

When considering the labour value *per capita* of the prisoners of the Dominion it must be remembered that our prison population is partly composed of derelicts who are unable to work, of old men who are incapable of carrying out anything but the lightest tasks, and of men whose previous avocations unfit them for manual labour until a considerable period after their admission. The really able-bodied competent labourers among the prisoners are working fully as well as, if not better than, men employed at similar work outside; but the large percentage of “drones” necessarily causes the total output of work from the central prisons, where they are confined, to be less than would otherwise be the case.

The cash receipts and credits brought to charge for the financial year are shown in detail in Table 1 below:—

TABLE 1.—Cash received and Amounts credited to the Prisons Vote for the Year ended 31st March, 1921.

Prison or Institution.	Metal, Gravel, &c.	Farm-produce.	Farm Stock.	Bricks.	Concrete Blocks, Poles, Tiles.	Tree-planting and Realizations.	Sale of Fire-wood.	Boots.	Prison Labour on Public Buildings.	Road-works.	Invercargill Rifle Range.	Totals.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Auckland ..	6,682	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,033	..	..	..	7,715
Invercargill ..	..	2,703	6,162	..	218	..	..	..	..	..	2,450	11,533
Kaingaroa ..	..	92	120	..	..	2,670	..	..	..	..	..	2,882
Napier ..	338	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	338
New Plymouth ..	692	270	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	962
Paparua ..	..	789	967	..	917	..	..	1,062	3,905	..	..	7,640
Waikeria ..	..	2,680	212	..	..	..	..	..	..	90	..	2,982
Wellington ..	..	16	95	1,190	..	..	111	..	..	33	..	1,445
Wi Tako ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	55	..	..	..	..	55
Miscellaneous ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,584
Totals ..	7,712	6,550	7,556	1,190	1,135	2,670	166	2,095	3,905	123	2,450	39,136

Value of Prison Labour for which neither Cash nor Financial Credits are received.

While the figures quoted in the preceding table indicate that a satisfactory cash return has been obtained from the employment of able-bodied prisoners, much important work is carried out by the Department for which no financial credit whatever is received. Under a standard system of inter-departmental book-keeping a credit equivalent to the labour value of the work would be shown in the general accounts, but under existing conditions each Department has to consider a charge made against it by another Department as if it were a definite increase to the departmental expenditure, whereas such payments are merely transfers or book entries.

In order that a proper record may be kept of the value of all prison labour it has been the Department's practice during the past few years to have the value of the work for which no payment is received carefully estimated on strictly conservative lines at the end of the year, and the result embodied in a tabular statement that is published in each year's report. The figures for 1920-21 are contained in Table 2 below:—

TABLE 2.—Total Value of Prison Labour employed on Roads, Buildings, Reclamation, Wall-building, and other Public Works, for which no Financial Credit has been received, for the Year ended 31st March, 1921.

Prison.	Buildings and Walls.	Construction and Maintenance of Roads.	Excavation-work and Preparation of Necessary Grounds.	Manufacture of Concrete of Blocks and Bricks.	Reclamation-works.	Electric-lighting Installation.	Drainage-works.	Totals.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Auckland ..	1,547	1,150	120	520	..	165	..	3,502
Invercargill ..	2,203	1,074	554	705	874	..	1,574	6,984
Paparua ..	1,100	51	..	..	..	..	..	1,151
Point Halswell ..	1,120	408	..	..	..	30	..	1,558
Waikeria ..	1,225	156	61	250	..	..	82	1,774
Wellington ..	..	..	2,110	..	..	..	..	2,110
Wi Tako ..	1,200	67	650	557	..	..	690	3,164
Totals ..	8,395	2,906	3,495	2,032	874	195	2,346	20,243

In addition to the large output of constructional and other reproductive work shown in the two preceding tables, a large amount of prison labour is required to develop the farming properties, to make boots and clothing for the inmates and officers, to carry on the domestic services, and to do the numberless things that are necessary in connection with the management of the institutions.