

Environmental conditions have a definite relation to delinquency and crime, particularly those conditions often associated with the haunts in our cities frequented by our criminals, but the healthful conditions on the farms, with the open air, extensive liberties, and strenuous but creative work, all make for virility and character.

Apart, however, from the above virtues of open-air work as far as the criminals themselves are concerned, it is found that those elements of competition which arouse hostility in the marketing of the product of prison labour are not evident in connection with primary industries. The market is sufficiently large to enable our produce to be easily absorbed without prejudicing other producers.

The following section of this report relating to expenditure and revenue give details of the financial results, and the appended reports of the officers in charge of the various institutions give details of their work, but there are several items that warrant special reference.

At the Waikeria Borstal farm 2,758 acres of land were taken over from the Mental Hospitals Department during the year for development. One-ninth of this area only was down in permanent pasture, one-half in temporary pasture, and the balance was in swamp, scrub, and rough state for draining, clearing, and cultivation. The total holding of the Borstal farm now comprises 4,815 acres.

Splendid progress is being made in the clearing of the land, and general farming in all its branches is carried out for the instruction of the inmates. Three dairies have been established, the standard of which is a credit to the Department. By judicious culling and careful feeding, the average yield per cow has year by year been brought up from 170 lb. of milk for the season 1921-22 to 364 lb. for the season 1927-28. The following graph, drawn by a Borstal inmate, discloses a position regarding which the institution may be justly proud, particularly in view of the fact that the herds are not raised from high-priced pedigree stock.

