

1930.
NEW ZEALAND

OFFENDERS PROBATION

UNDER OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920, AND CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT, 1910
(REPORT ON OPERATION OF), FOR THE YEAR 1929-30.

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

The Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE to His Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

SIR—

Wellington,

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Chief Probation Officer on the operations of the Offenders Probation Act for the year 1929-30.

I have, &c.,

JOHN G. COBBE,
Minister of Justice.

The CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER to the Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present my annual report on the work of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act and the Crimes Amendment Act, together with the reports of the Field Organizer and the principal District Probation Officers, for the year ended 31st December, 1929.

Probation has been a part of our judicial machinery for the past forty-four years, having first come into operation on the passing of the First Offenders' Probation Act, 1886. The provisions were extended by the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, the scope of the Act having previously been restricted to first offenders. Three years ago the organization of the scheme was made more effective by the appointment of several full-time Probation Officers, and by the institution of a plan to enlist the active co-operation of voluntary committees to work with the Probation Officers in the care and supervision of persons placed on probation.

The statistical tables attached hereto and the subsidiary reports appended from the Probation Officers show that in the great majority of cases those admitted to probation have justified the clemency extended, and, with a few exceptions, have satisfactorily complied with the conditions of their probation. There were 1,886 cases dealt with during the year, made up of 708 new admissions and 1,178 on the books at the commencement of the year. Of the total number dealt with only 161, or a fraction over 8 per cent., failed to conform with the conditions imposed upon them by the Court.

A total sum of £4,513 19s. 7d., representing restitution-moneys and costs of prosecution, was collected from probationers during the year. This is an increase of 9 per cent. over the amount collected for the previous year, and is the largest amount that has so far been collected in any one year since probation was instituted. The total sum collected since the inception of the scheme amounts to £46,003, the greater portion of which comprises restitution to victims. This is a positive feature of probation as compared with imprisonment where the victim receives nothing and the offender becomes a charge on the taxpayer. The foregoing satisfactory results, particularly in regard to the small percentage of failures, bears witness to the efficacy of the methods adopted, and is due mainly to the thoroughness with which Probation Officers have carried out their duties and to the splendid assistance given by a large band of voluntary helpers.

The following comparative table shows that there has been a diminution in the number of persons admitted to probation during the past years as compared with previous years :—

Year.	Direct Admissions.	Sentence deferred.	Total.
1925	658	102	760
1926	656	108	764
1927	586	134	720
1928	615	154	769
1929	557	151	708

The above reduction in the number admitted to probation can be attributed to the exercise of a slightly greater reserve on the part of Courts in granting probation in cases where it has been considered that the deterrent element should be given more weight in imposing sentence. Early last year, in order to break down several youthful criminal gangs, the Courts had recourse to the imposition of Borstal detention. It is noticed in the criminal statistics that, while there has been a slight falling-off in the number of offences against property, there has been a small increase in the number of offences against the person. Probation is regarded as not always appropriate to offences in the latter class.

It is an accepted axiom that the more generous impulses of the law are not intended for cases involving deliberation or brutality. In considering the deterrent aspect of the treatment of criminals probation should not be regarded as tantamount to letting an offender off. It is not merely a gesture of clemency on the part of the Court, neither is it a form of procedure whereby undue consideration is given to the welfare of the offender to the entire disregard of the rights of those injured or of society generally.

Probation is a tried and proved method of treatment on common-sense lines. The high percentage of successes recorded above strongly support the adoption of probation wherever it can be suitably applied. Experience shows that more can be accomplished in the development of character and the provision of socializing influences, through the careful supervision of an offender in the community, where he is participating in the everyday economic struggle, than in the artificial atmosphere of an institution, no matter how well it may be conducted.

In view of this important fact grave responsibility rests upon Courts in considering this possible alternative to imprisonment. In England the Secretary of State, in a recent Home Office Circular to Justices, stated, *inter alia*, "He wishes to express an earnest hope that every Court, before committing a young offender to prison, will satisfy itself that this course is inevitable, and that no other method of treatment can properly be employed. . . . The impression that probation can only be applied to first offenders still seems to exist, probably owing to the fact that the first Act, which dealt with probation, was limited to first offenders. . . . Under the present law probation can be applied to subsequent offenders as well as to the first. Again, in some places the services of Probation Officers are seldom or never used for older offenders. The Courts concerned would appear to think that the probation system is intended only for young persons, and is not appropriate for older offenders. This is a misconception. . . . It is equally valuable in proper cases for lads and girls who have been at work for some years, and for adult offenders."

