

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 121.

The following Report of the Superintendent of Victoria Gaol for 1885, is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 3rd April, 1886.

No. 38.

GAOL SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 27th January, 1886.

COLONIAL SECRETARY,

In forwarding the prescribed Annual Statistical Return of Victoria Gaol, I beg to submit at the same time, for the information of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, a few observations regarding the Gaol and its administration, which are but little adverted to in the Official Return.

2. I assumed charge of the Victoria Gaol in the beginning of May last. My personal experience therefore only extends to eight months of the past year; and, if I venture to offer opinions and make suggestions as to desirable changes and reforms, I do so with diffidence, conscious of my limited experience of the criminal classes and Prison Administration in the Far East.

3. In directing the administration of the Gaol in this Colony, it will hardly be disputed that Government cannot do better than to be guided in its general principles by English Prison experience, and to endeavour to attain the results arrived at in England. These results have of late years been marvellous, and are briefly but graphically described in Sir E. DU CANE'S account of Penal Servitude (London 1882.) A combination of deterrent and reformatory Prison discipline, matured by the experience of many years, has, in England, resulted in a diminution of crime truly astonishing. During the five years ending in 1859, the yearly average of sentenced Prisoners, in England and Wales, was

Sentenced to Penal Servitude	1,009
Sentenced to imprisonment	12,536
TOTAL,	<u>15,125</u>

out of a population of over 19 millions. This number was year by year reduced till in 1881 it amounted to

Sentenced to Penal Servitude	1,525
Sentenced to imprisonment	9,266
TOTAL,	<u>10,791</u>

while the population had increased from 19 millions to nearly 26 millions.

4. Such splendid results can hardly be hoped for in this Colony; but Government can at least strive to approximate them. There are many causes operating in Hongkong which make both the deterrent and reformatory results of Prison discipline less efficacious than they are at home. Some are inherent in the situation and conditions of the Colony; but some are removeable. The wealth and prosperity of Hongkong induces a large influx of Chinese and other foreign population amongst whom must be expected a fair proportion of the criminal classes. These latter, probably accustomed to the severity of the Canton and other Eastern Prisons, must be agreeably surprised, and can hardly be deterred by the humane and gentle treatment, which, as a civilized and Christian nation, we extend to our Prisoners.

5. In this Gaol, as far as my observation goes, Chinese Convicts are better fed, better clothed, and better lodged than free coolie labourers, and the labour exacted from them is less. The deterrent effects of imprisonment are therefore almost limited to loss of liberty and its accompanying pleasures—a loss far more acutely felt by Western races than those we have to deal with here. Reformatory elements are greatly wanting here. Scholastic and religious instruction there is none for the Chinese Prisoners (if we except a Voluntary Christian Service in the Chinese language on Sundays). Instruction in trades can, owing to limited accommodation, be extended to only a limited number, and the compulsory living in association is only likely to result in the moral corruption of many of the Prisoners.

SUBORDINATE STAFF.

6. The Gaol staff, besides the Warden and Head Turnkeys, consist of 1st and 2nd class Turnkeys (all Europeans) and 1st and 2nd class Assistant Turnkeys (Europeans, colored men and natives). None of these have had previous training in Prison discipline. They have all been trained in this Gaol. The European Officers are zealous, painstaking and conscientious. The maintenance of Prison discipline has altogether depended upon them, and, although it would be better to have a proportion of Officers trained to the careful discipline of an English Prison, the services of the European Staff deserve in my opinion the acknowledgment of Government.

