

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 54.

The following Report of the Superintendent of Victoria Gaol for 1897 is published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 5th February, 1898.

VICTORIA GAOL,
HONGKONG, 31st January, 1898.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Governor the following report on the Victoria Gaol for the year 1897.

2. Mr. LETHBRIDGE had charge of the Gaol up to the 30th March, when he left the Colony and I assumed charge.

3. The number of prisoners admitted to the Gaol under sentence of the ordinary Courts was 4,711, besides 48 soldiers and sailors sentenced by Courts-Martial.

There were also 54 prisoners imprisoned for debt, and 263 in default of finding security, making a grand total of 5,076; of these 606 were old offenders.

4. The corresponding numbers for last year were:—

Convicted by ordinary Courts, 5,414; by Courts-Martial, 50; Debtors, 63; in default of security, 55. Total for 1896, 5,582.

5. The daily average number of prisoners confined in the Gaol during the year was 462 as compared with 514 in 1896.

I attribute the decrease to the abolition of the Light and Pass regulations, and to the narrowing of the limits within which hawking is permitted in the vicinity of the markets in Victoria.

6. There were 2,619 reports made by the Prison Officers against prisoners for prison offences, compared with 3,887 in 1896, and 5,365 in the year 1895.

7. Discipline has been well maintained, and I am of opinion that the marked decrease is due to greater efficiency of supervision on the part of the Gaol Staff, and to a better appreciation of prison discipline on the part of the prisoners.

The reports during the year were dealt with as follows:—

One hundred and thirty-one cases were dismissed on the report, in the majority of instances, of the Medical Officer. In 521 cases a caution was given, and

139 were punished with rice and water for 1 day.

254 " " " 2 days.

116 " " " 3 "

204 with solitary confinement and rice and water for 1 day.

231 " " " 2 days.

263 " " " 3 "

30 " " " 5 "

48 " " " 7 "

80 bread and water for 1 day.

63 " " 2 days.

29 " " 3 "

37 solitary confinement on bread and water for 1 day.

26 " " " 2 days.

31 " " " 3 "

9 " " " 7 "

61 whippings by Superintendent. 13 Prisoners were twice whipped. The actual number of prisoners whipped was therefore 48.

52 extra crank.

78 " shot and stone.

17 loss of marks.

47 separate confinement.

60 to shot and stone.

59 to crank.

33 punishments awarded by the Superintendent and Justice of the Peace of which 8 were whippings.

Total, ...1,967

8. The new rules and regulations for the Prison came into force on the 29th of March, and the power given under them to the Superintendent to award a maximum of 7 days' solitary confinement, and a maximum of 42 days' separate confinement upon full and penal or reduced penal diet in alternate weeks, has been exercised with marked effect.

9. There were 735 prisoners reported for refusing to labour during the year.

This offence in a prison filled principally with Chinese is a difficult one to deal with.

Since I have had charge of the Gaol I have only known one European who refused to labour. As a rule Europeans prefer to labour than to sit idle. Chinese prisoners on the other hand, with very few exceptions, would be content to sit in a cell from one year's end to another and do nothing.

This extreme apathy tends to induce to refusing to labour and undoubtedly accounts for the obstinacy with which Chinese prisoners will persist in refusing to labour.

I have found separate confinement on full and penal or reduced penal diet in alternate weeks the most efficacious punishment in obstinate cases of this extremely troublesome offence.

10. The number of prisoners reported for having tobacco during the year shows a further decrease.

Three Indian Assistant Warders were dismissed during the last 9 months of the year for trafficking with prisoners, and since their dismissal the number of cases in which tobacco has been found on prisoners has materially decreased.

In November and December there were four such cases, but during those months there have been several free labourers at work in the Gaol.

11. I attach a return shewing details regarding all the whippings that were inflicted during the past year.

12. The profit in industrial labour during the year amounted to \$2,620.08. The balance sheets for each industry are shown in enclosure E.

13. The report from the Gaol Medical Officer shows 4 deaths from natural causes, and 2 cases of suicide during the year.

The sanitary condition of the Gaol is good.

14. A modern apparatus has been constructed for the carrying out of executions.

15. A new fire main, with 3 hydrants, has been laid within the Prison walls, and a complete new set of fire-extinguishing appliances has also been supplied.