In considering the arguments in favour of probation, mention has already been made of the large sums collected from probationers for fines and restitution. This enforced saving for the purpose of making reparation to those injured is an important reformatory factor. Probation Officers state that in many cases they find that not only has it been the beginning of the habit of thrift, but also it brings home to the offender in a most salutary manner a fuller realization of the consequence of his lapse; but apart from all this, and apart from the obvious advantage of the saving of expense to the taxpayer which would be involved were the offender kept in an institution, there is another important human consideration—that is, probation obviates the necessity of severing domestic ties, which, besides making the problem of rehabilitation less difficult, saves considerable hardship and suffering to the innocent members of the offender's family. The granting of probation should thus be considered in every case where the offence is contingent more on circumstances than upon character.

Dealing with the Crimes Amendment Act statistics for the year under review, it is to be noted that during the year 246 cases, an increase of eighty-six over the previous year, were admitted to probation on the recommendation of the Prisons Board, and only twenty-four of these, which includes six habitual criminals, were recommitted to prison for breaches of their license. These institutional discharges are under the care of the Probation Officers and voluntary probation committees similarly to those admitted to probation by the Courts. The success of the cases paroled may be judged from the fact that during the quinquennium ended 31st December last, 853 prisoners, who had been sentenced to reformatory detention or hard labour, were released on probation, and during the five years only eighty-four, or 9·8 per cent., were recommitted for breaches of the conditions of their probation or for other offences; 26·4 per cent. only were reconvicted for lapses subsequent to discharge. These small percentages of failures, which are even smaller than for the previous year, not only reflect creditably on the reformatory influences of our present penal methods, but they bear witness to the effective working of our system of parole and after-care. This branch of the probation work is undoubtedly an exacting challenge to the social worker, for the man who welcomes an ex-prisoner to the world outside, who introduces him to his new life, needs a sympathetic understanding of the prisoner, and yet must have a practical knowledge of the world; but, more than this, he must be big enough to be the friend and not the patron.

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.

There appears a further reduction in the numbers remaining on the register, the figures being 160 as compared with 177 at the end of the previous period. The number received from the Auckland Courts are only two less than in the previous year, but 14 less were transferred from other districts. The total dealt with is 31 less than in the period 1928-29.

Appended are the complete figures for the year under review :—

Probationers remaining on register at 1st April, 1929	..	..	177
Probationers received from Auckland Courts	..	..	109
Probationers received on transfer	..	..	33
			— 142
Total dealt with	..	..	319

Of these there were—

Probationers completed probationary term	..	..	83
Probationers who died during period	..	..	4
Probationers transferred to other districts	..	..	57
Probationers left Dominion by permission	..	..	4
Probationers sentenced on original charge	..	..	3
Probationers sentenced for other offences which the termination of the probationary period antedated	..	..	6
Probationers who absconded and were not traced whose term expired during the period	..	..	2
			— 159
Total remaining on register at 1st April, 1930	..	..	160

Besides the 11 probationers who appear as defaulters in the foregoing list, there were 6 who came before the Court for breach of probation, and later reverted to probationary conditions, and 9 remaining on the register who absconded but have not been traced, making a total defaulters list of 26.

This number is approximately 8 per cent. of the total dealt with during the period, a result almost similar to that shown during the past four years' work under the Offenders Probation Act.

The amounts paid by probationers as restitution and costs of prosecution during the year were £928 1s. 10d. and £101 5s. 6d. respectively, a total of £1,029 7s. 4d.

This amount shows an increase of approximately £275 over that paid in during the previous year, the increase being accounted for largely by the fact that in many cases where probation was granted there were also fairly large amounts to be restored as restitution.

Much has already been said and written regarding the restoration of moneys by those admitted to probation, and it may be that these remarks may appear to be a reiteration of much that has been mentioned at other times. There can be no doubt, however, as to the good and lasting effect that the principle of restitution has on the conduct of men whose previous habits showed little appreciation of the virtue of thrift.

Apart from the restoration to the persons despoiled, there is a measure of justice in this condition of probation that may not be attained in punishment by other means. In very many cases dealt with, complete restitution has only been made as a result of that thrift, which, if it had been practised in the first place, would have precluded the temptation and fall into wrongdoing.

Apart from the purely monetary return or any increase or decrease in the amounts collected from year to year, it is very apparent in the course of these years that the principle of restitution is a very vital one in the probationary sense. It helps men to regain their self-respect, and in some degree is an incentive to forming habits of thrift and to redeeming character.

Of the majority of the probationers it may be said that they have done well, and, excepting those who came before the Courts or absconded, they have been well conducted.

There are always those in this as in every other class who are difficult to manage and who have to be repeatedly reminded of their obligations. On the whole, the probationers have given little trouble, and very many show by their actions their appreciation of the chances given to make good.

It is indeed gratifying to hear from probationers whose terms have expired so many expressions of appreciation for advice and encouragement given.

There are occasions when, due to lack of employment or other discouraging phase, probationers have been advised and encouraged, and thus helped along what is to them a rough part of the way.

Unemployment is still prevalent in this centre, and very many of the probationers have had considerable difficulty in this respect. It is regrettable that so many of the younger probationers, particularly, find it so hard to obtain steady employment. Lack of steady work has been a dominant factor in many of those cases which came before the Court.