7. I regret I cannot, with one or two notable exceptions, say the same for the colored and native staff. At one time friendly and familiar with Prisoners, at other times harsh and exacting, almost always wanting in judgment and discretion, they are in my opinion responsible for much Prison crime. Many of them also have proved to be dishonest in so far as they have trafficked with Prisoners in tobacco, opium, etc., and have been open to bribery in conveying communications between Prisoners and outside friends. In fact at the time I took over the Gaol, any prisoner, whose friends would provide the money, could procure tobacco, opium, letters or anything he wanted, through the instrumentality of colored Turnkeys. Of these Turnkeys during the year 6 were invalided, 5 resigned and 10 were dismissed; most of the latter for illicit dealings with Prisoners, one of them having been tried and convicted in the Magistrates' Court. The vacancies so caused were mostly replaced by soldiers, His Excellency, the Major General Commanding the Troops, having kindly permitted soldiers from the Garrison to join the Prison staff on probation. These men, if found suitable purchased their discharge and permanently joined the Prison staff. They proved most valuable. Their habits of discipline raised the tone of the subordinate staff. Instead of quarrelling and arguing with Prisoners, like so many of the colored staff, they gave their orders quietly and reported breaches of discipline without noise or altercation, and gradually improved the subordination and discipline of the convicts. The soldier Turnkeys moreover are absolutely free from the slightest suspicion of trafficking with Prisoners. Their presence in Gaol I consider a great gain to Government.

PRISON BUILDINGS.

8. The Official Return shows that this Gaol contains 150 cells or wards, of which 49 only are separate cells. Last year there were only 46 separate cells, but 3 have been added during the year. The Prison is greatly overcrowded. During the year the Government sanctioned the removal of the Female prisoners to a house outside Victoria Gaol. This was carried into effect in October last, and placed at my disposal the late Female ward with 8 large cells and a separate yard, which relieved to some extent the overcrowding. Yet this is but a very small relief. Long experience at home has proved that, to make Prison punishments deterrent and reformatory, it is essential that Prisoners should be kept in separate confinement. The established principle is that Prisoners on conviction should for a fixed period be kept in separate confinement both day and night. This penal stage lasts in England for nine months. In the second stage convicts are employed at labor in association, but sleep and have their meals in a separate cell. It is quite impossible to carry out such a system in Victoria Gaol, with the very limited and unsuitable accommodation of the buildings, and I believe it has never been even approximately attempted, confinement in separate cells having in past times been chiefly used for punishment. I have however endeavoured, as far as the limited accommodation allowed, to follow the established principles, which I have carried out in the following manner. Prisoners sentenced to less than six months, I have, except in rare and special cases, entirely exempted from separate confinement, placing them at once in associated wards. Every Prisoner sentenced to six months or more I cause to undergo a limited period of separate confinement. Such Prisoners come in almost daily. Whenever the separate cells therefore are full, I examine the records of those occupying them, and transfer the best conducted amongst them to associated wards to make room for new comers. This has to be done about once a week. Since I have had the Female ward at my disposal I have used it as a sort of intermediate place of semi-separate confinement; four or five long sentence prisoners being confined in each cell there, and kept at work in separation from all other Prisoners, having their own separate yard for exercise. Long sentence Prisoners, on removal from separate cells, are now transferred to the late Female ward, but these on their turn must in a short time be removed to the ordinary associated wards to make room for others. By this system I am able to give every Prisoner, sentenced to six months or more, from two to three weeks separate confinement at the beginning of his sentence. A very poor result, but it is all that can be done, unless separate confinement were entirely reserved for convicts sentenced to Penal Servitude.

9. The limited space of the Gaol tells equally hardly on industrial labor. Mat making, chair and basket making, carpentering, and even most of the oakum picking have to be carried out in narrow and limited verandahs. There is only space for a single loom of coir mat-making and a single loom of grass mat-making; tailoring is carried out in a dark hall, shoe making is carried out in an ordinary cell. In fact there is no suitable work shop in the Gaol, nor space for one, except for the single industry of washing clothes. Were the Prison provided with suitable workshops, it would be easy to discharge every long sentence Prisoner a trained and skilled workman at a remunerative trade; and

there would be every hope that a large percentage of convicts would by these means be reclaimed from a life of crime. As it is, we can barely employ at and train to trades about one hundred Prisoners.

10. In short the Victoria Gaol is unsuited to the demands of modern civilization, or even humanity; for it seems hardly humane to fail in adopting those measures which experience has shown to operate as deterrents to criminals and as encouragements to reform of life; it seems hardly humane to continue a Prison system in which the enforced association of criminals is well known as tending to make the better class bad and the bad worse.

