

The fluctuations in the prison population from 1881 to 1919 inclusive are shown in the table below :—

Daily Average, 1881 to 1919.

Year.	Daily Average of Prisoners in Dominion Prisons.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.
1881	631·66	94·37	726·03
1891	459·22	58·39	517·61
1911	799·08	64·18	863·26
1912	855·28	64·07	919·35
1913	826·69	66·55	893·24
1914	916·09	63·72	979·81
1915	931·33	76·79	1,008·12
1916	895·99	82·78	942·77
1917	817·27	96·99	914·26
1918	896·98	84·97	981·95
1919	936·28	68·06	1,004·34

Prisoners sentenced by Military Courts-martial.

It has already been stated that the daily average number of military court-martialled prisoners in the prisons for the year 1919 was 192·80, compared with 222·928 in 1918, the decrease being caused chiefly by the expiration and remission of sentences and by the reduction in commitments after the termination of the war. The improvement in the figures for the two years is, however, more clearly indicated when a comparison is made between the number of prisoners of this class in March, 1918, and the average for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1920. In March, 1918, there were 293 military prisoners in our charge, while the daily average for the financial year ended 31st March last was 138·87. In August, 1919, the sentences passed upon 72 military prisoners who had been classified as genuine religious objectors by the Religious Objectors Advisory Board were remitted, and the men so classified were discharged without further penalty. Fourteen Maoris who were also serving terms for refusing to serve in the Expeditionary Forces were released in May, 1919, on the recommendation of the same Board, while in May of the current year a remission of six months was granted to all military prisoners sentenced in New Zealand. This resulted in a further 20 men being released, leaving only 14 prisoners of this class in the whole of the prisons on 30th June last. A few deserters have since been arrested and sentenced to short terms, but it is expected that when the next report is written only three or four men who have been sentenced by military Courts for serious civil crimes will remain in custody.

Generally speaking the conduct and industry of the military prisoners have been reasonably satisfactory. As stated in last year's report, there were mild attempts to strike, while even hunger-striking was resorted to at Waikeria by a limited number of the men, but these attempts to defy constituted authority met with little success. Adequate punishments were inflicted, and there was no recrudescence of the trouble.

The distribution of the military prisoners in all prisons and prison institutions of the Dominion during the past five years is shown in the table below :—

Military Court-martialled Prisoners in Civil Prisons.—Daily Average Number in Custody in the Principal Prisons of the Dominion during Five Years ended 31st December, 1919.

Institution.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.
Auckland	0·756	0·557	0·600	4·717	10·521
Invercargill	..	..	3·500	39·030	33·211
Kaingaroa	..	..	2·010	32·040	21·581
Lyttelton	0·016	0·016	0·032	0·065	0·201
Paparua	..	1·980	2·229	44·256	42·611
Roto-aira	0·410	0·104	20·700	22·250	15·031
Waikeria	..	..	10·400	58·300	52·301
Wellington	0·512	0·360	14·640	22·270	10·911
Wi Tako	..	..	..	..	6·441
Totals	1·694	3·017	54·111	222·928	192·80

EXPENDITURE AND RECEIPTS.

The gross expenditure of the Department under all heads for the financial year ended 31st March last amounted to £109,528, compared with £95,324 for the previous year, an increase