

As an analysis reveals that the average age of probationers admitted during the year to be thirty-one years, it will be readily recognized that more difficulty has been experienced in securing that measure of response so necessary to a comparative success, which response has been found to be more readily forthcoming through contact with younger types of adolescent or post-adolescent groups.

*Borstal Institutions and Crimes Amendment Act.*—The number released from institutional control during the year and remaining on the local register at date, shows a decrease. If a comparison is practically possible, it might be submitted that the class of younger releasee recently received represents a better type, and consequently response appears to have been more spontaneous than has been previously experienced.

The licenses revoked during the year represent types for whom probationary control had apparently no benefit and who were returned to the stricter discipline of institutional control.

*General.*—Where material necessities have been recognized, the practical interest of the local Patients' and Prisoners' Aid Society (Inc.) has been manifest, and in expressing our thanks to the society for its assistance and co-operation it is a pleasure to once again record the continuance of our harmonious association.

When called upon, members of the Voluntary Probation Committee have demonstrated their interest in the work in a variety of ways and are thanked for their helpful co-operation without which probation work could not be so effective.

Again I wish to place on record my appreciation of the helpful services rendered by my assistant, Mr. R. Watt.

Mr. R. WATT, Acting Probation Officer, Wellington.

*Offenders Probation Act.*—Number on register at 1st April, 1935, 110, admissions, 71, and transfers, 40, made the total 221; against this, completions 56, discharged by Prisons Board 3, defaulters 6, transfers 53, left 103 on the register at 31st March, 1936.

Moneys recovered: Restitution, £290 1s. 1d.; costs, £30 16s. 7d.: Total, £320 17s. 8d.

*Crimes Amendment Act.*—Number on register at 1st April, 1935, totalled 56, releases, 75, transfers, 13, gave a total dealt with of 144. During the year completions totalled 65, discharged by Prisons Board 2, absconded 2, left Dominion 3, licenses cancelled 8, transfers 26, leaving at 31st March, 1936, a total of 38.

Reference to the statistics for the year under review reveals a consistency in the total of offenders dealt with (221), although it is worthy of note that the number released on probation by the local Courts (71) is smaller than it has been for some years. The number dealt with for breach of probation represents an average for the district (3 per cent.) and appears to have largely concerned those inevitable types who fail to appreciate the advantages of advisory control.

As possibly experienced elsewhere, unemployment still proves a matter of some concern, and in regard to many probationers remains a problem. Though economically conditions would appear to have improved somewhat and many do find their way into suitable employment, the sustenance and employment schemes under the Unemployment Act have again proved of untold assistance in meeting this problem.

The sum recovered by way of restitution and costs of prosecution indicates an increase over the previous year and represents an encouraging fulfilment of obligations on the part of those probationers concerned. This has been accomplished in many instances by way of small, regular payments, although not without some measure of self-denial. For the most part, restitution, &c., outstanding at date is represented by those on relief work and others whose pecuniary means permit only of small instalments.

The general tone of conduct and response on the part of probationers has been well up to the average, and, apart from the failures enumerated, many were appreciative of the leniency extended to them by their release on probation with its attendant advantages, and are regarded as having responded accordingly.

*Crimes Amendment Act.*—From the point of view of criminal statistics, it is significant that the total dealt with under this heading (144) shows a decided decrease. On an average, the number of defaulters remains approximately the same (6 per cent.), being represented by those who committed further offences and others who apparently placed no value on conditional liberty and were returned to institutional control.

In the transfer from institutional to civil life, ultimate and true rehabilitation is, to a certain extent, bound up with the question of material welfare as may be exemplified in general employment. There is, however, evidence of occasions, not infrequent, where a genuine desire to "make good" has resulted in a measure of reform which, while reflecting credit on the probationers concerned, also gives encouragement and impetus, indicating the increasing potentialities of advisory control.

Many have expressed what is regarded as an earnest appreciation of the help and encouragement they have received through contact with the late Probation Officer, Mr. T. P. Mills, who, in and apart from his official capacity, was the means of encouraging many to attempt personal rehabilitation and a return to take their places in society and assume rightful responsibilities as useful members of the community.

The Voluntary Probation Committee and the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society are again thanked for their practical help and valuable co-operation, without which probation work in general could not altogether accomplish its end or be so effective. Likewise, the police and the Court officials are thanked for their willingness to assist, and courtesy at all times.