The members of the voluntary committee have given assistance in finding employment. My thanks are due to the committee for their efforts and assistance.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—There was a slight increase over last year in the numbers reporting under this heading, the average being 63 compared with an average of 49 during the previous year. Of these probationers, 53 completed the term of probation, 10 left the Dominion by permission, 10 committed fresh offences, for which they were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, their licenses being cancelled also, while 1 absconded, whose license was in consequence cancelled. One probationer was returned to the Borstal Institution. One probationer, whose case was reviewed by the Prisons Board, was granted a discharge from probation. This man had severed himself from old associates,

and sought an entirely new environment with the assistance of social workers, and had proved by his conduct and industry over a number of years, that he had redeemed his character. Others, whose probationary terms are definite, completed their terms with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the Probation Officer.

There are failures, but it is a pleasure to see so many men who have completed terms of probation in this and in other years doing well. One meets them every day, engaged in various occupations, living ordinary lives, and, having profited by previous experience, together with the wisdom of added years, they are now good citizens.

As year succeeds year I am strengthened in my opinion that the difficulty in obtaining employment by those men released from prison on probation is, to a great extent, the cause of the further downfall of many of them, even of those whose previous record shows many offences. This has been much in evidence recently due to the prevailing unemployment, and in a few particular cases during the past year where men have committed fresh offences, for which they returned to prison. I am convinced that had they been able to obtain employment readily, they would not have transgressed, or that transgression would certainly have been deferred.

Summarizing the work during the year with the probationers in this class, it may be said that with some few exceptions their conduct was good.

Concluding my report, I have again to express my thanks for the keen interest in and appreciation of the probationary work that is shown by the Judges of the Supreme Court and the presiding Magistrates at the Courts in this centre.

Mr. J. W. HUGGINS, Probation Officer, Palmerston North.

The number of probationers under my charge during the past year has averaged thirty-six, one-third of whom have been discharged prisoners.

The securing of employment has been the biggest problem, but, in view of the scarcity of work, it is satisfactory to record only two unemployed at present. Of these two, one is mentally weak and cannot hold a job, while the other is unable to work through an injury.

It is also pleasing to record the number of successes among the probationers—only two failures who did not take advantage of probation.

I have felt the need in this town of some small fund, which could be administered by the honorary probation committee, as a stand-by to assist distress cases among probationers. There is no Prisoner's Aid Society here, and I have, therefore, to rely on the Charitable-aid Officer, who, by the way, has always been reasonable.

I am indebted to J. L. Stout, Esq., and members of the local probation committee, for advice and help rendered to me, and the Rotary Club for gifts of clothing and offers of other help. I am also grateful to the Police and Justice Departments for their very helpful co-operation.

Mr. T. P. MILLS, District Probation Officer, Wellington.

I have the honour to report that the period just closed compares favourably with other years.

The numbers dealt with show a slight decrease, 235 in all passing through my hands. The following particulars represent the year's operations: The year commenced with 108 reporting, 61 were placed on probation, and 66 were received from other districts; the removals numbered 126. Of these, 74 successfully completed the period of probation, 44 were transferred to other districts, 3 left the Dominion permanently, 1 was discharged by the Prisons Board, 2 were sent to a Borstal Institution, and 2 died, leaving 109 reporting at the close of the year.

It may be noted that the number transferred to the Wellington District exceeds that of new probationers, and is by far the largest yet recorded. It is accounted for by the fact that so many outsiders regard Wellington as a good field to secure employment. In this, quite a number were disappointed, and it has only been through much effort that these have been placed. In this connection we are again under a debt of gratitude to the members of the voluntary probation committee. The task of finding employment for probationers has been accentuated this year, and it is superfluous to refer to its cause. Employment has been more intermittent, and the number of workless probationers do not show so favourably as last year. However, it has been a very satisfactory experience to find that, with the exception of the confirmed idler, there has been a marked readiness to accept any work offering.

The lapses this year call for no special comment, except that they were fewer than last year. Four only were sentenced to imprisonment for subsequent offences—such terms being of short duration, 3 were fined, and the probationary term in 1 instance was extended. No very serious offences were committed by probationers, except that of the two youths mentioned above, who were sent to a Borstal Institution.

There has been a steady falling-off in the numbers of those who were granted probation, the figures for the last three years being 97, 75, and 61 respectively. This is accounted for partly by the Child Welfare Act, which has raised the age in the Children's Court, excluding from the operation of our own Act youths in their seventeenth and frequently some in their eighteenth year. The principal other cause was due to the frequency of breaking, entering, and theft charges, and the adoption of severer methods of punishment.

