

1937.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# PRISONS

(REPORT ON) FOR THE YEAR 1936-37.

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

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The Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE to HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

Wellington, 17th September, 1937.

I HAVE the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report on the prisons and borstals of the Dominion for the year 1936-37.

I have, &c.,

H. G. R. MASON,

Minister of Justice.

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The CONTROLLER-GENERAL OF PRISONS to the Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present the annual report of the Prisons Department for the financial year ended 31st March, 1937, and the criminal statistics for the calendar year ended 31st December, 1936, together with the reports from the controlling officers of the various institutions administered by the Department. These supplementary reports narrate in detail the numerous activities carried on at the several institutions as part of the scheme of training and occupational therapy adopted for the various classes of offenders.

In last year's report two outstanding features were referred to—viz., the decline in the Dominion's prison population, and the marked improvement in revenue after the slump period through the productive use of prison labour. The year 1936 has witnessed a still further diminution in the number of commitments to prison, but the total revenue earned (£63,845) was slightly less than in 1935, although it was considerably higher on a *per capita* basis. It is satisfactory to note that the farming revenue increased by 33 per cent., but the earnings from the quarries and roadworks, which are more directly related to the man-power engaged, were less than for the previous year.

## PRISON STATISTICS.

*Decline in Receptions.*—The total number of receptions (3,813) has continued steadily to decline over the past five years, the aggregate number received in 1936 being 346 less than during the previous year. The number of distinct prisoners received, which eliminates consideration of inter-institutional transfers and receptions of short-sentenced persons more than once in the same year, was 1,790. This is 368 less than the number of distinct persons committed to prison in 1935, and, compared with 3,401 for 1932, represents approximately a 50 per cent. drop in five years. It is of interest to observe that the numbers still continue to diminish, the present number in custody being considerably less than the number at the 31st December last.