

I desire again to record the Department's appreciation of the helpful co-operation of the Magistrates who have taken up the chairmanship of the voluntary probation committees. Their continued interest in this work has contributed materially to the success of the scheme.

I also desire to thank the members of the various voluntary committees for the kindly interest taken in befriending and assisting probationers. The work calls for a sympathetic interest combined with a fine intuition, which are the practical means of opening up avenues of real understanding, thereby paving the way for constructive effort. The old idea of probation was purely a period of supervision involving certain restrictions of liberty. The modern idea is a closer friendly supervision with the idea of stimulating in the probationer a sense of responsibility and a desire to do better as a social unit, the primary object being the development of character.

I have pleasure in recording my deep sense of gratitude to the members of my staff, and to the police officers and others who act as Probation Officers for the helpful manner in which they have co-operated with me, as well as with the sympathetic way in which they have dealt with probationers coming under their care.

B. L. DALLARD, Chief Probation Officer.

REPORT OF FIELD ORGANIZER.

I have the honour to submit my third annual report on the probation system, more particularly respecting the working of the scheme recently instituted whereby the Department has availed itself of the services of voluntary committees associated with the official Probation Officers.

During the year I have visited each of the probation districts, and have renewed personal contact with members of the various committees. Despite the general unemployment which has been so marked during the year under review, thanks to the persistent efforts of the Probation Officers and the whole-hearted co-operation by the members of the various voluntary committees, it has been possible to place most of the probationers in employment.

Twenty-two voluntary committees are now in existence, and, without exception, the Probation Officers are loud in their praise of the cordial support and assistance given.

In some districts, fortunately, frequent calls upon the services of committeemen are not required to be made, but experience has shown that it is a distinct advantage to have an organization at call whenever the emergency arises.

The aim has been to enlist the services as committeemen of men with established business reputations and as widely representative as possible.

Only those who come into close contact and are attempting to encourage men who have fallen, and observe the fight that is often put up to redeem themselves, and witness the loyal support of their families to live down a foolish lapse, realize the inspiration and help that lie behind the friendly hand and word of advice from the Probation Officer or committeeman.

The low percentage of failures—that is, those who have failed to fulfil the terms of their probationary licenses and have again to be brought before the Courts, and the still smaller number unemployed—is a striking testimony of the efficiency with which the probation work is carried out.

The splendid efforts of the police Probation Officers in the country districts call for special mention. These officers, despite the many demands upon them in connection with their departmental duties, make time to give sympathetic consideration to probationers under their charge, assisting them to secure employment and encouraging them to reinstate themselves as useful citizens.

It is satisfactory to note that the scheme of encouraging the younger probationers to systematic saving is spreading throughout the Dominion. It is frequently found that, where probationers are required to make restitutional payment, they are encouraged to continue making payments after restitution is complete. These payments are lodged by the Probation Officers to a savings-bank account in favour of the probationer, and long after restitution has been completed probationers have produced with pride books showing substantial credit balances. In some instances the original delinquency has been due to a lad having more spending-money than is good for him. This has allowed him to make unfortunate companionships, and frequent undesirable places of amusement. Restitution, which obliges the repayment of his defalcation by claiming money surplus to his actual needs, is of considerable assistance in changing his thriftless habits and reforming his character.

I should again like to pay tribute to the valuable assistance given by the Stipendiary Magistrates of the Dominion who act as chairmen of the various voluntary probation committees. They have taken a keen personal interest in the work of probation, and have been of considerable assistance to Probation Officers in the carrying-out of their work.

GERALD M. SILVER, Field Organizer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. W. J. CAMPBELL, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I have the honour to submit my eighth annual report as Probation Officer of the Auckland District, for the period ended 31st March, 1930.