

Trade conditions in the quarrying industry have considerably improved during the period under review, and it is pleasing to report that the revenue derived from sales showed an increase of close on £1,000. There has been a distinct improvement in the orders received from the various local bodies, and, at the moment, we have one unfulfilled order for 10,000 yards, a proportion of which has been crushed and stacked in readiness for supply at an early moment.

The quarry-faces are all in good order, and although recently the available labour has been somewhat reduced by the falling muster we have been able to maintain an output sufficient to meet all demands, and, with the orders in hand, should have no difficulty in maintaining the present volume of business during the remainder of the current financial year.

With the exception of minor replacements, the maintenance of the plant has called for little expenditure, and the whole is in efficient working order.

Under the arrangement by which the whole of our meat-supplies continue to be drawn from the Waikeria Borstal Institution we have been assured of sufficient tallow to continue the soap-making industry, with a marked advantage to the Department. During the twelve months the output amounted to 7,225 bars, equal to 15,969 lb., and this supply proved adequate to meet all the requirements of this large institution, as well as the needs of some of the other prisons.

The total quantity of polish manufactured during the year was 1,760 lb., sufficient not only to meet the whole of our own institutional requirements, but also those of the Waikeria Borstal Institution and some of the other prisons. The low cost of production warrants a continuance of operations.

The tobacco-factory at this prison, which operates under the capable supervision of Mr. C. Lowe, Tobacco Instructor to the Department of Agriculture, continues to be an extremely valuable asset to the Department, as is evidenced by the fact that the output during the year was one of 80,634 1-oz. packets, sufficient to meet the whole of the requirements of all institutions throughout the Dominion at a cost which showed a very satisfactory margin of profit.

In addition to the above specified output, a further 2,520 packets were prepared for issue by the Department as Christmas cheer to the prisoners, a special wrapper indicating the nature of the gift.

In this connection I would express appreciation of the gift by Mr. Lowe of sufficient leaf to manufacture a goodly proportion of this special issue.

A party of twenty prisoners, under the supervision of two officers, has been working continuously at Rangitoto Island since November, 1925. Improvements by way of roading, bridge-building, and the forming of footpaths were carried out during the year. Two dressing-sheds were erected, also a wall to retain water for a swimming-pool. Various improvements were made at the waterfront, and the levelling of the sports area was completed.

Concerts have been held periodically at the prison, the excellent programmes presented being keenly enjoyed by the inmates. Thanks are due to the Anglican Gaol Chaplain (the Rev. G. E. Moreton) and to Mr. S. Falls, Official Presbyterian Visitor, who, in conjunction with other social workers, maintain a sympathetic interest in the welfare of the inmates. The Salvation Army has also contributed entertainments of merit, and the various theatrical interests have at all convenient times shown readiness to assist at the concerts arranged.

Lectures under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association have continued to be given monthly, and have proved both instructive and enjoyable. Mr. N. M. Richmond, Director of the Workers' Educational Association, has been mainly responsible for the arrangement of this form of entertainment, and his efforts are deserving of appreciation.

During the year the Rev. G. E. Moreton arranged for an evening first-aid class to be conducted at the prison under the auspices of the St. John Ambulance Association, and it is pleasing to record that all the twelve candidates were successful in obtaining a pass at a recent examination conducted by Dr. A. L. de Berri Noakes. Lectures were given by Dr. Neil McDougall, whilst instruction in the practical work was given by Ambulance Officer J. W. Cumming. These gentlemen gave their services freely in the interests of the inmates attending the class, and deserve great credit for the excellent results obtained.

In a large institution of this class the library obviously plays an important part in providing for the leisure-hours of the inmates, and periodical gifts of books from the Grafton Public Library and several social organizations have been much appreciated.

The several social organizations and business firms which in past years have provided additional comforts for the inmates during the festive season again contributed freely, with the result that each individual prisoner received an adequate supply of "extras" during Christmas and New Year. Such practical sympathy was deeply appreciated by the inmates, and those responsible for the gifts may be assured that their efforts were well worth while.

Throughout the year the various denominations arranged for services each Sunday, and sincere thanks are due to the interested parties who spare no effort to make these services enjoyable as well as beneficial to the inmates in attendance.

The Rev. G. E. Moreton, secretary to the Prisoners' Aid Society, has again been most assiduous in attending to the needs of prisoners. Mr. Moreton spares no effort in giving sympathetic consideration to the many and varied calls which are made upon his services throughout the year. It might also be mentioned that the Salvation Army has at all times shown readiness to assist the prisoners, and has done much good work in this direction.

Other social workers have, of course, contributed their share of assistance, and their efforts are likewise to be commended.