

1936.
NEW ZEALAND.

OFFENDERS PROBATION

UNDER OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920, AND CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT, 1910
(REPORT ON OPERATION OF), FOR THE YEAR 1935.

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, 18th August, 1936.

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 ended 31st December, 1935.

I have, &c.,
H. G. R. MASON,
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 working of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act and the Crimes Amendment Act for the year ended 31st December, 1935.

Statistical tables showing the numbers dealt with, the nature of the offences, and the ages of the offenders concerned are also appended. The epitomized reports of the District Probation Officers are annexed hereto.

During the year Messrs. T. P. Mills and W. J. Campbell, Probation Officers at Wellington and Auckland respectively, retired, the former on account of failing health, and the latter on superannuation. Both of these gentlemen were well endowed with common-sense, sound judgment, and a sympathetic understanding of human nature, qualities which eminently fitted them for their duties as Probation Officers. These men were held in high esteem both by the Bench and by those who were placed under their care.

The reports from the districts disclose a satisfactory year's work, and with few exceptions those on license have responded to the probationary treatment. The majority were found employment and appear to have successfully rehabilitated themselves. The number of failures during the year was approximately 8 per cent. of the total dealt with. Although a slightly smaller number of persons were admitted to probation than during the previous year (759 for 1935, as compared with 821 for 1934), it is interesting to note that, as a probable reflex of the improved economic conditions, the restitution moneys collected (£3,383) exceeded the amount collected in the previous year by £469.

The total sum collected since the inception of the scheme under which the Courts can order restitution now amounts to £63,575, representing reparation to victims and legal costs incurred.

Probation may be defined as the suspension of final judgment in a case, but involving a judicial warning and the giving of the offender an opportunity of readjusting himself and making amends whilst living as a member of the community, subject to conditions which may be imposed by the Court, and under the supervision and friendly guidance of a Probation Officer. Probation has the mercenary virtue that it is cheap. There is no expense for institutional maintenance and, as indicated above, the Courts can impose a condition requiring restitution to be made. It has, however, a more important social virtue in that it prevents a severance of domestic and family ties, and avoids the stigma invariably associated with imprisonment, which prejudices an offender in his ultimate rehabilitation.

Although by comparison probation must be admitted to be a lenient form of treatment, it is quite wrong to assume that it is equivalent to being "let off." This deep-rooted misconception, no doubt arising from the genesis of the scheme, which originally applied to first offenders only, for offences more or less of a venial character, has been to some extent responsible for probation not being utilized as extensively as it might be. There is definitely a disciplinary purpose in probation, and usually strict compliance with the terms of the

recognizance make exacting demands upon the probationer. It is, in effect, conditioned liberty, but the positive feature of it is that, although in some cases the restrictions on liberty may be irksome, they are imposed not so much as punishment as with the object of assisting the probationer in habituating himself to a more ordered and disciplined mode of living. Right living is largely a matter of acquiring good habits.

Although it would appear that probation might be more freely used, it cannot be granted indiscriminately. Regard must be had both to the offender and the nature of the offence, as well as to a consideration of the question as to whether or not the granting of probation in a particular case is in the best interests of society. Not only is it axiomatic that the more generous impulses of the law are not intended for offences involving deliberation and brutality, but if investigation of the circumstances of any case show that an offender, particularly a young offender, comes from bad home surroundings, the chances of successful probation are remote, and it is often preferable in such cases that the offender be removed from his old environment and placed in an institution in his own interests. One has observed instances of this in cases where Maori lads have been sent to Borstal. Had the Courts merely considered the intrinsic gravity of the particular offence probation would probably have been considered appropriate, but in an endeavour to arrest an outbreak of petty lawlessness in a district it has sometimes been found desirable to send a number of offenders away.

An extension of the policy of relieving the police from the duties of Probation Officer where they are too fully occupied with their police duties has been made, and the Department now has civilian Probation Officers at Hamilton, Hastings, Palmerston North, Nelson, and Timaru, in addition to the main centres. The Voluntary Probation Committees who are associated with Probation Offices in the main centres and principal secondary towns continue to render useful and helpful public service in assisting in placing probationers and maintaining oversight in selected cases.