PRISONERS AND THEIR DISCIPLINE.

11. After a short experience of eight months in charge of this Gaol, I venture to hazard an opinion that the Chinese convicts under my charge are as amenable to discipline, and disposed to be as well conducted, as those of any race I am acquainted with. This view, I must admit is in appearance not supported by the statistics given in the Annual Return. It will be observed that in the year 1884, with a daily average number of 552 Prisoners, 4,784 Prison offences were reported. In 1885 with an average of 530 Prisoners 6,473 Prison offences were reported; giving an average of 12 Prison offences a year for each Prisoner; nor was the great bulk of these offences committed by a small number of habitual offenders, as is the case in England, where only about half the number of Prisoners are annually punished for Prison offences. On the last day of the year it was found that there were only 78 Prisoners in Gaol who had been free of punishment for three months. If we compare this with the statistics of English Prisons, where in 1880-81 with an average number of 10,297 Prisoners, only 5,861 Prisoners were punished, committing 18,003 offences or less than two per annum per Prisoner confined, we can hardly fail to draw the conclusion that the convicts of Hongkong are a peculiarly turbulent and insubordinate class. But this conclusion would be erroneous.

The large number of Prison offences in Victoria Gaol appear to be due to special conditions, the chief of which are:—

1. The enforced association and crowding together of the Prisoners at night, for want of separate sleeping cells for each Prisoner.
2. The enforced crowding together of Prisoners by day, when at work and at meals, for want of space in the workshops and yards.
3. The want of training and general inefficiency of a number of the Turnkeys, whose ignorance, misconduct and want of judgment have been the cause of much avoidable Prison crime.

12. An explanation will naturally be expected of the large increase of Prison offences in 1885 as compared with 1884 from 4,784 to 6,473 or over 30 per cent. The number of Prison offences reported during the past year have actually decreased all round with the exception of two kinds, viz. "talking," and "task of oakum short picked." The explanation of the increase in these two offences is as follows. On taking charge of the Prison I found that the Regulation requiring silence to be maintained was not strictly enforced, only very noisy talkers at work being reported. In fact after the Prisoners were locked up for the night, the buz of conversation from the associated wards was perfectly audible in the neighbouring streets. I enforced the Regulation, detailing for some time extra Turnkeys on night duty to enforce silence. This raised the number of reports for "talking" from 519 in 1884 to 2,132 in 1885, a number which more than accounts for the total increase of reports in the year. I append a tabulated statement (A) showing the monthly offences under this head during the last two years. It is curious to note that silence appears more difficult to the Prisoners in the summer months.—During 1885 there were reported 945 offences for short oakum picked and petty oakum thefts; the Prisoners, crowded together in the working yard, frequently stealing each others picked oakum. No offences were recorded under this head in 1884. The practice had been for the officer charged with weighing the oakum to report deficiencies on a separate paper and these offences and their punishments were not recorded in the offence book. As these papers were not preserved, I am unable to make comparisons with the previous year. The practice appeared to me to be irregular. I directed all these offences to be entered in the offence book, thus increasing the offences by 945. The offences under these two heads account for nearly half the Prison offences of the year 1885 and for more than double the increase over previous year.

13. The remaining Prison offences consist of assaults and acts of insubordination, idleness and refusing to work, having tobacco or opium, quarrelling and fighting, stealing food, disorderly conduct and other miscellaneous offences. In all these there has, as compared with the previous year, been a diminution in 1885. The number however is a very large as compared with English Prisons, owing chiefly to the great opportunities and temptations of imprisonment in association.

14. During the year 11 cases of insubordination towards and assaults on officers of the Gaol, were tried by the Superintendent and a visiting Justice. Of these cases 8 offenders were awarded corporal punishment, and 3 solitary confinement.

