

In conclusion I would respectfully tender my thanks to the Department for the guidance and assistance afforded me in dealing with various matters throughout the twelve months under review, also to the officers of the institution for their assistance.

WANGANUI PRISON.

(Gaoler, Mr. E. CHING.)

During the year there were received from all sources 100 males and 6 females, this being 49 less males and 3 less females than 1928, it being approximately a daily average of 30·42 males and 10 females. At the commencement of the year there were in custody 35 males, and at the close of the year 30 males.

Employment has been found for those able to do some little work in the kitchen-garden, prison grounds, laundry, cleaning, &c., besides cutting firewood into 8 in. lengths for the Mines Department. The latter work has been very much delayed this year, the wood coming to hand later than expected. Considering the age and other infirmities of most of the men, they take a good interest in their work—more so the garden, grounds, and wood-cutting, which is a good, clean, healthy employment for them. The kitchen-garden has done better this year than ever before, and I think we shall have enough vegetables to keep going for the greater part of the year.

The rations supplied have been of the very best, and it can be said that not one complaint about the food has been made to the Surgeon, Visiting Justice, Inspector, or myself. The Medical Officer makes an examination of the kitchen and food on all his visits, also the Visiting Justice. In the opinion of the Surgeon and Visiting Justice, who have had considerable experience in connection with the management of other and similar institutions, the food supplied is ample and most suitable. The bread which is still supplied from the New Plymouth Prison, is a first-class article in every way, and the arrangements made for our supply are perfect, and not the least inconvenient.

The conduct of the men has been very good, there being six offences by three men, and one of those was a prisoner who was sent to the hospital for medical attention. He left the institution without permission, and was away for a few hours only, when he was returned to the prison.

Taking all things into consideration, the health of the prisoners has been quite satisfactory. The building is very dry and well ventilated, and the surroundings are good in every way.

During the year three old men died in the public hospital. An inquest was held in each case, and a verdict of death through natural causes was returned, the doctors' reports being to the effect that their ailments were of long standing.

The main buildings are all in good order, except a few minor matters which are being attended to. The earthquake in June did considerable damage to the brickwork of the two officers' cottages, laundry, &c.

Again I have to thank the many religious bodies for holding service in the institution, the Protestant services being held in the mornings and Roman Catholic in the afternoons each Sunday. I have also to thank the Salvation Army for sending their band to play in the grounds, and many other friends for wireless and other concerts. Thanks are due to the Cosmopolitan Club for their generous gift of over four hundred library books for the use of the prisoners. Again, thanks are due to the Rev. Mr. Patterson and his band of helpers for the fine tea given to the prisoners on Christmas Day; the Rev. Mr. Marshall and his choir for New Year gifts to the prisoners; the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Cosmopolitan Club, and the New Zealand Tobacco Co. for gifts of tobacco for Christmas and New Year, all of which were highly appreciated.

The conduct of the officers has been satisfactory, and no changes have been made during the year.

RANGIPO PRISON.

(Officer in Charge, Mr. A. BANKS.)

At the beginning of the year there were in custody 32 males; during the year 21 were received, 21 discharged, and 4 transferred to other prisons; leaving in custody 28 males at the end of the year.

The general conduct and industry of the prisoners have been very satisfactory. The health of the prisoners has been exceptionally good.

The following is a summary of the work carried out during the year: 420 acres of virgin land were cleared of tutu, fern, and manuka, and burnt off in preparation for the ploughs; 200 acres were ploughed, disked, and harrowed, of which 100 acres were sown in temporary pasture; 50 acres of temporary pasture were disked and harrowed and sown down in permanent pasture; 100 acres of temporary pasture were ploughed, disked, and harrowed, and sown down in permanent pasture; three miles of fences, of three posts to the chain and five barb wires, were erected to protect the shelter-belts from the stock; 2,000 posts were split in the bush on the property for fences on the farm; 20,000 young *Pinus radiata* trees were planted out for shelter-belts.

The prison vegetable-garden has again been a success, sufficient vegetables for local requirements have been grown.

A building, 20 ft. by 18 ft., was erected for the purpose of drying the prisoners' clothing in wet weather. It is also used for church services, concerts, &c.

The spiritual welfare of the prisoners has been well attended to by the ministers of the various denominations.

I am again pleased to report that the officers have performed their duties very satisfactorily.