

## LENGTH OF SENTENCES.

The following table shows particulars of the sentences imposed by the Courts during the past three years and the proportion of each group to the total number of persons received :—

Term of Sentence.	Number of Prisoners.			Percentage to Total Number sentenced.		
	1938.	1939.	1940.	1938.	1939.	1940.
Under one month .. .. .	873	964	774	39·3	38·5	35·2
One month and under three months .. .. .	514	642	527	23·1	25·7	23·9
Three months and under six months .. .. .	291	286	260	13·1	11·3	11·9
Six months and under twelve months .. .. .	161	194	210	7·3	7·7	9·6
One year and under three years .. .. .	287	320	362	12·9	12·7	16·4
Three years and under five years .. .. .	79	76	57	3·5	3·1	2·5
Five years and over .. .. .	19	23	11	0·8	0·9	0·5
Totals .. .. .	2,224	2,505	2,201	100·0	100·0	100·0

It will be observed from the above figures that proportionately there has been a steady diminution during the past three years in sentences under one month, while terms of one year and up to three years have increased. In spite of this, however, sentences under three months represented over 59 per cent. of the total number imposed during 1940.

## NATURE OF OFFENCES.

The following comparative table covering the past six years shows the number of offences classified under three main headings—offences against the person, offences against property, and miscellaneous offences. It will be observed that although there has been a decrease of 300 in the number of offences dealt with in 1940 in comparison with 1939, there has been little variation in the number of offences against the person or in offences against property.

Year.	Offences against the Person.	Offences against Property.	Miscellaneous Offences.	Total.
1940 .. .. .	238	789	1,174	2,201
1939 .. .. .	238	777	1,490	2,505
1938 .. .. .	197	740	1,287	2,224
1937 .. .. .	191	675	1,125	1,991
1936 .. .. .	189	599	1,002	1,790
1935 .. .. .	175	887	1,096	2,158

## NATIONALITY OF OFFENDERS.

The following table covering receptions during the past five years, classified on a nationality basis, shows that the number of New-Zealand-born offenders (exclusive of Maoris) decreased from 1,427 in 1939 to 1,257 in 1940, while the number of Maoris received increased from 310 to 330. It is regrettable that the number of Maori offenders continue to increase from year to year at a rate which is quite out of proportion to the increase in the general population. The large majority of the Maori offenders were under thirty years of age, their offences being mainly theft, assault, and crime of a sexual nature.

Year.	New-Zealand-born (excluding Maoris).	Maoris.	British and Foreign.	Total.
1940 .. .. .	1,257	330	614	2,201
1939 .. .. .	1,427	310	768	2,505
1938 .. .. .	1,248	252	724	2,224
1937 .. .. .	1,383	257	351	1,991
1936 .. .. .	1,022	199	569	1,790

## AGE OF OFFENDERS.

A further increase in the number of offenders under the age of twenty years is revealed by the statistics. During the past five years there has been a steady increase in the number of youthful offenders committed to prison institutions, while crime among persons over the age of thirty years shows a tendency to decrease. It will be observed from the table hereunder that offenders under the age of twenty numbered 203 in 1940, as against 96 in 1936, an increase of 111 per cent. This unsatisfactory