15. The cases of Prisoners assaulting and fighting with each other were much more numerous. In 1884, 270 such offences were reported, in 1885, 204 were reported. Finding these offences very numerous, I caused it to be signified to the Prisoners that aggravated assaults on each other would be tried. 13 such cases were accordingly brought to trial before the Superintendent and a visiting Justice. In 9 cases corporal punishment was inflicted; in 3 cases solitary imprisonment; one case broke down for want of evidence. The result was satisfactory in diminishing this class of offence. I append a table (B) showing the number of these offences during each month for the last two years. It will be observed that the monthly average during the first nine months of 1885 was 21 offences, which was reduced in the last quarter to a monthly average of 11.

16. The most serious offence during the year was an assault made on the Superintendent on the 27th June, with a bludgeon by a Prisoner under sentence of 18 months' imprisonment. He was tried and received corporal punishment. A careful and lengthened enquiry into the causes of this assault elicited the fact that it was the result of a conspiracy, in which upwards of 50 of the worst convicts in Gaol (nearly all Members of the Triad Society) were concerned. A considerable sum of money had been collected or promised to reward the man who committed the assault. The cause was stated to be the general discontent of the Prisoners at the somewhat increased severity with which the Prison regulations were enforced by the new Superintendent. A special grievance being his enforcing the prescribed punishment diet of 1 lb. of rice a day; the practice having previously been to allow Prisoners sentenced to punishment diet to receive the "Penal diet" of 1 lb. 8 oz. of rice, a punishment but little felt; 1 lb. 8 oz. of rice when boiled giving a Prisoner somewhat over 3 lbs. of food.

17. The great risk of possible conspiracies is very obvious in a Prison like this, where most of the Prisoners live in association, and where silence has been very imperfectly enforced even at work, under the immediate eye of the Turnkeys. It was necessary therefore to be well informed of everything going on in the Gaol. After some trouble and through the valuable assistance of Mr. MACHADO, the late Gaol clerk, an able and intelligent official, thoroughly conversant with the Chinese language, several informers were found to give information of what was going on among the Prisoners. Slight remissions of sentences were granted by Government at my recommendation for such services. The advantage of this arrangement became speedily apparent. A plot was revealed for the escape of a number of convicts, chiefly Pirates, from the Chain-gang. These men had procured (by means never ascertained) a duplicate of the key which opened the padlocks of their chains. A letter was intercepted (and sent to the Police) asking friends outside to have a junk in readiness for them at a named spot; the key was carefully concealed, and the convicts were only waiting for a wet day, when, huddled up in a shed for shelter, they could pass the key along and loosen their chains unobserved by the Warders. After a careful search the key was found sown into one of the Chain-gang men's hats and the persons intending to escape were removed from the Chain-gang. For this service the Prisoner who gave the information was allowed by Government a remission of 18 months of his sentence.

18. The offence of having Tobacco or Opium in Prison has been a very common one. In 1884 there were 719 cases reported, in 1885 there were 709 cases reported. This, in its effects is a very serious matter. With the moderate work and liberal diet of this Gaol, as compared to that of ordinary coolies, and with the comfort of living in association, it only requires easy opportunities for indulgence in narcotics, to render the Gaol quite a pleasant place of residence for criminals. The deprivation of narcotics acts as a deterrent to this class and should be strictly enforced. There have been many difficulties to contend with in Victoria Gaol on this score. The corruption of colored Gaol officials, who dealt with Prisoners in tobacco, has been referred to. Prisoners were allowed to act as cooks and servants to Turnkeys residing in the Gaol and these, coming more or less in contact with the outside public had many opportunities of smuggling in tobacco &c. The Prison walls in parts are low, and when convicts were crowded at work in the yards, tobacco was frequently thrown over the walls from the adjoining Street and falling among the Prisoners was secreted by them before it could be observed by the Turnkeys in charge, even if the latter did not wilfully turn their eyes away. It was introduced in provision baskets and in dry earth baskets. In fact every ingenuity is exercised by Prisoners and their friends outside to have this coveted article secretly introduced into the Gaol. The following steps have been adopted. Every officer proved to have been engaged in traffic with Prisoners has been dismissed; several persons found attempting to pass tobacco into Gaol have been prosecuted. Nets have been suspended over parts where tobacco had been thrown over the walls. The employment of Prisoners as cooks and servants to Turnkeys has been stopped by Government, and constant and vigilant inspections and searches are continually made all over the Gaol premises. These measures have met with some success. It will be seen from the Return of these offences (C) annexed hereto, that in the first six months of the year 534 cases of having tobacco were reported; an average of 88 per month. In the last six months 175 cases were reported; an average of 29 per month; or, if we take the last 4 months, 76 cases or an average of 19 cases per month. A progressively satisfactory result, which will appear still more so when it is added that in the earlier part of the year and summer, the tobacco found in possession of Prisoners often consisted of large sticks or plugs, and the opium of neat and well filled boxes, while during the last 3 or 4 months the quantities found were infinitesimal.

