

provide for the making of boots, clothing, &c., for the inmates and the staffs, and the cooking, baking, cleaning, &c., that have to be carried out in connection with the management of the various institutions. From our returns we find that the daily average number of able-bodied prisoners throughout the year was 908·4.

When considering the increased expenditure of the Department during recent years it must not be forgotten that the amelioration of the conditions of prison life involves increased charges. The payment of wages to the dependants of prisoners has resulted, for instance, in additional expenditure to the extent of about £3,500 per annum. Other changes and improvements, together with the establishment of a probation branch to control the large number of probationers now placed under the Department's care, account for another £3,000; while the development of our various properties, necessitating the employment of prisoners and officers in remote districts, adds materially to our annual expenditure. The increase in the value of the public estate that this expenditure brings about cannot be represented in figures or in the balance-sheets that are now published, but, as has been pointed out in previous reports, the State's assets are being built up substantially each year, and when at a later stage a comparison is made between the values of the various properties when first acquired and the values after their development has been completed there will be a fuller understanding of the national importance of the work upon which the Department is engaged.

For the reasons stated it is quite impossible to make a fair comparison of the cost per head of maintaining prisoners in New Zealand and the cost under the prison systems of other countries. Payments to prisoners' dependants and of wages to prisoners on the scale we provide are practically unknown elsewhere, while the nature of our work is entirely different from that of other systems. Neither are other administrations usually charged with the cost of a Probation Branch. If, however, a comparison is made between the value per head of prison labour in New Zealand and in other countries it will be found that we have established a substantial lead.

Average Cost per Head of Prisoners' Rations from 1910 to the 31st March, 1924.

Year.	Total Expenditure on Rations.	Number of Prisoners.	Cost per Head.	Year.	Total Expenditure on Rations.	Number of Prisoners.	Cost per Head.
	£		£		£		£
1910 ..	9,322	901·73	10·33	1917-18 ..	15,522	941·11	16·64
1911 ..	8,494	863·26	9·83	1918-19 ..	16,473	1,003·43	16·41
1912 ..	9,405	919·35	10·23	1919-20 ..	17,294	965·07	17·93
1913 ..	9,754	893·24	10·91	1920-21 ..	18,766	965·03	19·44
1914 ..	11,555	979·81	11·79	1921-22 ..	17,962	1,075·34	16·70
1915 ..	15,099	1,008·12	14·97	1922-23 ..	16,803	1,103·95	15·22
1916-17 ..	15,092	920·15	16·41	1923-24 ..	17,441	1,145·46	15·23

Cash Receipts and Credits.

	£		£
1912	5,451	1918-19	21,654
1913	7,382	1919-20	31,177
1914	9,162	1920-21	39,136
1915	11,982	1921-22	49,866
1916-17 ..	9,867	1922-23	46,060
1917-18 ..	15,083	1923-24	53,178

TABLE I.—CASH RECEIVED AND AMOUNTS CREDITED TO THE PRISONS VOTE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1924.

	Metal, Gravel, Broken Concrete, &c.	Farm- and Dairy- produce.	Farm Stock.	Bricks.	Concrete Blocks and Tiles.	Timber and Fire- wood.	Tailoring, Boots, and Mail-bag Repairs.	Prison Labour employed for other Depart- ments and Local Bodies.	Road- works.	Prison Officers employed on Public Buildings.	Coir Mats.	Sundries.	Totals.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Addington ..	..	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	32
Auckland ..	15,558	..	..	..	140	..	3,266	91	..	..	123	323	19,501
Hautu ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	144	144
Invercargill ..	..	3,363	1,164	..	30	245	..	..	..	1,162	4	153	6,121
Napier ..	383	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	391
New Plymouth	1,227	136	..	..	..	..	..	27	..	..	..	26	1,416
Paparu ..	..	1,922	1,367	..	551	..	..	..	..	1,062	..	349	5,251
Point Halswell	..	227	183	..	..	..	..	..	..	136	..	97	613
Waikeria ..	..	4,124	518	..	..	..	..	1,365	..	..	..	622	6,629
Waikane ..	..	..	..	..	..	1,678	..	..	3,454	..	..	426	5,558
Wellington ..	1,580	21	..	17	104	15	..	763	..	221	14	386	3,121
Wi Tako ..	..	42	11	1,478	..	23	..	522	..	289	..	203	2,568
Minor gaols ..	1,573	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	81	1,654
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	149
Totals ..	20,321	9,849	3,245	1,496	825	1,961	3,266	2,768	3,454	2,870	141	2,985	53,178