

INDUSTRIES, REVENUE, AND EXPENDITURE.

The year ended 31st March, 1932, has been one of even more intense difficulty from an industrial and financial point of view than last year. Not only has there been a continued decline in quantity output of all industries, except those relating to farming, which seriously reflected itself in the revenue for the year, but also there was the unavoidable but drastic curtailment by Treasury of available monetary provision.

It is therefore very gratifying to be able to report that, notwithstanding having had to maintain a daily average of considerably over one hundred inmates in excess of the number for the previous year, the net total cost on Consolidated Fund was almost £4,000 less than for 1930–31. Although industry revenue declined by nearly £15,000, economies and reductions of £19,000 in gross expenditure (including salaries, £7,000) more than compensated for this. Actually the average cost per inmate showed a marked reduction, amounting to £7 per head, the net annual cost per inmate being £59.

Summary of Cash Payments and Receipts of Prison Vote 1924 to 1932.

Year.	Daily Average Number of Inmates.	Gross Expenditure.		Credits.		Net Expenditure.	
		Total.	Per Head.	Total.	Per Head.	Total.	Per Head.
		£	£	£	£	£	£
1924–25 ..	1,227·81	144,484	117·67	68,118	55·56	76,366	62·11
1925–26 ..	1,340·13	152,794	114·00	79,099	59·02	73,695	54·98
1926–27 ..	1,397·25	148,766	106·47	70,915	50·76	77,851	55·71
1927–28 ..	1,489·62	161,199	108·21	66,979	44·95	94,220	63·26
1928–29 ..	1,501·82	163,451	108·83	73,994	49·27	89,457	59·56
1929–30 ..	1,425·54	172,248	120·83	83,806	58·87	88,442	62·04
1930–31 ..	1,525·32	171,382	112·36	70,669	46·33	100,713	66·03
1931–32 ..	1,641·51	152,581	92·93	55,867	34·03	96,714	58·90

The departmental accounts and balance-sheet are shown as Table B in the appendix to this report as distinct from the cash statement in the foregoing table. These include all nominal and indirect charges for interest on capital, nominal rent of buildings, and buildings-maintenance expenditure from the Public Works Department's vote. Briefly summarized, the all-inclusive costs per prisoner for all real and nominal charges for each of the past three years are as follow: 1929–30, £85 11s. 7d. per head; 1930–31, £88 11s. 4d.; 1931–32, £86 9s. 7d.

Expenditure on Prisoners' Rations purchased (not including Tobacco).

While to some extent the declining prices of foodstuffs have enabled the Department to effect reductions in cost under this heading, it is noteworthy that the cash cost of purchased rations was reduced by more than £2,000 last year, although an average of 116 additional inmates were in daily custody. This economy was effected by progressively developing the system of supply of rations from the prison farms and gardens, by extending the supply of meat to the city institutions from the prison farms, by the purchase, in other cases, on specially advantageous terms of frozen meat, and by baking the whole of the Department's bread requirements in the institutions. The cost last year per prisoner for purchased rations was reduced to the very low figure of £8 10s. per head. This figure was actually lower than in 1914, when the cost was £11 16s., and at that time wholesale prices were 16 per cent. lower than in 1931–32. On a weighted basis to adjust the disparity in the price index numbers the cost last year would rank as £7 2s. as against £11 16s. in 1914. Expressed in terms of cost per day *per capita*, purchased foodstuffs now amount to only 5½d. per day, and including the value of produce from the Department's farms and gardens, the cost amounts to 9½d. per day.

This result is a distinctly satisfactory achievement, particularly in view of the fact that there has been no reduction whatever in the quantity or quality of the rations supplied, though, on the other hand, they have been made more varied, better balanced, and in some respects increased.

Capital Expenditure.

A natural sequence of events following the substantial increase in committals of persons to prison would be an increase in capital expenditure on the construction of accommodation; but, on account of the urgent necessity for curtailment of expenditure of loan-moneys, works of a capital nature have been kept down to a minimum, and with the exception of the erection of forty additional hutments at one of the farms, the increased number of prisoners has been dealt with by improvising accommodation in the existing buildings. This has made the matter of supervision and control rather more difficult, but it is hoped that the existing position will not be of sufficiently long duration to warrant the provision of additional permanent accommodation.