19. Prison discipline, during the year, has therefore been so far satisfactory, that, with the exception of the offences of talking and short oakum picking, there has been a gradual but steady diminution

of reported Prison offences; and, of the numbers reported, it seems probable that at least three fourths are owing to the living in association, necessitated by the limited Prison accommodation.

20. In concluding my observations on Gaol discipline, I desire to call attention to the large number of Prisoners who are old offenders. I annex a return (*D*) showing the number of convictions recorded against Prisoners in Gaol on 31st December 1885. It will be seen that out of a total of 573 Prisoners 198 or 35 per cent. have been previously convicted. This is probably to some extent attributable to light sentences passed on habitual criminals. Many of these return to Gaol, over and over again, a few weeks after discharge. It seems likely that if such criminals were sent to penal servitude for their second offence, such punishment would probably act as a deterrent (which short sentences do not), it would cost the Colony no more, and would save the community from many thefts and much vexation.

21. That short sentences passed in associated wards are not very deterrent, I have fair evidence. There are generally in Gaol from 20 to 30 Prisoners of the criminal class, confined for short periods for want of finding security (generally only a few dollars) for good behaviour. These persons are placed in associated wards, comfortably lodged and fed, and have no work to do. As a rule they declare themselves unable to find the required security, and remain in Gaol the appointed time. But, having some idea that many of these "Security Prisoners" could find security if they wished, indeed knowing that some of them had more money in their possession than the amount of security demanded, I tried the experiment of sending several of them to separate cells, the result being that very few stood more than 3 or 4 days of separate confinement but found the security required and left the Gaol. Had these men been allowed to remain together in an associated ward, it seems probable they would have preferred a rest of a few months in Gaol at the cost of the Colony.

LABOR ON PUBLIC WORKS AND INDUSTRIAL LABOR.

22. A Chain-gang of Prisoners has been working during the year, under the orders of the Surveyor General on Public Works, and has generally consisted of about 90 men; though this number has lately been much reduced. The work of this Gang has not given satisfaction. The officers in charge of the Gangs receive an extra allowance for this duty. The Prisoners on Chain-gang receive extra allowances of rice, shinned beef for congee and tea, besides being credited and on discharge paid one cent a day as earnings. The cost of these extras is charged to the Surveyor General's Department. The Surveyor General considers the work done by these Prisoners to be barely, if at all, worth the extra cost to his Department. I consider the extra food given to the Chain-gang to be excessive, but as this subject is now being considered by a special Committee ordered by Government, it appears unnecessary to enter into any details. I have every confidence that in re-organising Chain-gang labor, means will be found to carry out Public Works by Prison labor, in a manner more satisfactory to the Surveyor General and myself and more conducive to the interest of the Public than has hitherto been the case. But I should neglect my duty if I failed to bring to the notice of Government that in my opinion the Prison Authorities have in past times abused the powers given them of levying costs from the Surveyor General's Department. It bears the appearance as if it was wished to coax or bribe the Prisoners to go on Public Works without grumbling; for not only was an amount of extra food passed to them, which in the opinion of the present Medical Officer of the Prison is much in excess of the requirements of nature, but this extra food has from the beginning been given to them, not only on wet days, when they did not go out to work, but also on Sundays, in direct contradiction to the orders of Government (see Note to Diet Scale.) The cent per diem sanctioned as earnings, was also passed to these Prisoners on wet days and on Sundays. I did not interfere with the diet, as I had referred that question to Government, but I at once stopped crediting Prisoners with earnings paid by the Surveyor General, for days on which they did not work for his Department.

