

Since 1917 the Board has dealt with the following hard-labour cases :—

*Table D.—Hard-labour Cases.*

Total individual cases considered	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	370
Number discharged from prison on recommendation of Board	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25
Number released on probation on recommendation of Board	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	95
Left the Dominion	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Recommitted for other offences	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Completed probation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1921	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42

*Offenders Probation Act, 1920.*

In terms of section 12 of the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, any person granted probation under that Act is permitted to apply to the Prisons Board for discharge from probation after half the term to which he has been sentenced has expired. During the year 17 applications of this nature were received by the Board with the requisite reports from the respective Probation Officers. After due consideration of the merits of each case the Board agreed to the discharge of 13 of the applicants. Particular care was taken to see that each probationer had complied strictly with the conditions imposed, including the restitution of moneys wrongfully appropriated and costs ordered to be paid by the Court, and that the Probation Officer's report was entirely satisfactory.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

The following table shows the cases considered year by year by the Board since its inception :—

*Table E.*

Year.	Habitual Criminals and Offenders.	Reformative Detention.	Hard Labour.	Probationers for Discharge from Probation.		Totals.
				Crimes Amendment Act.	Offender Probationers.	
1911 .. ..	65	105	..	..	..	170
1912 .. ..	159	259	..	..	..	418
1913 .. ..	157	403	..	..	..	560
1914 .. ..	117	332	..	..	..	449
1915 .. ..	101	273	..	..	..	374
1916 .. ..	102	322	..	..	..	424
1917 .. ..	95	329	14	..	..	438
1918 .. ..	87	201	92	..	..	380
1919 .. ..	97	471	115	18	..	701
1920 .. ..	74	467	75	32	..	648
1921 .. ..	75	564	167	18	17	841
Totals ..	1,129	3,726	463	68	17	5,403

From the table shown above it will be noticed that the number of cases considered in 1921 exceeded that of the previous year by almost 200. This substantial increase is largely accounted for by the extension of the powers of the Prisons Board under the Crimes Amendment Act, 1920, and the Offenders Probation Act, 1920. Where formerly the Board was restricted to the consideration of the cases of hard-labour prisoners whose sentences exceeded two years, it now, under the latest amendment to the Crimes Act, has had conferred upon it authority to deal with all hard-labour cases irrespective of length of sentence.

As previously pointed out, the question of the variation of the terms imposed by the Courts upon offender probationers has now been placed in the hands of the Board, and under the Act all such persons are eligible to petition the Board on completion of half their respective probationary periods. As will be seen, during the first year of the operation of this provision of the Act the cases of 17 offender probationers were dealt with, and everything points to this section being more frequently availed of as the provisions become more widely known to this particular class of offender.

Of the reformative-detention prisoners released by the Board since its inception the percentage of those who have "made good" remains much the same as that shown in the previous report. In view of the trade depression and the consequential scarcity of employment the fact that 75 per cent. of those released have "made good" must be considered highly satisfactory.

The habitual criminals are in an entirely different category from the reformative-detention prisoners. Almost without exception they have been passing in and out of prison for a number of years, and have generally become confirmed in their criminal habits before being declared "habituals" by the Courts. Under the circumstances the fact that 24 per cent. of those granted their liberty on the Board's recommendation have not again offended is an indication that the passing of the indeterminate-sentence law has had and is still having a satisfactory effect on a number of our more hardened offenders.