

addition to this, there is included in the annual appropriation for prison administration a large sum for farm-development and reclamation work which, strictly speaking, is of a capital nature, and although it is shown in the annual costs it is used in creating a valuable national asset which must be set off against the cost of prison administration.

An important factor contributing to the net increase in expenditure is that the labour available, after making provision for domestic and routine service, is so much reduced. The number of prisoners suitable for employment on the farms, roadworks, workshops, &c., is in much less proportion to the total musters than a few years ago. Further, the general efficiency of the labour is rather below the standards of the past. This has resulted in a heavy curtailment of quarry and roadwork activities, which previously contributed a considerable proportion of the Department's revenue. Farm work and other shop industries, which are essential to the Department's own domestic economy and which cannot be curtailed without involving the sacrifice of a measure of part expenditure, have been maintained by a judicious mechanization of these industries, and it is of interest to note that, besides having increased the vocational value of the work, with approximately half the number of prisoners that were in custody five and six years ago, the revenue last year was in the vicinity of £70,000, as compared with £56,000 and £53,000 for the earlier years mentioned.

The higher cost of salaries, due to additional appointments to staff following the introduction of the shortened week in conformity with Government's policy in 1936, and the general regrading increases approved by the Commissioners in 1937, now requires provision of £14,000 more annually under this head than a few years ago. A further feature involving additional expenditure is the general trend towards providing additional amenities in the way of a variety of food, cultural entertainment, and the vocational training of prisoners. The provision of improved and less drab-looking clothing to both male and female Borstal inmates has been a recent worth-while innovation.

The installation of radio has involved some additional appropriation, though in this connection it should be mentioned that nearly all the wireless sets were provided by voluntary effort.

INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT.

The following sets out the special features in connection with industries and development at the various institutions during the year :—

Mount Eden Prison.—The bootshop has been completely mechanized by the installation of up-to-date plant, which now enables the footwear for the inmates and for all mental hospitals to be supplied in better quality and more expeditiously than hitherto, and at the same time provides a valuable vocational training to the prisoners engaged on the work. In the clothing shop an electric cloth-cutter and several new mail-bag-darning machines were procured to cope with the steadily increasing post-office mail-bag repair work undertaken at the prison. In the prison kitchen a new oil-burning stove has been installed.

Waikeria Borstal Farm.—The orchard has now been improved by the installation of a high-pressure-motor spraying-plant and the construction of an up-to-date orchard sorting-room and storeroom. A new and improved farm store facilitates the handling of stores and enables a better check to be maintained on issues. The freezer installed in connection with the supply of meat and milk to Mount Eden is a valuable improvement and will result in considerable economy.

Waikune Prison.—Roadwork construction and maintenance was carried out during the year, but on account of the reduced musters it was found necessary to relinquish a considerable section of the roads previously maintained by the Department, and the work is now being confined mainly to the supplying of metal.

Hautu and Rangipo Development Farms.—The number of acres now in grass or temporary cultivation is as follows: Hautu, 4,464 acres; Rangipo, 3,201 acres.

A more general farm programme is being pursued with a view to consolidating the country already broken in. Further development-work is being held in abeyance for the time being on account of the diminished musters.

Point Halswell.—The laundry-work for other Departments is gradually increasing and is providing useful employment of vocational value to the inmates. During the year it was found necessary to install an additional electric ironing-machine.

Paparua Prison.—The reduced musters made the fulfilling of orders for quarry products difficult, but this has now, to a considerable extent, been overcome by the installation of a mechanical loader. This has increased the capacity of the quarry, and has also proved a convenience to carriers whose vehicles can be loaded with a minimum loss of time.

Invercargill Borstal.—The installation of a mechanized laundry equipment has proved very successful and has enabled a number of lads to be released for outside work on the farm. The farm, which has been built up from an estuary reclamation, had for a number of years presented the Department with a seemingly hopeless task to keep it reasonably dry for carrying healthy stock throughout the year. With the installation of modern electric water-pumps within the last twelve months a very big improvement in the general condition of the farm has been effected. With the establishment of a Shorthorn dairy herd it is hoped that the general conditions of the farm and its production will, from now on, show steady improvement. Attention has been given to the tepid heating of the swimming-bath, and this has undoubtedly proved an appreciated amenity.

HEALTH OF PRISONERS.

The health of the prisoners has been uniformly good throughout the year, there being no illnesses of an epidemic character. The daily average on the sick list was 12.88, which represents 1.5 per cent. of the total average in custody. There were 57 admissions to the hospital and there were 3 deaths during the year, 1 from cerebral thrombosis, 1 from heart-failure, and 1 from suicide by hanging.