16. On the 22nd November a commencement was made in carrying out the improvements in the Gaol originally suggested by my predecessor in C.S.O. $\frac{2037}{1836}$ together with some additions in the matter of separate cells recommended by myself.

The principal of the suggested improvements within the Gaol were the increase of yard space by the demolition of D wing; the subdivision of a number of association cells into separate cells; and the extension of the female prison.

D wing has already been pulled down and, with the materials removed from it, 89 association cells are being rapidly converted into separate cells. Almost the whole of the labour is supplied by prisoners. The work is therefore being carried out at very small cost.

There were formerly in the Prison 248 separate cells and 115 association cells.

Within the next 6 months when the subdivision now in progress will be completed, there will be 427 separate cells, and 26 association cells, which will afford accommodation for 453 prisoners in separate confinement. In cases of necessity 104 extra prisoners can be accommodated by putting 5 prisoners in each association cell making the total capacity of the Prison 557.

With 427 separate cells it will be possible in all ordinary times to locate every convicted criminal prisoner in a separate cell. This Prison will then be in as satisfactory a condition as it seems possible to render it on the present site.

17. The conduct of the Gaol Staff has been, on the whole, very good. I have already stated in paragraph 5 that the record of prison offences for the year gives evidence of increased efficiency in supervision.

Great credit is due to the Chief Warden for this result, to which the Principal Warders also have contributed materially by the example they have shown of tact and discretion in dealing with prisoners, and by the steady enforcement of discipline.

18. During the year 11 European Warders have been engaged locally. They have been drawn from H. M.'s Naval and Military Forces and have given satisfaction.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

F. H. MAY,
Superintendent.

The Honourable

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(A.)

VICTORIA GAOL.

Return of Reports for talking, idling, short oakum picking, &c., in the years 1894, 1895, 1896 and 1897.

MONTH.	1894. Daily average number in Prison, 455.	1895. Daily average number in Prison, 472.	1896. Daily average number in Prison, 514.	1897. Daily average number in Prison, 462.
January,	122	301	214	200
February,	166	314	209	161
March,	209	223	249	147
April,	180	255	257	154
May,	223	295	270	191
June,	179	311	261	166
July,	211	447	191	142
August,	187	374	192	159
September,	410	346	213	132
October,	441	309	174	160
November,	363	273	174	151
December,	205	225	188	140
Total,	2,896	3,654	2,592	1,903

(B.)

Return of Offences reported of Prisoners fighting with or assaulting each other, or Officers, for the years 1894, 1895, 1896 and 1897.

MONTH.	1894. Daily average number in Prison, 455.	1895. Daily average number in Prison, 472.	1896. Daily average number in Prison, 514.	1897. Daily average number in Prison, 462.
January,	6	Nil.	4	4
February,	19	5	1	1
March,	12	3	4	4
April,	3	12	...	2
May,	12	12	2	1
June,	16	4	4	1
July,	4	6	5	2
August,	3	9	4	4
September,	1	2	2	2
October,	7	10	2	4
November,	5	3	...	1
December,	7	3	...	8
Total,	95	69	28	34

(C.)

Return of Offences of Prisoners having Tobacco for the years 1894, 1895, 1896 and 1897.

MONTH.	1894. Daily average number in Prison, 455.	1895. Daily average number in Prison, 472.	1896. Daily average number in Prison, 514.	1897. Daily average number in Prison, 462.
January,	7	18	2	0
February,	18	15	1	1
March,	13	11	4	3
April,	10	17	1	4
May,	7	3	1	7
June,	11	11	1	7
July,	10	3	2	2
August,	10	6	5	0
September,	8	20	6	1
October,	12	15	6	1
November,	6	4	8	2
December,	5	3	5	2
Total,	117	126	42	30

(D.)

Comparative Return of Prisoners confined in Victoria Gaol on the 31st December, for the years 1894, 1895, 1896 and 1897.

CONVICTION.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.
1st,	366	340	444	321
2nd,	63	54	60	56
3rd,	21	21	23	27
4th,	12	20	10	9
5th,	9	24	11	7
6th,	4	4	7	3
7th,	5	2	4	2
8th,	4	4	5	2
9th,	2	1	2	1
10th,	2	1	2	2
11th, .....	...	...	...	...
12th, .....	...	...	...	...
13th, .....	...	1	...	...
Total,.....	488	472	568	430

(E.)

