answer another charge of theft preferred against him there, and for which he was sentenced to a further term of two years' hard labour. Two of the males and the female have petitioned to be released, but the consultative committee, no doubt profiting by their former experience, have not felt justified in recommending their petitions.

The thanks of the Department are due to the consultative committee for the interest they have shown in holding monthly as well as quarterly meetings in the reformatory prison. I also wish to thank Miss Ahier, the lady Official Visitor to the prison, for kind interest to the female prisoners.

I regret to say the practice of remanding lunatics to the prison, in spite of repeated protest, still continues. This is not only unfair to the unfortunate creatures themselves, but is detrimental to the good discipline of the prison, as they are often very noisy, and keep the prison in a state of uproar the whole time they are here. The local Police-station being provided with a padded cell, there can be no valid excuse for sending the poor creatures to the prison at all.

There was one escape from the prison ground, but the escapee was recaptured, and sentenced to forfeit three months' marks by the Stipendiary Magistrate.

The general health of the prisoners has been very good. There were 4 admissions to the District Hospital during the year; 3 were discharged from Hospital quite recovered, and the fourth is still there.

The rations throughout the year have been good. The vegetables were supplied from the prison garden.

A party of prisoners were employed for three months working at the Esplanade, where good work has been done.

Another cottage has been erected on the prison ground to replace those pulled down, and the two old remaining cottages have been thoroughly renovated.

A party of prisoners are still employed removing the hill on the eastern boundary of the Gaol Reserve, and satisfactory progress is being made. A party has also been employed in the quarry, Marsland Hill, and the Defence Reserve has also been kept in order. Satisfactory progress has been made with the drainage, which is now practically completed.

The conduct of the prisoners throughout the year has been good.

One probationary warder taken on during the year, having passed a satisfactory examination, has been taken on the staff permanently. The conduct of the officers has been good.

FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

The 2 probationers who were on probation at the commencement of the year have completed their term satisfactorily, and have been released; 1 was admitted to probation during the year, 1 received on transfer from Wellington, 1 from Napier, and 1 from Auckland, who are still carrying out the terms of their licenses satisfactorily.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

S. G. MILLINGTON,
Gaoler, Probation Officer, and Manager.

WAIOTAPU PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Waiotapu, 13th January, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report on the working of this prison for the year ended 31st December, 1908.

The prisoners were transferred from the old to the new camp on the 25th April, and have since been employed on the new area.

Three prisoners escaped during the year: two were recaptured and sentenced to additional imprisonment; the third is still at large.

The general health and conduct has been good.

The officers continue to give satisfaction. The staff was increased by the appointment of a probationary warder, who took on the duty of night-watchman.

Summary of work done: Area cleared, 1,020½ acres; fire-break cleared, 320 chains, 1 chain wide; pits dug, 2,807,600; trees planted—*Pinus ponderosa*, 80,525; *Pinus laricio*, 473,500; *Pinus strobus*, 19,750; *Pinus Benthamiana*, 63,000; *Larix europea*, 1,364,800; *Betula alba*, 5,950; redwood, 90,200; blanks replanted, 12,500; total planted for the year, 2,110,225: total planted since 1901, 9,043,154: total area planted, 3,317 acres; cleared, 4,341½ acres.

A. W. ROBERTS,
Principal Warder and Acting-Gaoler.

The Inspector of Prisons, Wellington.

WAIPA VALLEY PRISON.

H.M. Prison, Waipa, 26th January, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report on the working of this prison for the year ended 31st December, 1908.

In custody on the 1st January, 30 males; 25 males were received during the year, and 21 discharged; the average number in custody being 23.69.