

clearing and farm development. A considerable area of the swamp has been drained, and this has been proved to be particularly fertile for gardening. A substantial revenue has been obtained from the sale of garden-produce at the Wellington produce marts.

At Wellington, the Terrace Prison has been recently vacated and demolished, and the levelling of the site for school purposes is almost completed. A new prison at Mount Crawford is nearing completion, and it will be mainly a trial and remand prison. At present the main activities are confined to structural works and the formation of an access road to the institution. There are minor industries, such as soapmaking and lead-headed-nail making, carried on, besides repair shops.

At the Point Halswell Borstal Institution gardening and laundry-work for other Departments, and clothing repairs for the Defence Department, constitute the main industrial activities.

At the Wanganui Prison all the old prisoners are detained. Unfortunately the prison is located on a sand area, which is almost incapable of cultivation. Last year, by arranging for the cartage of several loads of manure, sufficient vegetables were able to be grown to supply the institution needs, but unfortunately there is insufficient means of employment to keep the inmates occupied and free from discontent. The acquisition of an alternative site is under consideration.

The Paparua Prison comprises a farm of 1,350 acres, of which 1,300 acres are freehold. This is mainly river-bed flat, but a fair portion is rich arable land and exceptionally high yields of produce have been secured. It is particularly good sheep-country, and the Department has a flock of Corriedales. The breeding of fat sheep is also undertaken, specializing in the early-lamb market. During the last two years the Department had secured up to £2 8s. per head for lambs in November. There is an extensive vegetable-garden, surplus produce being sent in to the Christchurch market. The main industry apart from the farm is quarrying gravel from the subsoil, which is comprised mainly of river-bed gravel deposits. A substantial and profitable quarrying business has been developed, the Department principally supplying gravel to the Public Works Department, local authorities, and for main-highway purposes.

At the Invercargill Borstal Institution there is a farm area comprised principally of reclaimed land, 759 acres of which are freehold and the balance leasehold. The land is particularly low-lying. Recently a pumping scheme has been installed, which has materially improved the condition of the farm. Dairying and sheep are the main farming pursuits. In order that the institution may fulfil a useful function from a vocational point of view a series of industrial and technical classes have been established to give inmates an opportunity of learning various trades, and during the year the lads have been afforded facilities for acquiring practical experience in connection with several structural additions to the institution.

At the Addington Women's Reformatory the chief activities carried on are cottage-gardening and laundry-work. Recently the Department equipped the laundry on modern lines to enable laundering for the Defence Department and Railway Department to be undertaken. This has proved a revenue-producing enterprise.

General.

An important feature of the administration has been the development of the internal production of the Department's own needs instead of purchasing requirements outside. This applies to clothing and equipment; and within the last few years, by adopting a system of inter-institutional transfers, the Department is now practically wholly self-sustained in the matter of its requirements of vegetables and farm-produce. Bakeries have now been established in nearly all the institutions, so that the Department is baking practically the whole of its bread requirements, thereby providing an advantage not only in the way of cheaper bread, but also by way of affording a further avenue of employment, and thus teaching a number of prisoners a useful means of livelihood which will assist them when released. During the year, for dietetic reasons, an arrangement was made for the issue, on alternative days, of whole-meal bread. By means of these internal economies a considerable saving has been effected. On bread alone an estimated saving of £2,300 per annum has been brought about.

EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE.

Table B sets out a Summary Income and Expenditure Account and Balance-sheet for the year ended 31st March, 1929, detailed amplification of which will appear in parliamentary B.-1 papers. In addition to this there is here shown a comparative statement of cash payments and credits to the vote during the year. Although the total average number of prisoners in custody during 1928-29 was slightly in excess of the previous year, the total net expenditure was reduced by £4,763, the average net Public Account cost of maintenance of prisoners being reduced by almost £4 per head, to £59 10s. Main contributing causes have been improved industry returns and rigid economy in the prisons and industries. The results are very satisfactory, and preliminary indications for 1929-30 show a promise of further decrease in net expenditure per head.

In comparing the expenditure for last year with the years prior to 1927-28 it should be borne in mind that capital expenditure on the pumice-land development farms at Hautu and Rangipo was previously charged to Public Works Fund. Such expenditure, amounting last year to £4,967 16s., now appears as a charge against the Prisons vote. Similarly, prison labour devoted to farm-development is temporarily capitalized, and no credit appears in the Department's annual accounts for what is undoubtedly an important annual accretion to a national asset of considerable magnitude. It is because no credits are received in this connection that a portion of labour has been kept on roadworks in order to keep down the Public Account cost.