

satisfactory during the past year. Lambs were sold at an average price of £1 11s. 4d. each, and wool realized a very favourable price. Good progress has been made with the farm-roading scheme.

Borstal Institution School: Report of Senior Schoolmaster.—I have the honour to report on the work of the Borstal Institution educational classes for year ended 31st March, 1924.

On first coming into the school pupils are graded according to the standards passed by them, and if they are not too backward they are retained in those classes, the standard being taken from reading and arithmetic. A fair proportion get into Standards II and III, and they have apparently made little effort to improve themselves after leaving school, the result being that they are very backward. It is pleasing to record that the majority of these pupils show a desire to learn, and that the work of higher standards is done at the end of the year by the brighter ones. We have also a number of Maori scholars, many of whom were unable to read or to write when they entered. In many cases the first lesson in English has been received in this school; and these Natives are surprisingly keen and make rapid progress in acquiring ability to read. Special attention is given to English in the case of Maoris, who are naturally good in writing and in ordinary calculations. Backward pupils receive more attention, and no inmate leaves the institution without being able to read and write fairly well. When a student shows that he has mastered the work of a standard he is at once promoted. In the upper standards much of the general arithmetic and English is done collectively, lower standards thus having the aid of example from those of higher grade.

The ideal kept before the teachers is to interest the inmates, and monotonous work is rigidly avoided. When pupils show a desire to study special subjects they are aided if permission has been accorded to them by the Superintendent. Discipline is maintained without effort, and no breach calling for punishment has been recorded in the classes during 1924.

Napier Prison.

An average of thirteen male prisoners was held in custody at this prison, the majority of whom were serving short sentences. All the able-bodied men were employed in the prison quarry, alterations to buildings, and at gardening, whilst repairs to boots and clothing were carried out by the one or two who could not work outside. Alterations and repairs to the main prison building were carried out by prison labour under experienced supervision. The installation in the prison of electric light is a great improvement, and is more economical than the discarded gas system.

The revenue from the quarry for the past year amounted to £378. The principal customers are the Napier Borough Council, who practically take all the metal we can produce.

A stone wall has been built along a considerable portion of the prison-reserve frontage to the Marine Parade, and is an improvement both to the prison property and the Parade.

The health of the prisoners on the whole has been very good.

New Plymouth Prison.

The conduct of the prisoners has been exceptionally good considering the class of men that are detained here. There was one attempt to escape, but the would-be escapee was of very weak intellect and was hardly accountable for his actions.

The health of the men on the whole has been very good considering we have a number of old men, some of whom are feeble.

We are indebted to the ministers of the several denominations, also the Salvation Army, for their help both in conducting Divine service and assisting prisoners on discharge.

With the aid of the Official Visitors and others we have had several concerts throughout the year. In my opinion concerts have a very good effect on the minds of the inmates, but do not afford the same food for thought as the lectures. The following gentlemen have given lectures throughout the year: The Revs. Blundell, Martin, and Elliott; also Mr. Ridling of the Technical College, Colonel Weston, and Mr. Moss, B.A., LL.B.

The chief industry at this prison is quarrying, knapping stone, screening gravel, and gardening. All the stone and gravel is disposed of to the New Plymouth Borough Council. To expedite the work on the lower level of the quarry the old system has been altered and a new system put into operation, with the result that the output has very materially increased.

A start has been made to strip a further area of ground to get to the level of the gravel. After consulting with the Supervisor of Prison Works it was agreed that the quarry should be extended in a westerly direction. This work will be put in hand when the lower level is worked out.

Several works were carried out for the New Plymouth Borough Council—viz, the forming-up of Down Street and Fulford Street, keeping Marsland Hill in order and also the adjoining reserve, and alterations and repairs to the Robe Street pound.

Paparua Prison.

At the beginning of the year there were 147 prisoners in custody; 441 were received during the year, and 457 were discharged or transferred during that period, leaving a total of 131 prisoners in custody at the end of the year. The greatest number in custody at one time was 146, the least being 111. The daily average for the year was 131.58.

The health of the prisoners generally has been very good. There were received the usual number of old derelicts, who increased the average number sick during the year. The largest number on the sick-list at one time was eight. Four prisoners were admitted to the Christchurch Hospital. There were no deaths.

There were no escapes. One prisoner made an attempt to cut out of his cell, but was detected and punished for the offence, being afterwards transferred to Auckland.