

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRISONS BOARD.

(ANNUAL REPORT OF) FOR 1940.

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

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.

Hon. Sir HUBERT OSTLER, Kt. (President); Sir DONALD MCGAVIN, Kt., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.);
Hon. JOHN ALEXANDER, C.M.G., M.L.C.; B. L. DALLARD, Esq.; THRO. G. GRAY, Esq., C.M.G., M.B., M.P.C.;
and ERNEST EDRIIDGE, Esq.

SIR,—

20th June, 1941.

I have the honour to forward herewith the report of the Prisons Board for the year 1940.
I have, &c.,

H. H. OSTLER,
President.

The Hon. the Minister of Justice.

REPORT OF THE PRISONS BOARD.

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1940.

THE Board has to report that during the year it visited each of the prisons, prison camps, and Borstal institutions in the Dominion. It dealt with a total of 1,025 cases at fifteen meetings held in Wellington and at the various institutions.

The following summary gives details of the cases considered and the decisions arrived at:—

<i>Cases dealt with.</i>		<i>Board's Decisions.</i>	
Persons undergoing Borstal detention ..	308	Recommended for release on probation ..	464
Persons sentenced to reformatory detention	336	Deferred for later consideration ..	496
Persons sentenced to hard labour ..	277	Petitions declined	21
Habitual criminals	57	Recommended for discharge	2
Habitual offenders	—	Discharged from probation	38
Habitual criminals for remission of head sentence	5	Recommended remission of head sentence	3
Probationers under Crimes Amendment Act	15	Modification of terms of probation ..	1
Probationers under Offenders Probation Act	27		
	1,025		1,025

In view of the continued shortage of paper and the need for all-round economy only a brief review of the Board's operations during the past year is intended.

During the year under review the Board considered 1,025 cases, or 4 less than the previous year; and it recommended a remission of sentence in 544 cases, as compared with 458 in 1939.

Comparison of the statistics with those of former reports show that the operations of the Board for 1940 have been attended with satisfactory results. The percentage of successes—*i.e.*, the offenders who “make good”—is well maintained. Of the total number released after undergoing sentences of Borstal detention and reformatory detention or imprisonment with hard labour, 22 per cent. only have been reconvicted or failed to comply with the conditions of their release, while of the habitual criminals released on parole since the Board commenced to function in 1911, 56 per cent. have been returned to prison for non-compliance with the conditions of release or for further offences. It is pleasing to report, however, that during the past year the Board was able to recommend the complete discharge from probation of a further 11 habitual criminals who have made good. In other words, the stigma of habitual criminal was removed from these persons. It is only where the individual, after a number of years on probation from prison, has satisfied the authorities by continuous good conduct and industry that he has rehabilitated himself that the Board does make such a recommendation. The foregoing percentage results are identical with those obtaining in the preceding year.