

FIRST OFFENDERS' PROBATION ACT.

Table J shows that 94 persons were placed on probation, as against 108 in 1910. Of these 28 have so far satisfactorily carried out the terms of their licenses and been discharged; 7 have been rearrested, 1 absconded, 2 were granted permission to leave the Dominion, and 56 still remain under the supervision of the Probation Officers.

The amounts ordered to be paid by the various Courts towards the costs of prosecution amount to £343 4s. 8d., of which sum £196 9s. 4d. has already been paid.

GAOLERS' REPORTS FOR 1911.

AUCKLAND PRISON.

SIR,—

H.M. Prison, Auckland, 24th January, 1912.

I have the honour to forward the annual report on this prison for the year 1911, together with the usual returns for expenditure, &c.

On the first day of the year there were 215 male and 13 female prisoners, total 228, in custody. During the year 1,521 males and 136 females, total 1,657, were received. As compared with the previous year, 1910, this shows a decrease of 168 males, and an increase of 11 females; total decrease, 157.

The number of prisoners in custody at the commencement of the year who had been declared habitual criminals was 19. Seven were sentenced during the year, and 1 was received on transfer, making a total of 27. Thirteen were transferred to New Plymouth Prison on the expiration of their definite sentences; leaving 14 persons who had been declared habitual criminals in custody at the close of the year.

During the year 55 males and 4 females were received from the Courts on sentences of various terms for reformatory purposes. Two were received on transfer from other prisons, making a total of 61. Of this number, 22 were transferred to other prisons, leaving 39 reformatory-treatment prisoners in custody at the end of the year. These prisoners are included in the total number of prisoners received.

The daily average number of prisoners was 250·40, as against 288·49 in the year 1910, a decrease of 38·09. The greatest and the least number of prisoners in custody at any one time was 289 and 221 respectively. During the year 1,480 males and 127 females, total 1,607, were discharged, leaving 256 males and 22 females, total 278, in custody on the 31st December last.

There were no complaints from prisoners about the quality of the rations issued to them, and I consider the contractors carried out the conditions of their contracts satisfactorily.

There were 273 minor breaches of the prison regulations, which were dealt with by the Visiting Justices as follows: Cautioned, 70; bread-and-water, 65; forfeiture of marks, 141. There were three aggravated offences, and these were tried in open Court by a Stipendiary Magistrate, and punished by forfeiture of marks. One concerted act of disobedience to orders, of which the Justices took a very lenient view, accounts for 123 of the minor offences, and also for the comparatively large figures. I consider that, on the whole, the general conduct of the prisoners during the year has been good.

During the year 8 males were sent to the Auckland Hospital. The daily average of sick prisoners in that institution was 0·39, as compared with 1·63 in the previous year.

There was one execution during the year.

There were 4 deaths during the year, 1 at the District Hospital and 3 at the prison. In each case of a death at the prison a *post-mortem* examination was made, and an inquest held, and the jury, in accordance with the medical testimony, brought in a verdict of "Death from natural causes." In the former case, at the Auckland Hospital, the prisoner died from cirrhosis of the liver and heart-disease.

The industry of the prisoners has been good, with few exceptions. The following is a review of the more important work performed during the year: Continuing the erection of the south and west wings of the prison. On this work about three-fourths of the prisoners have been employed, and very good progress has been made. Ten cells on the first floor of the south wing have been occupied, and a similar number on the second floor are also ready for occupation, with the exception of three which require the doors to be fixed. The first and second floors in the west wing are now occupied. On the third floor of this wing good progress has been made, and it is expected that it will be ready for the roof in three months' time. Our single-cell accommodation has been increased by 45 during the past year.

The new building is now so far advanced that when the baths have been fixed in the west wing a commencement should be made to remove the old wooden buildings and rearrange the exercise-yard accommodation. In connection with the new building, quarrying, blacksmithing, carpentering, and general labouring-work are carried out by the prisoners under skilled supervision. Good work has been done in the various workshops—namely, carpenters', blacksmiths', tinsmiths', bootmakers', tailors', &c.