In spite of adverse conditions, the moneys collected have been well maintained, restitution-payments being represented by £600 5s. 3d., and costs of prosecution £66 11s. 2d., making a total of £666 16s. 5d., the largest amount yet received by this district.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—The numbers under this heading show an increase, 118 in all being accounted for. Thirty were reporting at the commencement of the year, 67 were received direct from the several institutions, and 21 were transferred from other districts. Thirty-two satisfactorily completed the terms of probation, 28 left for other districts, 7 left the Dominion, 9 were imprisoned for unsatisfactory conduct, and 1 absconded, leaving 41 reporting at the end of the period. The conduct of these men generally has been good, and the response to any consideration or interest shown has been commendable. One feels, however, that the restrictive and other special conditions of release are excellent in their deterrent effects, and usually there is a genuine desire to observe them. As in the previous class, the lack of permanent employment is a serious handicap in advancing ideals, and in this direction it is to be hoped that a distinct improvement in economic conditions will pave the way for greater efficiency. As usual, the Courts and police officials have been most sympathetic in meeting the claims of those who are granted probation, and merit our best thanks.

MR. W. H. DARBY, District Probation Officer, Christchurch.

It is my privilege to present my third annual report covering my work as Probation Officer in charge of the Christchurch district.

The past year has been a somewhat difficult one, due to the large amount of Court work that has been necessary. There is no need for me to emphasize the fact that we have dealt with a number of what might be termed "bad cases" during the year, and although only a very few of them have been released on probation, the time involved in preparing reports, &c., for the Courts has been very great. An unfortunate aspect of most of the bad cases has been the deliberate nature of the crimes committed, and Magistrates and Judges have found it necessary to inflict punishment that will act as a deterrent. With the exception of a very few, the conduct and work of probationers during the year has been excellent. We have had very little trouble regarding employment, and at the close of the year there were only two or three who were not in constant employment. In two cases I had trouble in collecting restitution, but a final warning gave the desired results. The banking accounts of many probationers continue to grow, and during the year many new accounts have been opened. One young fellow, who was only on probation for twelve months, saved just on £50, an illustration of what can be done with a little encouragement.

During most of the past year, Mr. E. D. Mosley, S.M., chairman of our voluntary probation committee, was away on furlough, and his place was taken by Mr. E. C. Levvey, late of Gisborne. I have to place on record the very great consideration shown by Mr. Levvey to our work and the reliance he placed on the Probation Officers' reports, both male and female. On several occasions he assisted me very materially by dealing with cases with which I was having a little trouble, in a very humane manner. Mr. Mosley returned to Christchurch before the end of the year and took up his work again.

The young fellows released from the Borstal institutions on license continue to make excellent progress, and we have had practically no trouble with them.

We have been instrumental during the year in committing to the mental hospital several men who otherwise would have gone to gaol. Once again the assistance given by the officer in charge of the mental hospital and his assistants cannot be overemphasized. I should also like to place on record the very great help the officer in charge of the Salvation Army Men's Industrial Home, Staff Captain Dry, has rendered. Working under very great difficulties, and beset by many and varied problems, he has never turned us down when a little temporary assistance was needed.

The social workers mentioned in previous reports have always been most sympathetic and readily rendered help when necessary.

During the year restitution amounted to £244 9s. 4d, and costs of prosecution £56 2s. 2d., making a total of £300 11s. 6d.

Probationers on register at 1st April, 1929	80
Probationers received from Courts	55
Probationers transferred from other districts	26
	— 161
Probationers completed probation	41
Probationers transferred to other districts	36
Probationers terms extended	2
Probationers committed fresh offences	13
Probationers defaulted	1
Probationers sentenced to Rotoroa Island	1
	— 94
Total number probationers on register at 31st March, 1930	67

Of the 76 Crimes Amendment Act probationers reporting during the year, 21 completed their term, 1 died, 1 left country by permission, 1 was admitted to mental hospital, 12 transferred to other districts, and 9 committed fresh offences, leaving a total of 31 reporting at 31st March, 1930.

Mr. J. GARBUTT, Probation Officer, Dunedin.

I have pleasure in submitting my third annual report on probation work in the Dunedin district, and append a statement setting out the numbers dealt with under their respective headings for the period ended 31st March, 1930.

First Offenders :—

Number on register at 1st April, 1929	..	..	..	..	69
Admitted to probation by local Courts	..	..	..	..	43
Received on transfer	..	..	..	..	13
					— 125
Less—					
Discharged on completion of period	..	..	..	..	47
Transferred to other places	..	..	..	..	22
Dealt with by Courts on original or subsequent offences and removed from register	..	..	..	..	6
Absconders	..	..	..	..	2
Discharged by Prisons Board	..	..	..	..	4
Left Dominion	..	..	..	..	1
					— 82
Leaving on register at 31st March, 1930	..	..	..	..	43

Releasees from institutional control :—

Number on register at 1st April, 1929	..	..	..	..	10
Released on license during year	..	..	..	..	23
Received on transfer	..	..	..	..	3
					— 36
Less—					
Discharged on completion of sentence	..	..	..	..	12
Transferred to other places	..	..	..	..	6
Returned to institutions on other charges	..	..	..	..	1
Licenses cancelled	..	..	..	..	2
Committed to Seacliff Mental Hospital	..	..	..	..	1
					— 22
Leaving on register at 31st March, 1930	..	..	..	..	14

Restitution—rightly regarded as one of the moral props of the probationary system—amounting to £171 18s. 6d., and £98 7s. 8d. costs of prosecution, have been collected during the year and represent an individual effort and self-denial of the utmost value in the stabilizing of weak, improvident characters in the habits of self-respect and thrift. No lesson so completely demonstrates to the average probationer's mind the futility of wrongdoing as when he is called upon to repay by gradual instalments the loss caused to another person through his folly or vice.