Abstract of Industrial Labour, Victoria Gaol, for the year 1897.

Dr.		OAKUM.		Cr.	
1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 640.80	1897.	By Oakum sold during the year,	\$ 2,989.64
	„ Cost of Paper Stuff purchased during the Year,	2,209.45		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	871.00
	Profit,.....	1,010.39			
	Total,.....\$	3,860.64		Total,.....\$	3,860.64

COIR.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 191.31	1897.	By Matting, &c., sold during the year, ..	\$ 1,562.19
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	1,029.13		„ Articles made for Gaol use,.....	37.67
	Profit,.....	879.62		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	500.20
	Total,.....\$	2,100.06		Total,.....\$	2,100.06

NET-MAKING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	...	1897.	By Nets and Nettings sold and repaired,	\$ 145.00
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	\$ 78.92		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	1.90
	Profit,.....	67.98			
	Total,.....\$	146.90		Total,.....\$	146.90

TAILORING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 1.81	1897.	By Articles sold and repaired,	\$ 46.67
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	1,283.94		„ Work done for Gaol,.....	1,290.50
	Profit,.....	53.70		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	2.28
	Total,.....\$	1,339.45		Total,.....\$	1,339.45

PRINTING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	...	1897.	By Printing done for outside,.....	\$ 2.95
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	\$ 13.65		„ Printing done for Gaol,	98.05
	Profit,.....	87.55		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897, .....	.20
	Total,.....\$	101.20		Total,.....\$	101.20

BOOK-BINDING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 2.30	1897.	By Book-binding and repairing done for outside,.....	\$ 29.65
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	35.05		„ Book-binding and repairing done for Gaol,	36.00
	Profit,.....	33.10		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	4.80
	Total,.....\$	70.45		Total,.....\$	70.45

SHOE-MAKING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 1.70	1897.	By Articles sold and repaired during the year,.....	\$ 2.15
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	24.74		„ Work done for Gaol,.....	31.25
	Profit,.....	9.24		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	2.28
	Total,.....\$	35.68		Total,.....\$	35.68

WASHING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 28.57	1897.	By Washing done for which cash was received,.....	\$ 1.00
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,.....	605.59		„ Washing done for Prison Officers at 1 cent per piece,	276.61
	Profit,.....	412.79		„ Washing Prisoner's Clothing at 1 cent per piece,	752.34
	Total,.....\$	1,046.95		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	17.00
				Total,.....\$	1,046.95

GRASS MATTING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 1.35	1897.	By Matting, &c. sold during the year, ..	\$ 1.96
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,	35.57		„ Matting made for Gaol use,	42.90
	Profit,	8.90		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897, .....	.96
	Total,	\$ 45.82		Total,	\$ 45.82

RATTAN.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	...	1897.	By Articles sold during the year,	\$ 73.25
	„ Cost of Material purchased during year,	\$ 68.86		„ Articles made for Gaol use, .....	...
	Profit,	10.44		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	6.05
	Total,	\$ 79.30		Total,	\$ 79.30

TIN-SMITHING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 2.77	1897.	By Work done for outside,	\$ 3.44
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,	59.94		„ Work done for Gaol,	58.37
	Profit,	8.15		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	9.05
	Total,	\$ 70.86		Total,	\$ 70.86

CARPENTERING.

1897.	To Stock on hand, 1st January, 1897, ..	\$ 3.53	1897.	By Articles sold and repaired during the year,	\$ 18.50
	„ Cost of Material purchased during the year,	116.49		„ Work done for Gaol,	133.18
	Profit,	38.22		„ Stock on hand, 31st December, 1897,	6.56
	Total,	\$ 158.24		Total,	\$ 158.24

RECAPITULATION.

1897.	Oakum,	\$1,010.39	1897.	By Surplus,	\$ 2,620.08
	Coir,	879.62			
	Net-making,	67.98			
	Tailoring,	53.70			
	Printing,	87.55			
	Book-binding,	33.10			
	Shoe-making,	9.24			
	Washing,	412.79			
	Grass Matting,	8.90			
	Rattan Work,	10.44			
	Tin-smithing,	8.15			
	Carpentering,	38.22			
	Total,	\$ 2,620.08		Total,	\$ 2,620.08