23. The other industrial work carried out in the Gaol during the year has been more satisfactory. I annex an Abstract (*E*) showing the actual profits or savings to Government in nine different industries carried out in the Gaol, showing altogether a profit of \$1,990. 74 cents during the year. Such abstracts have now been prepared for the first time; they do not quite accurately show the transactions of the year because,—no industrial stock having been taken at the end of 1884.—I am dependent, for the account of stock on hand on 1st January 1885, on the statements of officers, who could only refer to their private note books, or to their memory. But in most cases, such as that of oakum, no person in the Gaol could tell me what stock of oakum or junk if any, was on hand on 1st January 1885. Some of the profits shown in 1885 may therefore be partly due to 1884. The practice in past years was somewhat unbusinesslike. All the money realised by sale of Prison labor was shewn as Prison earnings, while the cost of materials etc. remained concealed in the obscurity of incidental expenses. In future these accounts will be better kept.

24. The chief advantage of industrial labour is that an opportunity is afforded of instructing criminals in trades; the profits realised are incidental and of secondary importance. Reforming criminals to habits of industry is the main object. Industrial labour in Victoria Gaol would be capable of great expansion, were space for suitable workshops available. Each convict might be taught a trade before discharge and the profits might be increased so as greatly to reduce the cost of the Prison.

25. A very few remarks will suffice as to the Prison industries of the past year.

Oakum picking, hitherto not very remunerative, has paid well this year, as, instead of, as previously paying \$70 a ton for the raw material or paper stuff, it has since June last been procured for \$45, while oakum has been sold for the same price as before.

Rattan chair and basket making is a new industry, started in October last. The work is easily taught, convicts take much interest in it, and are anxious to be taught. It seems likely to be remunerative, and could be greatly extended were space available.

Coir Yarn. An old industry and a remunerative one. can only be worked with one loom for want of space.

Net making, for the same reason cannot be extended.

Grass mat-making, shoe-making, carpentering and tailoring are almost entirely confined to work for Gaol purposes, making up Gaol clothing, shoes and bed mats, and executing repairs etc. Printing is done for most of the Public offices. No expense is connected with it; the offices sending the stationery used for their printing.

Labor on Public works has not been put down as remunerative for reasons already explained.

\$360 were paid by the Civil Hospital and Asylum during the year for washing done in the Gaol. This has now been discontinued; the Hospital washing being done elsewhere. As far as can be ascertained, no profit has been realized by this industry, the cost of fuel, soap, etc., having, it is believed, eaten up the money received, but no accurate account appears ever to have been kept. The Prison washing was mixed up with that for Hospital and Asylum. No permanent record was kept of the number of Prison clothes washed. The washing for Prison officers was likewise mixed up with the other washing; and, to add to all, the fuel used for kitchen and washhouse was not accounted for separately. The officer in charge of the washhouse on my arrival could barely read and write, and kept his notes in pencil hieroglyphics. I had therefore to give up as hopeless the attempt to make out an account of the washing industry for the past year.

A proper account is now kept.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

26. Having now reported on those points of Prison discipline and administration which appear of more prominent interest, all the further observations or suggestions I would desire to offer centre round the one theme, the urgent necessity of no longer delaying the building of a new Gaol, on the recognised principle of separate sleeping accommodation for every prisoner and ample space for workshops and industrial labour. No deterrent or reformatory efforts can meet with appreciable success, in the absence of these necessary conditions. But, these conditions once granted, there would be every prospect of diminishing crime in, and consequent expense to, the Colony.

27. I have visited the neighbouring Prisons of Canton and Macao. In the former the Prisoners are treated with a harshness and severity which we could not imitate, but which proves deterrent. In Macao I found the Prison far less overcrowded than this Gaol. A portion of the convicts there were employed on Public works but received no extra rations. The diet and clothing etc., supplied to Prisoners there, appeared less liberal than in Victoria Gaol, though I think more in correspondence with the ordinary living of Chinese coolies. But we cannot, as a civilized and Christian people, treat our convicts otherwise than with humane attention to their health and comfort in food and clothing etc. But at the same time it seems due to the community and to the Prisoners themselves that, bound as we feel ourselves to treat convicts with a consideration and humanity which to the natives of these parts appears luxurious ease, we should also adopt those means which the experience of England has shewn to suffice, for taming and reforming the worst of our own criminal population; and imprisonment on the separate system is the first and mightiest of these agencies.

