

received, 5 were sentenced to various terms for reformatory treatment; but, as 84 males and 15 females were admitted more than once, the individual prisoners received were 485 males and 53 females.

During the year 566 males and 80 females were discharged or otherwise disposed of, viz.: Males—on remission, 46; at expiration of sentence, 333; acquitted and after remand, 121; habituals transferred to New Plymouth when sentences were served, 7; transferred to other prisons, 41; to Burnham Industrial School, 8; to police, 7; and to mental hospital, 3. Of the females discharged, 19 were on remission, 46 at expiration of sentence, 8 acquitted and after remand, 3 were transferred to another prison, 3 to Te Oranga Home, and 1 to the Salvation Army Rescue Home. There were remaining in custody at the end of the year 128 males and 10 females, 10 males being habitual criminals, and 20 for reformatory treatment. Amongst the females remaining in custody 1 is for reformatory treatment, in addition to serving a sentence.

As the number of prisoners ordered to be detained for reformatory treatment increases, the problem of how to employ them suitably becomes harder to solve. A few of the youths are employed as wardsmen and cleaners, but the bulk of them have perforce to mix with and perform the same work as the ordinary prisoners. This is not conducive to their best interests, nor can their minds be expected to improve under those conditions. The necessary accommodation is lacking, and I would suggest that a separate institution be found for the female prisoners, and the female wing utilized for males detained for reformatory treatment, provided that suitable work can be found for them.

The chief industries carried on at this prison are tailoring and bootmaking. The long-sentence prisoners are put to this class of work, in which some of them take a keen interest. The work is undoubtedly well done, and will compare favourably with work of the same class turned out by private firms. As none of the prisoners are tradesmen, all of them being taught here, it is surprising how soon they become competent to do the work. I would be glad if tailoring could be done here for other Departments, as double the number of prisoners could then be employed. As it is, it is frequently difficult to find employment for all the prisoners.

A daily average of 41 prisoners has been employed working for the Borough Council—one party quarrying, dressing stone, and breaking road-metal; another party forming a new street, widening another street, building retaining-walls, widening the approach to the public cemetery, and building a handsome wall of dressed red stone, and in laying out, levelling, and grassing reserves. Excellent work has been done and permanent improvements effected which are a distinct benefit to the borough. Another small party has been employed at the Artillery Barracks, where, in addition to completing the drainage commenced last year, building lavatories, &c., they have also been quarrying, dressing, and carting stone for the building of a high retaining-wall where a tennis-court is to be formed. They have also done work at the Forts on Ripa Island as occasion required.

The conduct of the prisoners generally has been good. There were 24 males and 2 females punished, 2 of the males being dealt with by the Stipendiary Magistrate. Taking into account the class of prisoners confined in Lyttelton Prison, the number of punishments are not excessive. In every prison there is a small section of malcontents who occasionally set authority at defiance, and have to be dealt with by the Visiting Justices. It also frequently happens that they influence others to commit themselves, and in this way punishments become more frequent. There has been no escape or attempted escape during the year.

The health of the prisoners has been good, although there has been a daily average of 3 males on the sick-list. This is accounted for by 4 males having been sent to the District Hospital, where 3 of them remained till their sentences expired. One of them afterwards died in the Hospital, and 1 is still in that institution, although his sentence expired over three months ago. Two of these prisoners were suffering from incurable diseases when admitted to prison, and never did a day's work, so they cannot be said to have become sick in prison. The fourth was returned to prison when well. One female prisoner was also in hospital for over five months; she was ill when admitted here. Had it not been for these cases there would have been very little sickness, for the remaining cases were trifling ailments, the prisoners being confined to their cells for a day or two only. One prisoner serving sentence was certified insane and transferred to the Sunnyside Mental Hospital.

The quality of food supplied has again been excellent. I would recommend, however, that some variation be made in the diet, which could be done at a minimum of extra expense.

The spiritual welfare of the prisoners has again been well cared for, three Church services being held each Sunday, and the local clergymen visiting at other times giving interviews to prisoners of their respective denominations. The Salvation Army officers and Mr. Smail (evangelist) also attend every Saturday afternoon and interview the prisoners. Any that require help on discharge are offered admission into the Army Home until employment is found for them.

Several changes have taken place in the prison staff during the year from various causes. The services of the previous Chief Warder were dispensed with in January of last year. One temporary warder was discharged as unsuitable, and another temporary warder resigned. One Matron also resigned. Other officers have been appointed to fill the vacancies.

In a former report I made reference to the class of officers required when making appointments to the prison service. Every endeavour is being made to obtain the services of the best men possible. Although the conditions obtaining now are much better than they were some years ago, the remuneration and prospects are not sufficient to attract the best class of men. Those having such qualifications and the degree of education as would enable them to obtain a good position in life do not make application to join the service, men who would be suitable preferring to enter the Police Force, where the scale of pay is higher and the life more pleasant; hence an inferior class of men has to be taken on. Those after a time become negligent and indifferent about retaining an office when the pay on joining is not equal to that of an ordinary labourer,