

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

DOMINION LABORATORY.

The fees collected during the year were as follows: For analyses, £29; for licenses under the Explosive and Dangerous Goods Act, 1908, £535; charges on explosives stored in Government magazines, £1,519.

CENSORSHIP OF CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS.

During the financial year 1,735 films, containing 3,791,230 ft., have been examined by the Censor of Films. Of these twelve were rejected, and cuts were made in 143.

The receipts amounted to £1,269, which sum was in excess of the expenditure.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S OFFICE.

The revenue of this Department for the last financial year amounted to £18,308, being an increase of £5,592 on the revenue for the previous year.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The fees collected in connection with the administration of the Weights and Measures Act, 1908, amount to £444.

PASSPORTS.

The fees collected for the issue and renewal of passports during the past year amount to £2,089.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT.

Considerable progress has been made with the erection of residences for prison officers, farm buildings, &c., by prison labour under the supervision of instructing warders. The development of the Department's farms, and the building-up of dairy herds, has resulted in largely increased revenue.

The functions of this Department have expanded greatly in the past few years, while the character of its work has completely changed. From its former position as a custodial Department only—a dead weight upon the taxpayers and a clog upon the life of the State—it has developed into a solid working organization with a rapidly increasing revenue, and a variety of employment for the men committed to its charge. Farming, dairying, stock-raising, building in stone, concrete, and wood, road-construction, production of concrete tiles, blocks, posts, &c., and trades of different kinds provide interesting employment that, while remunerative to the State, is vital in its effect on the character and future lives of the men and youths who have for the time being become the wards of the State. While the prison system has now been thoroughly inoculated with the microbe of work as a reformatory agent, the mental and physical development of the inmates has been receiving adequate attention. Evening school and physical-culture classes have now been in operation for some time, new libraries with books by the best authors are being established in the reformatories, swimming-baths and recreation-grounds are being constructed, the dietary has been improved, while the system generally is being gradually brought into line with the more enlightened systems elsewhere. While conditions have been improved in every direction, in order that every prisoner may be given a reasonable chance of rehabilitating himself, there is no pampering. The Department's view is that a man is punished by being sent to prison and that so long as he works and behaves himself satisfactorily it is not called upon to punish him by treating him with unnecessary harshness while he is in prison. Judged by results the present system is incomparably superior, both from a moral and from an economic point of view, to the former custodial system. That the present system has had a beneficial effect upon the working capacity of the prisoners is shown by the fact that the cash return from the Department's farms, works, &c., for the last financial year was £31,000. In addition to this the estimated value of work carried out for the Public Works and other Departments, for which no payment was received, was £21,838; whilst the value of the domestic and industrial work required for the upkeep of the institutions amounted to £28,797. The total value of prison labour for the year was therefore £81,635. Prison labour has also been so effectively used in developing the properties taken over by the Department that the assets of the State have been increased in value by fully £60,000 in the past few years.