

Owing to the reduced staff slight structural alterations to the Gaoler's office, &c., had to be carried out, which permit of the yards being under observation and results in greater security.

The general health of the prisoners throughout the year has been very good.

#### *New Plymouth Prison.*

Work in the prison quarry has been on a reduced scale during the past year. The demand for metal and gravel has not been so great as in former years, owing, apparently, to the financial stringency. The vegetable-garden has been well cultivated during the year, and has produced considerable quantities of good vegetables. Sales of garden-produce realized £111 5s., which is satisfactory considering that the prison kitchen was fully supplied throughout the year.

Several concerts and interesting lectures were given, principally by local gentlemen who are interesting themselves in the welfare of the prisoners.

#### *Paparua Prison.*

The number of prisoners held during the past year shows a further increase, the daily average for the year being 140.48. All the men are being profitably employed on general farming and building works, whilst a number have been busy making concrete blocks and tiles, also paving-stones, for which there is a good demand.

Work on the east, or second, cell range has progressed satisfactorily, and most of the cells on the ground floor are well on to completion. The kitchen block is being completed, and the gear in connection with the electric bakers' oven has been given a trial, with satisfactory results. The oven and electric cooking-apparatus will be brought into use whenever the Public Works Department can arrange the supply of power from the Lake Coleridge station.

The pastoral branch of the farm has had a satisfactory year in spite of the general fall in prices. About 1,150 sheep were carried, and the percentage of lambs, 91.3, is, in view of the inclement weather during lambing-time, eminently satisfactory. The Corriedale stud ewes did exceptionally well during the season, and the establishment of a good flock of these sheep at Paparua is now an accomplished fact. About 325 acres were cropped, and good returns of wheat, oats, barley, peas, and potatoes were obtained. Wheat sold brought over £500, whilst eggs, peas, and vegetables produced £102.

The younger prisoners have been given facilities to improve their education by attending classes conducted by two schoolmasters, who give their services voluntarily. It is gratifying to note the keen interest the students take in their work.

Concerts have been held fortnightly for the benefit of the prisoners, and the work of the gentlemen who promote these entertainments is much appreciated. The music forms a welcome break in the monotony of the inmates' lives, and the good effect it has upon the great majority of them is noticeable.

#### *Waikeria Reformatory for Men.*

The majority of the inmates at this institution have been employed principally on farming operations during the year, whilst some of the less robust men are employed at gardening, poultry-rearing, &c. The progress of farm-work has been satisfactory, and but for the slump in prices the returns from produce would have shown a considerably greater increase on those of the previous year.

The two camps established last year on the Mental Hospital property for the purpose of bringing new land into cultivation are showing good results, and the co-operation between the two Departments has resulted in increased economy and efficiency in many directions. Incidentally, the camps have provided an opportunity for additional classification of inmates.

The general conduct and industry of the inmates have been good, and no more eloquent tribute to the advantage of a system of classification could be furnished than the improvement in this direction. It is now possible to trust certain inmates to a much wider extent, and this reacts favourably on the individuals themselves, whilst at the same time it increases efficiency in the working of the farm with a decreased staff.

The number of requests for country work by inmates about to be discharged is in itself a pleasing feature, while it is also satisfactory to note that those placed in employment in the surrounding district during the year are all doing well. The Department's policy of making every effort to obtain suitable employment in the country for inmates to go to immediately on release is meeting with success, and were employment only more easily obtainable the rehabilitation of numbers of released men would be assured.

The educational classes for inmates conducted by the Department's schoolmaster are working smoothly, but it is naturally too early yet to form an accurate estimate of the results achieved.

#### *Waikune (Erua) Roadmaking and Sawmilling Camp.*

The initial work in connection with the establishing of this prison camp was completed early in the year, and roadmaking and sawmilling have been carried on since with good results. The prisoners employed bushfelling and on timber operations generally have done good work, and the results obtained are most gratifying, more particularly as many of the parties both in the bush and in the mill are working entirely without supervision. The adverse climatic conditions prevailing in the winter months, due to the camp's proximity to the mountains, interferes with the progress of work on the roads for a portion of the year. Roadworks are accordingly pushed on as much as possible during summer and autumn months.