

WELLINGTON PRISON.

(Superintendent, Mr. J. DOWN.)

There were in custody at the commencement of the year 131 males; during the year 806 males were received and 825 were discharged, leaving in custody at the 31st December 112 males. The discharges were as follows: On expiration of sentence (hard labour), 430; reformatory detention, 1; simple imprisonment, 5; special remission, 49; on bail or probation, 10; died, 1; absconded and not taken, 1. Released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board: Hard labour, 18; reformatory detention, 16; habitual criminal, 1; debtors, 28; transferred to mental hospital, 1; transferred to other prisons or to police, 259; acquitted after remand, 5. The daily average number in prison during the year was 135.21, the number of admissions to the public hospital during the year being 19. One prisoner was received from Wi Tako Prison on transfer to the mental hospital, and the one death was through senile decay, the man concerned being an old offender. Though provision is now made for a permanent clinic at this prison, it is often found necessary to transfer prisoners from the prison clinic to the public hospital clinic for special observation by Dr. Aldred: this partly accounts for the large number of admissions to the public hospital for the year.

The conduct of the prisoners on the whole has been good, and we are indebted to the several religious denominations for their services, and more especially those who have to come a long way to carry out their service on a Sunday. We are also indebted to the Presbyterian Social Service Guild, with Mrs. Chatfield and other ladies, who were prominent participants in providing Christmas cheer and a concert, both of which were thoroughly appreciated by the inmates. Thanks are also due to Mr. Salek, Visiting Justice, for the special attention he has given to the prison throughout the year, also for the concert he arranged at Christmas, and the gift of a liberal supply of tobacco to the prisoners. I also wish to call attention to the charitable spirit shown by the Honorary Justices Association in giving monetary Christmas gifts to the wives and families of the inmates who were in need of assistance.

A concert was given by Colonel Toomer and other members of the Salvation Army, including Major Avenell, who worked very hard to make their concert a success, and also arranged for refreshments to be handed round at the conclusion of the entertainment, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the men. Thanks are due to the Salvation Army for their good work throughout the year. Thanks are also due to the National Tobacco Co., Ltd., Napier, for their liberal and generous gift of tobacco to the inmates.

The conduct of the officers has been good, there being only one minor breach of the regulations for the year.

Farm and Garden Produce.—There is great improvement in the dairy herd, and the supply of milk is well maintained, with a good percentage of butterfat. The results for the year are as follows: Total milk, 7,804.5 gallons; average production per cow, 867 gallons; estimated average butterfat production per cow, 347 lb. Dairy-produce issued to prison for rations, £101 14s. 1d.; dairy-produce sold to Point Halswell and staff, £218 6s. 2d: total, £320 0s. 3d. Included in the above there are 5,000 gallons of skim-milk supplied to the piggery, 1,155 lb. butter sold to staff and local grocers, 259 lb. butter supplied for institutional rations.

The pigs are all looking very well, and with the plentiful supply of skim-milk they come in for the butcher very early. The pigs sold to the butcher numbered 85, of a total value of £174 5s. 11d. Nine calves, of the value of £2 18s. 6d., were sold to Wi Tako Prison.

The vegetable-garden has many improvements, and an extra area of ground has been taken into cultivation. The crops of vegetables are making good growth; the potatoes are promising, and surplus vegetables are sold to officers, but this does not include potatoes. A liberal supply of green vegetables is issued to the inmates throughout the year, as well as dried beans and peas in the winter months.

Two large stacks of hay were taken from the paddocks, and these have kept the cows well supplied in feed during the winter months.

The Controller-General is to be congratulated for arranging for a wireless plant at this prison, and I have no hesitation in saying this will be of educational value; also in the absence of a minister of religion Divine service can be supplied. Wireless concerts have already been conducted on one night per week, and the little time they have been going has already proved them a great success.

The work of demolition of the buildings at the old Terrace Prison is now complete, and a start has been made to remove the garage. A small temporary garage is being constructed at a lower level to temporarily accommodate the two cars. The excavating is almost complete, and the surplus building-material, rails, trucks, &c., have yet to be trucked to the new prison when opportunity offers.

The two cottages at Mount Cook vacated by two of the staff have been demolished, most of the timber being only fit for firewood. The whole of the material was cleared from the ground and removed to Mount Crawford.

The boundary-wall of the new prison is all plastered except for a small section on the south end. The finishing coat of Colfix asphalt on all yards and passages is well in hand.

The painting of the steel window-frames has been completed, and the alteration of the separate cells is well in hand, consisting of lights, improved wooden floors substituted in place of concrete, also additional ventilation arranged for, all window-frames hinged, and ribbed glass replaced by plain. A grille has been placed across the passage to allow for a greater volume of fresh air. The rewiring and grouping of the hot-points has been carried out, also a start has been made with doors of the new library in the east wing.

Industries.—The manufacture of sandsoap is now well established, and large supplies are being manufactured and sold to Government Departments: 135 gross cakes were manufactured during the year.