It was necessary to bring several defaulters before the Courts on charges of failure to comply with the conditions of their release, and in most cases the punishment meted out proved sufficient to impress them with a sense of responsibility towards their obligations.

In comparison with previous years the numbers of those admitted to probation show a slight decline. This is not accountable to a corresponding fall in the criminal statistics or to the fear that probation as a reformative measure has lost favour with the Courts, but rather, I would suggest, to the difficult and frequently chronic nature of the offences dealt with, together with a proper discrimination in preserving the benefits of probation for those whose efforts are likely to prove reasonably successful.

As mentioned in my previous reports the unemployment problem continues to react adversely to the success of probation, but often the very failure to secure immediate employment on release by the Courts has served to strengthen the bond between the probationer and officer, which, when culminated by success, has outlasted the official period and brought about a mutual appreciation of the difficulties to be overcome.

The scarcity of unskilled work in the city has made it necessary for several of the younger and, incidentally, more frivolous type of probationer being called upon to take up employment at public-work camps, &c., in remote country districts where they are invariably thrown into contact with adverse company, and, having lost the steady influence of direct control, return in due course showing little, if any, progress towards true reform.

I am thoroughly convinced that if probation has to be made to substitute detention, the control exercised must essentially be in the nature of close individual contact, with all the understanding and co-operation from interested parties than can be brought to bear.

Despite the fact that probation as a remedial and humanitarian measure has long since passed the innovation stage, there yet remains a rather widespread and lamentable misconception of its purpose and benefits.

Until it becomes more generally and seriously realized that it is something more constructive in effect and less of a judicial gesture equivalent to the offender being let off, the work will remain shorn of its rightful appreciation as a character-building process, beneficial alike to the individual and to society of which he is an integral unit.

Taken on the whole the work during the year may be regarded as progressive and satisfactory, notwithstanding certain failures which but serve to remind us that "'tis not in mortals to command success."

When one remembers the forces of ignorance, indifference, and neglect arrayed against us and then assesses the gains commensurate with thought and effort, there is certainly no need for pessimism.

Home visitation, time and circumstances permitting, has been carried out, and often the chance or uncertain visit to a home is more enlightening as to the causes of probationary failure than twenty visits made by the probationer himself to his official sponsor would be.

The voluntary probation committee continues to render valuable service, and those members whose zeal for the work has led them to undertake almost complete personal oversight over one or more probationers express themselves as amply rewarded by the obvious results of their beneficial influence and practical efforts on behalf of their charges.

Thrift as a factor towards wholesome independence and ultimate self-respect is encouraged among probationers, and in some cases full control over an offender's earnings is given by the Court, and, almost needless to state, invariably proves a moral and economic safeguard.

One of the most encouraging features of the work has been the number of visits and letters received during the year from ex-probationers, many of whom have long since passed from official control to a transmutative bond of good fellowship and helpfulness.

In passing I cannot afford to omit mention of the helpful spirit of co-operation with the Superintendent of the Invercargill Borstal Institution, whose efforts towards re-educating his charges are to be seen in many instances of completely changed outlook on life. It is a privilege to recommend these youths to prospective employers, and rarely has it been necessary to recommend the cancellation of their license and return to the institution for slackness or serious misdemeanour.

During the year a distinctly forward move was made by entering into office accommodation more befitting our needs, where under happy association with the executive of the Patients and Prisoners' Aid Society the work is carried out under reciprocal and advantageous conditions.

I would again place on record my appreciation of the courtesy and kindness shown me in my work by members of the local Bench and Bar, and those associated with them in the administration of justice, the ready co-operation of the social workers and members of the voluntary probation committee generally, for whose kindly and practical assistance I express most sincere thanks.

Mr. C. G. L. POLLOCK, Probation Officer, Invercargill.

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year ended 31st March, 1930, on the working of the probation system in the Southland district.

