

Several concerts of a high-class order have been held during the year. These have been mostly provided by the members of the Male Choir and the Orchestral Society, and have been much appreciated by all.

As in previous years, the main industry of the prison has been the quarrying of road-metal for the New Plymouth Borough Council. As the supply of metal becomes scarcer it has become necessary to go deeper with the excavation, and in order to facilitate the working of the lower level the Borough Council have supplied an electric motor and pump. These were installed in October last, and are working satisfactorily. One of the Borough Council reserves, Marsland Hill, has been kept in good order and clear of noxious weeds.

The garden, in common with other local gardens, suffered tremendous damage in a gale that occurred last March; still the financial results of the year's working are quite satisfactory. So as to provide useful means of consuming the waste from the garden and kitchen, several pigs have been bred, and as these become saleable they are sold at market rates.

Practically the whole of the corrugated iron on the roof of the prison has been renewed, and the roof generally renovated and repaired, and it is now in first-class order. All the inside walls have been either painted or whitewashed. The cell-floors in the south and east wings have been covered with malthoid: this has proved a distinct improvement on the old worn concrete floors. New coppers have been fitted in the kitchen and laundry, and the whole of the prison generally renovated. It was very gratifying to hear the late Controller-General of Prisons say on his last inspection of the prison that he had never seen it look in such good order before.

The news of the death of the late Controller-General of Prisons, Mr. C. E. Matthews, came as a painful shock, and was received with deep regret. By his death all those connected with prison-work have suffered a great loss, and to those who knew him best the loss is greatest.

PAPARUA PRISON.

At the beginning of the year there were 131 prisoners in custody; during the year 359 were received and 367 were discharged, transferred, or otherwise disposed of, leaving a total of 123 in custody at the end of the year. The daily average for the year was 121·24.

The health of the prisoners has been excellent. The largest number on the sick-list at any time was six. Three prisoners were admitted to the Christchurch Hospital during the year. There was one death in prison—a prisoner sentenced to five years hard labour hanged himself in his cell the night after receiving sentence. An inquest was held by the Coroner, and a verdict was returned of suicide.

There were two escapes during the year. One prisoner succeeded in reaching Australia, where he is now serving a sentence of three years for a fresh offence. The other prisoner escaped from the cookhouse and was at large seven days before being recaptured by the police and returned to prison.

The spiritual welfare of the men has been well attended to by the ministers of the various denominations. The Richmond Mission (Mr. and Mrs. D. T. Smith), have held monthly meetings, which have been well attended by the prisoners.

Fortnightly concerts were continued during the year, and many thanks are due to the ladies and gentlemen led by Mrs. W. J. Hunter and Mrs. Holmes, who have devoted their time to this, and their efforts to relieve the monotony of prison life were much appreciated by the prisoners.

The school classes conducted by Mr. W. O. Gilmour have been continued during the year and many of those attending the classes have shown a decided improvement. The schoolmaster's annual report is reproduced below.

The "honour system" is continuing to give satisfaction here, and although there have been one or two instances of broken faith, the vast majority appreciate and never abuse the privileges obtained from this system. The conduct of the prisoners on the whole has been excellent. Very few punishments for breaches of discipline were found necessary.

Progress on the construction of the buildings has been continued. During the year the East Cell Range has been almost completed except for the four porches. The building is now fully occupied. The administrative block of buildings is in course of erection. The first story has been erected and part of the second story has also been constructed. The exercise yards have been laid out with concrete borders, but progress with the walls has been delayed owing to the shortage in New Zealand of expanded metal which has just come to hand. All the drainage-work has been completed and connected up with the main septic tank. The water-supply to the new dairy has been completed.

The farm is producing good results: 410 acres of the poorer ground have been placed under lucerne, which has made the farm practically independent of the droughts which are so prevalent in Canterbury. The dairying industry is still being carried on with a measure of success. A number of the cows have been culled and the best retained. This industry, besides being a satisfactory source of revenue, provides instructive and congenial labour for a number of prisoners. The cash revenue produced from this source during the year was £948 7s. The pig industry profited by the skim-milk from the dairy. The cash revenue from this industry amounted to £508 8s. 4d. This industry also provides instructive work for the men. After the year's operations the number of pigs on hand was 139. The sheep flock was reduced to the half-bred ewes only and the stud Corriedales. The year has been most satisfactory for this class of farming, and the cash received from this industry was £1,081. The lambs sold particularly well at from 35s. to 42s. and the average per head worked out at 37s. 4d. The garden is now well established, and besides supplying the prison with vegetables for rations the sum of £68 17s. 6d. was received for cash sales. The poultry industry has been under the direct control of an officer during the year and the cash revenue amounted to £82 10s. 7d.

The conduct of the officers has been satisfactory. During the year one officer was fined for disobedience of orders.