

The conduct of the staff has been fairly satisfactory. One was reprimanded and warned for lack of vigilance, one fined for being absent without leave, one fined and three reprimanded over the escape of the prisoner who got out of his cell and escaped during the night.

#### REPORT OF THE SCHOOLMASTER AT AUCKLAND.

The average number of pupils for the year is 22·8. The highest roll number was 32.

A better spirit of work has been shown, and considerable progress has been made by all classes, particularly the Fourth Standard. As the men in the Third Class were fairly intelligent I was able to combine this standard with the Fourth in reading and arithmetic, a plan which saved a great deal of time. Most of the men in the Fourth Standard will soon be ready for promotion to Standard Five, which will leave me more time for individual attention to the weaker pupils.

I introduced the teaching of history on Friday evenings for the last twenty minutes. It has proved to be quite a popular subject.

Newcomers unable to read or write are still a perplexing problem. They require a great deal of attention, and, not having sufficient knowledge to be able to continue long at desk-work, can do little to occupy their time while I am engaged with other classes. Most of them find the learning of tables irksome, and are apt to lose heart because they forget so easily. There are, however, at least three notable exceptions. One Maori, unable to read or write in October, 1918, can now read fairly well from a Standard I book, and is quite proficient in Standard II arithmetic.

With the smaller numbers I had towards the end of the year I was able to devote more time to mental arithmetic and composition. In Standard V I gave a good deal of time to English. Each pupil has a book on the subject, and the exercises done are fairly creditable. A pupil of Standard VI is taking a correspondence course in book-keeping, and the college reports his work as excellent. I should strongly recommend that this year an examination for the Fifth Standard should be held under the Department's Regulations. Any headmaster of one of our large city schools is empowered to grant these certificates, the possession of which would prove of considerable advantage to the men when they left the institution. The ambition to obtain such a certificate would, I am certain, be a strong incentive to better work in the lower standards.

#### GISBORNE GAOL.

The health and conduct of the prisoners has been good.

The prisoners were employed during the year at keeping the Prison clean, attending to the grounds, and levelling at the back of the Prison, which is now complete. The garden this year has been a failure, owing to the sandy nature of the ground and the long period of dry and very hot weather.

The female prisoners were kept constantly employed at keeping their quarters clean, washing and repairing prisoners' clothes and blankets.

#### GREYMOUTH GAOL.

The general health of the prisoners has been very good, with the exception of eight male prisoners received for medical treatment and suffering from the effects of drink. Two of these had to be transferred to the Mental Hospital at Hokitika.

The prisoners were employed during the year keeping the Prison clean, washing and repairing Prison clothing, digging and cropping the garden.

During the year I had paid into the Public Account the sum of £11 14s. 1d., amount received by me for sale of vegetables grown in the Prison garden. The garden is again planted with vegetables, and the prospects of a good crop are favourable.

#### INVERCARGILL BORSTAL INSTITUTION.

The general health of the inmates has been good. There were nine admissions to the District Hospital, and they were cases requiring treatment that could not be dealt with in the institutional infirmary. Two of the cases required operative treatment for appendicitis, and one was a case of meningitis, which ended fatally, that being the only death during the year.

The conduct of the inmates on the whole has been very good, the majority of institutional offences being of a minor nature. There were four escapes during the year, and the escapees were recaptured after a very brief freedom. In three instances the escapees were from working-parties employed within a few yards of the Otatara Bush, and in the other instance the inmate escaped from the police escort while being transferred to this institution. There was also an attempted escape from the rifle-range-embankment construction party.

The physical classes have been continued in the gymnasium under a qualified instructor with beneficial results.

The educational facilities, having been increased during the year, now cover the full primary course by teaching up to the Sixth Standard. Quite a number of the brighter youths have shown the necessary qualifications to gain proficiency or competency certificates if the opportunity were given, and on their release they could have left the institution with some tangible proof of literary attainment which would be invaluable to their future progress.