Offenders Probation Act probationers :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
On register at the beginning of the year	21	..	21
Admitted during the year	15	1	16
Received on transfer from other districts	15	..	15
Total dealt with during the year			52
Completed probation during the year	7	..	7
Transferred to other districts	21	..	21
Left Dominion with permission	1	..	1
For non-compliance with probation terms—			
Sentenced to two months' hard labour	1	..	1
Committed for one year to Borstal	1	..	1
Sentenced to reformatory detention on further charges	2	..	2
Sent to Salvation Army Home	1	..	1
Convicted and ordered to come up for sentence	2	..	2
Total removed from roll during the year	36	..	36
On register 31st March, 1930	15	1	16

The total number dealt with (52) is 9 less than the previous year's total. In 4 cases costs of prosecution amounting to £7 3s. 8d. were ordered to be paid. Towards this the sum of £5 1s. was received, of which £3 11s. was lodged to the credit of the Public Account, and the balance £1 10s. paid to the Police Department.

The restitution required to be made amounted to £98 5s. 6d., of which £41 3s. was collected and handed over in accordance with the orders made by the Courts.

Crimes Amendment Act probationers, and Prevention of Crime (Borstal Institutions Establishment) Act probationers :—

	Males.
On register at the beginning of the year	7
Received from Borstal Institutions during the year	2
Transferred from other institutions	9
Total dealt with during the year	18
Completed probation in course of the year	5
Transferred to other districts	7
Left Dominion with permission	1
Total removed from roll during the year	13
On register, 31st March, 1930	5

The total dealt with during the year is 4 in excess of the previous year's total, and includes no female probationers, while there are 2 less remaining on the roll at the end of the year. Although the number of probationers dealt with for further lapses is in excess of the previous year's corresponding figures, this must not be taken as reflecting upon the system so much as indicating a larger proportion than usual of cases wherein hopes of reclamation are low in the scale. Two of the offenders had previously served terms of imprisonment; 2 presented problems with which only institutional training could cope, while 1, a border-line mental case, had to be sent to a Home. Of those who completed their term satisfactorily it is gratifying to be able to report that, so far as is known, they are doing well. The past year has not been an easy one as far as employment is concerned, but, thanks to the efforts of the members of the voluntary probation committee and other helpers, valuable assistance was given to probationers in finding employment even if only temporary.

For the greater part of the year Mr. W. H. Woodward, S.M., was the relieving Magistrate, and I desire to place on record the kindly interest he took in this work, and his sympathetic understanding of those brought under his notice.

The services of Dr. Burns Watson have always been available for any cases where a medical examination was considered advisable in the offenders' best interests.

The personnel of the voluntary committee remains unchanged, except in the case of Mr. G. E. Pollock, who resigned on his removal from Invercargill. This gentleman was a most enthusiastic member, whose departure was much regretted. Mr. C. A. Davis, who has been appointed to the vacancy, is proving a worthy successor.

To the Court staff and officials of the Police Department I am indebted for the courtesies extended to me in my work.

Mr. H. N. RICHARDSON, Probation Officer, Gisborne.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ending 31st December, 1929.

On the register at the beginning of 1929, 33; received from other parts during the year, 6; transferred to other parts, 16; completed terms of probation, 19; on the register 31st December, 1929, 34; 1 probationer was rearrested and sentenced to hard labour at Mount Eden Prison.

I wish to thank those gentlemen of the Gisborne Probation Committee for their kindness in helping me during the year. My thanks are due also to Mr. J. Jackson, Labour Department, who took a special interest in placing men on railway-works, &c., round Gisborne and Wairoa. All the young men discharged from Prisons (Crimes Act) are doing well; some on stations outside of the town, others on farms near Gisborne. Of the 34 probationers on the register, only 2 are not in employment.

Mr. W. R. COOK, Probation Officer, Napier.

I respectfully beg to submit this my annual report for the year ending December, 1929.

During the year 21 males and 1 female were placed on probation, a slight increase on the preceding year, while 36 were received from other districts, 8 have been discharged, and 36 transferred, leaving on the register 15. During the year the calls on the voluntary committee have been very light, as, owing to local labour-conditions, strangers coming into the district, unless having special qualifications, had little or no chance of obtaining employment, and all that could be done for them was to send them where work was likely to be found. That I was fortunately able to do through a small fund controlled by the Mayor, Mr. J. V. Brown. Taking into consideration the mentality, youth, and other characteristics, the conduct of nearly all probationers has been fairly satisfactory, only in one or two instances have offenders had to be brought before a Magistrate for failure to report.

Again, I have to thank all those who have helped me when approached for assistance in obtaining work or information.

Mr. W. DINEEN, Probation Officer, New Plymouth.

During the period under review the provisions of the Act have been invoked to the fullest reasonable extent.

On the 31st December, 1928, there were 21 probationers on the books, 26 cases were received from the Court, and 10 were received from other districts. Of these, 28 are still on the books, 18 have been transferred to other districts, 3 were sentenced to a term of imprisonment for serious crimes, 8 have completed their term and have been discharged.