28. I have recently had an opportunity of visiting the Prison at Singapore, and could not fail to observe how far Singapore is in advance of Hongkong in its treatment of criminals. In that Prison there is separate accommodation for 800 criminals (in Hongkong 49.) The greater part of the Gaol staff consists of warders trained in English Prisons, and liberally paid. The results, I understand, have equalled the expectations of that Government in building their new Prison. From the Singapore Prison report of 1884 it appears that for the last three years there has been a steady decrease in the number of convictions for graver offences, and it is specially noted that during the year "four men only have been reconvicted, who had ever undergone a sentence of three years and upwards."

29. In the event of the building of a new Gaol being further delayed, I would request Government to take into consideration the advisability of reserving the Victoria Gaol for convicts and long sentence Prisoners only, removing the short sentence Prisoners to some other building. The Victoria Gaol could be made to accommodate the former class in separation at no very great expense for alterations.

30 It would also, I think, tend to the repression of crime in Hongkong, if Prisoners who have earned a remission of sentence were, as in England, placed by legislative enactment under the Supervision of the Police, so that, if found returning to a criminal career, they might at once be sent back by the Magistrates to Prison, to complete their original sentence.

A. GORDON.
Superintendent, Victoria Gaol.

(A.)

VICTORIA GAOL.

Return of Reports for talking, &c., in the years 1884 and 1885.

MONTH.	1884.	1885.
January,	14	55
February,	17	25
March,	32	44
April,	24	23
May,	31	252
June,	70	362
July,	77	289
August,	72	344
September,	50	254
October,	64	174
November,	35	148
December,	43	162
Total,.....	519	2,132

A. GORDON,
Superintendent.

(B.)

Return of Offences reported of Prisoners fighting with or assaulting each other, for the years 1884 and 1885.

MONTH.	1884.	1885.
January,	22	28
February,	16	18
March,	23	18
April,	26	29
May,	29	6
June,	24	22
July,	19	27
August,	24	13
September,	30	12
October,	14	13
November,	21	8
December,	22	10
Total,.....	270	204

A. GORDON,
Superintendent.

(C.)

Return of Offences reported of Prisoners having Tobacco, for the years 1884 and 1885.

MONTH.	1884.	1885.
January,	65	74
February,	76	78
March,	47	82
April,	52	133
May,	66	106
June,	60	61
July,	72	52
August,	69	47
September,	82	17
October,	50	23
November,	41	15
December,	39	21
Total,.....	719	709

A. GORDON,
Superintendent.

(D.)

Return of Prisoners confined in Victoria Gaol on the 31st December, 1885, from 1st to 12th Convictions.

1st Conviction,	375
2nd " 	41
3rd " 	29
4th " 	30
5th " 	28
6th " 	23
7th " 	20
8th " 	16
9th " 	4
10th " 	2
11th " 	4
12th " 	1
Total,.....	573

A. GORDON,
Superintendent.

(E.)

ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNT OF INDUSTRIAL LABOUR, VICTORIA GAOL, FOR THE YEAR 1885.

