

Province—always under protest, always without any satisfactory solution. From the first it would appear that in addition to having its fair share of all the troubles which attach to the question of prison labor, the Central Prison of Ontario has troubles which are peculiarly its own. It is essentially a short term prison. It takes none whose sentences are over two years, and the average term is but a little over seven months. From a productive labor point of view, this is a bad situation. Other penal institutions with which comparisons have been made have the lifers and long-term men who, unless hopelessly degenerate, can be trained to some degree of efficiency. Most of the Central Prison inmates are ignorant of any useful work, have untrained hands, and muscles, and are there, as I have said, for but a short term. This may account in part for the unfortunate history of those contracts. Down to 1st July, 1905, these contracts, with two exceptions, have resulted in bankruptcy to the contractor and actual money out of pocket to the Province. Central Prison commenced business on the 1st of June, 1874, with its labor contracted to the Canada Car Co. at 50 cents per day. The prisoners went to work. The Government failed to collect. The company failed to pay, and claimed amongst other things that the prison labor was not worth the price contracted for. This continued until 1878, when the Government of that day investigated under Commission, and the Commission reported that prison labor, having regard to the short term and inexperience, was worth at the outside 37 cents per day, and the account with the Car Company was settled on that basis, leaving \$46,000 still due the Government on the reduced value of the labor. The company failed to pay this also, and the account was settled, so far as the books of this Province were concerned, by the Province taking over the company's machinery and plant at the original cost price to the company, amounting, with goods on hand, to \$76,682. The greater part, if not the whole item, of \$46,000 was lost to the Province. The Government then entered into a piece price per year contract with Messrs. McMurray and Fuller for the manufacture of wood-ware. This contract was discontinued after four months' experience by the contractors refusing to go on manufacturing. This was followed by the contract with the Brandon Manufacturing Company in 1881, which was renewed and varied from time to time for many years. This contract has been pointed to as one more favorable to the Province than the Taylor, Scott contract. It reserves on its face 50 cents per day, but the terms and other conditions concerning that cut the amount down to 25 cents a day, and the fact is that even that 25 cents a day was not collected by the Province.

THE WARDEN REPORTS.

On July 9, 1890, Warden Massey, then in charge, reported in connection with this contract. He goes into the figures in some detail and says (I quote verbatim from his report):

"From the above it will be seen there is a shortage on the nine months' operations of \$3,598.79, equivalent to 25 cents per day on the prison labor employed, so that, instead of earning 50 cents per day each, and sufficient to cover the foremen's salaries, the earnings, per prisoner, after deducting working expenses, is only 24 cents."

During the operations of the Central Prison under these contracts the company all the time kept getting deeper and deeper into the Government's debt, until in 1893 the company threw up the work, owing the