The majority of the cases received from the Court were young men under twenty years of age. Inquiries made before their cases were dealt with revealed the fact that continued attendance at billiard-rooms and dance-halls was the chief cause of their downfall, therefore special conditions were recommended, and in most cases imposed, to prevent the youths continuing their visits to these places, and the results have been satisfactory. To see that these conditions are reasonably carried out means a fair amount of supervision especially at night. However, the result seems to justify the effort. In most cases one has the co-operation and assistance of the parents, but occasionally one meets with opposition, and I regret to say that in one case where a father opposed me in an endeavour to get his son to keep better companions while on probation the result was disastrous to both father and son. In this case nothing would convince the father that his son was in the habit of mixing with evil companions, and when an endeavour was made to get the son out into the country the father successfully opposed the movement. The result was that after his term of probation was finished the youth hoodwinked his father and joined up with a gang of youths who were operating in this district. Consequently he received three years' Borstal treatment.

It has been my experience that to find a decent job for a youth does more to bring him to a sense of his responsibility than any amount of exhortation. One of the greatest difficulties of the year has been the finding of employment for probationers who have no country or farm experience. However,

with the assistance of friends and the press many jobs have been procured. Coincident with the lack of employment there has been a difficulty in collecting moneys ordered by the Courts to be refunded by probationers. They have, however, paid during the year £117 8s. 9d. costs of prosecutions, and £19 3s. for restitution to the victims of their offences.

Report on Probationers under the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910.—At the beginning of the year 1929 there were 14 men on the register, 11 men were received on transfer, 9 were transferred to other districts, and 3 completed their term; 2 men were permitted to leave the country, and 1 was confined to the mental hospital. Otherwise their conduct has been excellent. Firms and individuals have been generous in giving employment to this class of man in the district, and I am pleased to be able to state that up to the present the trust has not been abused, and the men are giving satisfaction and making good.

Mr. E. CHING, Probation Officer, Wanganui.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1929.

During the year there has been placed on the register 17 males and 1 female, being 8 males and 1 female less than last year. At the end of the year there were 14 males and 2 females on the register under the Offenders Probation Act.

The conduct of the probationers has been very good.

Two probationers absconded; one was rearrested and was sentenced to three months for his offence, and the other was an old man of no fixed abode. One committed suicide.

It is pleasing to be able to state that the amounts ordered to be paid are paid up well. Of course the payments are slow in many instances, but, taking the fact of unemployment and that many of the probationers have to make a fresh start, there is but little fault to be found.

Some of the probationers had trouble in obtaining work for a while, but, thanks to the members of the voluntary probation committee, who have done excellent work, every probationer has been placed. Our thanks are due to these gentlemen, and many others besides, for help in many ways; they having put themselves to a lot of trouble, loss of time, and other inconvenience to lend a helping hand. Thanks are especially due to Mrs. Patterson and Mrs. Boswell Williams for their care and attention to the female probationers.

During the year there were placed on the register of those discharged from prison 21 persons, being 11 more than last year. It is pleasing also in their case to be able to say that they have all done well except one.

Two who were on the register at the end of 1928 were arrested for other offences and returned to custody.

Miss A. J. SIMPSON, Probation Officer for Women, Wellington.

I beg to submit my third annual report as Probation Officer for Women for the City of Wellington and district, for the year ended 31st March, 1930.

Women offenders granted probation at local Courts during the year numbered 29. Four were received under the Crimes Amendment Act, 11 were transferred from other districts, and with the 18 on probation at the end of last year, 62 came directly under my control during the year. Of these, 19 completed probation, 7 were transferred to other districts, 1 left the Dominion, 1 died, and 1, who had been previously granted probation in Auckland, was sentenced to Borstal detention.

Girls who fail to appreciate the benefits of probation and who flout the law and the instructions of the Probation Officer require detention in an institution where, under a system of disciplinary supervision, they may be trained to work and their anti-social tendencies checked. The number of girls who fail to respond are, fortunately, few, but it is necessary that it should be understood that probation is not a means by which the defiant law-breaker escapes punishment. The four women offenders who were released under the Crimes Amendment Act have proved very satisfactory probationers. Evidently the term spent under prison discipline had a very salutary effect. They have all respected the terms of their release on parole, proved themselves anxious to work, and those who were placed in situations kept the same position during the whole term of probation.

Not so satisfactory are some of the girls granted probation in the local Court. The root of the trouble with the majority of them is that they have never been under proper control, and they do not take kindly to supervision of any kind. They have a low moral standard, an inordinate love of dress, a craving for pleasure and amusement, and, as they are frequently of a lazy, indolent disposition, the call of a mode of living which provides a sufficiency of money for amusements and dress is sometimes too strong for them. In dealing with this class of girl, whether in an institution or on parole, it is of greater importance to teach them how to work and to be useful members of the community than to provide them with means of recreation and amusement. There is an inclination to regard amusements and recreation as playing a very great part in the training of girls, delinquent or otherwise, but to teach the delinquent to work and to understand that her existence practically depends upon her ability to work is of paramount importance.