Dr.		OAKUM.		Cr.	
1885.	Stock on hand, 1st January, 1885, } not known,.....	...	1885.	By Oakum sold during the year,	\$2,686.91
	Cost of Paper Stuff purchased during } the year,.....	\$1,630.47		" Stock on hand, 31st Dec., 1885,—	
	Profit during the year,.....	1,067.49		Paper Stuff,.....	...
	Total,.....\$	2,697.96		Oakum,	11.05
				Total,.....\$	2,697.96
RATTAN WORK.					
1885.	Stock on hand, 1st January, 1885, ....	...	1885.	By Chairs, &c., sold during the year, .	...
	Material purchased during the year, ...	\$ 79.29		" Fenders and Swabs sold,	\$ 31.15
	Profit,.....	110.56		" Material on hand,	16.00
	Total,.....\$	189.85		" Chairs, &c., on hand,	48.20
				" Fenders and Swabs on hand,	94.50
				Total,.....\$	189.85
COIR YARN.					
1885.	Stock on hand, 1st January, 1885, } not known,.....	...	1885.	By Matting sold during the year,	\$483.63
	Yarn purchased during the year,	\$289.80		" Stock on hand, Material, 198 lbs.,	13.86
	Profit,.....	249.69		" " (350 lbs.), " manufactured, }	42.00
	Total,.....\$	539.49		Total,.....\$	539.49
GRASS MATTING.					
1885. May.	Stock on hand, 1st January, 1885, ....	...	1885.	By Issue, for prison use during the } year, 324 yards, market price, }	\$42.12
	Material purchased,—			" 13 cents per yard,	
	Hemp,.....\$ 8.14			" Stock on hand, 31st December, }	1.44
	Grass, 32.05	\$40.19		" 1885, (11 yards),	
	Profit,.....	16.27		" Material,	12.90
	Total,.....\$	56.46		Total,.....\$	56.46
SHOEMAKERS' SHOP.					
1885. Jan. 1	Stock on hand, 31st December, 1884, .	...	1885.	By Estimated value of Repairs, &c., }	\$ 50.00
	Material purchased during the year, ...	\$ 88.25		to European Prisoners' Boots, }	
	Profit,.....	32.10		during 1885,	8.00
	Total,.....\$	120.35		" Sale to Prison Officers,.....	62.35
				" Stock on hand, Material and }	
				Shoes, new Shoes made (included }	
				in above, \$24),	
				Total,.....\$	120.35

NET MAKING.

1885. Jan. 1	Twine on hand,	\$ 5.60	1885.	By Value of Net sold during the year,	\$125.65
	Wax,	3.00		" " " made for Gaol use,	28.44
Dec. 31	Material purchased during the year, ...	69.24		" Stock on hand, .....	...
	Profit,.....	76.25			
	Total,.....\$	154.09		Total,.....\$	154.09

CARPENTERS' SHOP.

1885. Jan. 1	Value of Stock on hand,	\$ 3.95	1885.	By Value of Work done and Articles } made for Gaol use,	\$189.92
	Material purchased during the year, ...	164.65		" Work done for Officers and } charged,	3.39
	Profit,.....	29.26		" Stock on hand, Material,	4.55
	Total,.....\$	197.86		Total,.....\$	197.86

TAILORS' SHOP.

1885. Jan. 1	Material on hand from last year,	\$ 53.00	1885.	By Value of Canvas Suits made up } during the year,.....	\$773.39
	Canvas purchased during the year, ...	544.00		" Value of Drill Suits made up } during the year,	22.40
	Flannel " " " } (2 bales),	405.00		" Work done for Officers & charged, ..	4.40
	Needles, Twine, Thread, Buttons, } &c.,	176.39		" " for Police, &c.,	44.87
	Profit,.....	71.67		" Stock remaining on hand, (2 bales } Flannel),	405.00
	Total,.....\$	1,250.06		Total,.....\$	1,250.06

PRINTING PRESS.

1885. Jan. 1	Stock on hand from last year, (Print- } ing Ink),	\$ 1.50	1885.	By Work done for Public Offices } during the year,.....	\$325.25
	Profit,.....	337.45		" Cash received for private work, ...	12.70
	Total,.....\$	338.95		" Stock remaining on hand,	1.00
	Total,.....\$	338.95		Total,.....\$	338.95

PROFITS.

Oakum,.....	\$1,067.49
Rattan,.....	110.56
Coir Yarn,	249.69
Grass Mats,.....	16.27
Shoemakers,.....	32.10
Net Making,	76.25
Carpenters,	29.26
Tailoring,	71.67
Printing,	337.45
TOTAL,.....	\$1,990.74

A. GORDON,
Superintendent.