Yet, again, there are girls who after being granted probation never look back. These girls, who so appreciate everything that is done for them, make up for the worry caused by the others, and then one feels it is all worth while. It is gratifying to me when I receive a visit from a mother thanking me for what I have done for her daughter, and it is pleasing, too, when ex-probationers still continue to call and see me.

It is quite a usual thing for parents to come to me about a wayward daughter, and ask my help in controlling her. I have to tell them that I have no power under the law to interfere, but if the girl will come to me voluntarily, I am willing to do what I can. I am sure that many girls and parents could be helped if Probation Officers had authority to bring young people before a Magistrate or Justices of the Peace without charging them with an offence.

My thanks are due to the Magistrates, Court officials, and police for their courtesy and help.

STATISTICS.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920.

AGES AND TERMS OF PROBATION OF THE OFFENDERS ADMITTED TO PROBATION DURING THE YEAR 1929.

Age, in Years.	Six Months or under.	One Year.	Eighteen Months.	Two Years.	Three Years.	Four Years.	Five Years.	Total.
Under 20 years of age ..	4	67	1	57	24	..	..	153
20 and under 25 ..	5	70	1	82	12	..	1	171
25 „ 30 ..	5	34	2	32	12	1	..	86
30 „ 40 ..	9	36	3	36	7	1	..	92
40 „ 50 ..	2	9	..	14	2	..	..	27
50 „ 60 ..	3	11	..	6	2	..	1	23
60 „ 70 ..	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	4
70 and over ..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Totals ..	28	230	7	228	60	2	2	557

SUMMARY OF CASES DEALT WITH DURING THE YEAR 1929.

	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Number reporting on 1st January, 1929 ..	..	..	..
Admitted to probation during 1929 ..	1,028	150	1,178
Totals ..	1,585	301	1,886
Completed probation during the year ..	552	149	701
Discharged by Prison Board ..	11	..	11
Deceased ..	3	4	7
Left the Dominion ..	12	4	16
Absconded and not traced (term expired) ..	24	8	32
Resentenced on original charge ..	31	2	33
Committed further offences ..	52	11	63
Totals ..	685	178	863
Number reporting on 31st December, 1929 ..	900	123	1,023

BREACHES OF CONDITIONS OF RELEASE COMMITTED DURING 1929.

Failed to report, &c. ..	..	..	..	..	58
Committed further offences ..	..	..	..	..	74
Absconded (still untraced) ..	..	..	..	..	29
					161

COSTS OF PROSECUTION AND RESTITUTION MONEYS COLLECTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1930.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of costs of prosecution-moneys collected by Probation Officers ..	865	19	1
Amount of restitution-moneys collected ..	3,648	0	6
Total ..	4,513	19	7

OFFENCES FOR WHICH OFFENDERS RECEIVED THE BENEFITS OF THE PROBATION ACT DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1929.

Offence.	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Theft	319	60	379
False pretences	61	26	87
Breaking, entering, and theft	22	4	26
Attempted suicide	3	18	21
Breach of probation	13	4	17
Obscene language	10	7	17
Unlawful conversion of vehicles	13	3	16
Vagrancy	11	5	16
Mischief and wilful damage	10	5	15
Receiving stolen property	12	2	14
Common assault	11	3	14
Drunk in charge of a vehicle	12	1	13
Forgery	11	..	11
Disorderly behaviour and resisting	9	..	9
Breach of Bankruptcy Act	6	3	9
Carnal knowledge	5	1	6
Offences under the Post and Telegraph Act	5	1	6
Unlawfully on premises	5	1	6
Indecent assault	4	2	6
Obscene exposure	2	..	2
Indecent acts	2	..	2
Aggravated assault	2	..	2
Concealment of birth	2	..	2
Keeping a brothel	2	..	2
Bigamy	1	1	2
Breach of prohibition order .. .. .	..	2	2
Disobedience of maintenance order .. .. .	..	2	2
Failing to render personal service (Defence Act)	1	..	1
Stowing away	1	..	1
False declaration under Marriage Act	1	..	1
Released under section 15 (in lieu of bail)	1	..	1
Totals	557	151	708

CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT.

PROBATION STATISTICS.

Year.	Admitted to Probation by Prisons Board.				Recommitted for Breaches of Conditions of Release and for other Offences during Period of Five Years.				Convicted subsequent to being discharged from Probation.			
	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reformative Detention.	Total.	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reformative Detention.	Total.	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reformative Detention.	Total.
1925 ..	15	50	125	190	9	7	18	34	4	14	35	53
1926 ..	21	45	142	208	7	5	9	21	7	14	37	58
1927 ..	22	42	76	140	18	11	4	33	3	4	36	43
1928 ..	17	57	84	158	12	2	10	24	4	5	34	43
1929 ..	14	90	142	246	6	8	10	24	..	14	32	46
Total..	89	284	569	942	52	33	51	136	18	51	174	243

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