The Department's Field Organizer has made periodical visits to each probation district for the purpose of maintaining personal contact with the various Probation Officers and Voluntary Committees, and through this means making more uniform the practice adopted throughout the Dominion. His reports indicate that the Probation Officers are doing effective work, and that the enthusiasm of the Committees in this important field of public service is well maintained.

In addition to these personal visits, the Department circulates to Probation Officers literature relating to probation activities overseas, which enables Probation Officers to keep abreast of modern thought on the technique of probation.

The Crimes Amendment Act statistics which deal with parole probationers—that is, persons who have been released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board after serving a term of imprisonment or detention—show that 342 persons were released on probation during the year. Four of these were readmitted to prison for breaches of the conditions of their license, and twenty-six, including eight habitual criminals, had their licenses cancelled for further offences. Considering the difficulties with which this class are faced in rehabilitating themselves, and the refractory material they are to deal with, the small percentage of failures must be regarded as satisfactory.

It has been suggested by ill-informed critics that the licenses of habitual criminals are cancelled without just and proper cause. It must be recognized that the very essence of probation is the strict observance of the conditions, and that looseness in this respect would render the system farcical, but, with regard to habitual criminals, Probation Officers realize the more serious consequences that ensue from the cancellation of their licenses, and in no case is the license cancelled without prior reference to the Chief Probation Officer and the concurrence of the Minister of Justice, who makes the appropriate recommendation to the Governor-General. An exceedingly liberal attitude is adopted if the breach of condition merely involves failure to report as required, although the reporting is an essential feature of the scheme, but it is exceedingly rare that a license of an habitual criminal is cancelled unless there has been a further criminal offence committed which has involved his reconviction by the Court.

The various prisoners' aid societies, Probation Committees, Women's Borstal Association, and Borstal Society have given valuable assistance in the after-care work of discharged prisoners. Practically the whole of this work is carried out on a voluntary basis, the Department making only comparatively small grants to the prisoners' aid societies and the Borstal Association.

The effectiveness of the after-care work may be gauged from the fact that during the five years ended 31st December last, 1,720 prisoners (excluding habitual criminals) were released on probation, and during this period only 148, or 8·6 per cent. were returned to prison for failing to comply with the conditions of their release or for further offences whilst on probation, and only 24·59 per cent. have again been convicted subsequent to discharge.

I desire to place on record the Department's appreciation of the valuable assistance given in this probation work by the large number of public-spirited citizens, referred to above, for their help to probationers and for their co-operation with Probation Officers.

I desire also to record my gratitude to my own staff for their loyal co-operation, and also to the Salvation Army officers, Police officers, and others who act as Probation Officers.

B. L. DALLARD,
Chief Probation Officer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. J. ANDERSON, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I respectfully submit the annual report on the probation work at this centre for the period ending 31st March, 1936.

Mr. W. J. Campbell, who had been Probation Officer of the Auckland District for the past fourteen years, and with whom I had been associated as Assistant Probation Officer throughout that period, retired on superannuation on the 9th March last. The work for the year under review, therefore, was under his control.

As Mr. Campbell's successor, and his associate for so many years, it is fitting that I should place on record an appreciation of the good work performed by him during the period of his service, work which was known and appreciated by the Judges, Magistrates, solicitors, social workers, and police of this city. This appreciation was shown by the eulogistic remarks made by the Magistrates and members of the Bar, social workers, and police on the occasion of Mr. Campbell's retirement.

At the beginning of the year there were 184 offender probationers on the books, 95 were admitted to probation during the year, and 42 were received on transfer, making a total of 321 dealt with. Of these, 72 satisfactorily completed the term of probation, 49 were transferred to other districts, 9 were discharged by the Prisons Board, 5 left the Dominion, 5 were imprisoned on the original charge, and 11 were sentenced for other offences, leaving 170 on the books at 31st March last.

In addition to the 16 defaulters shown, 1 probationer was convicted of breach of probation and resumed reporting, while 5 probationers failed to report and had not been located up to the end of the period. Three of the 11 probationers sentenced on other charges later resumed reporting.

The foregoing figures show a total of 22 defaulters for the period under review, that number being approximately 7 per cent. of the total number dealt with.

The total amount collected during the period in respect of costs of prosecution and restitution ordered to be paid was £694 2s. 7d. This represents £511 4s. 8d. restitution-moneys, and £182 17s. 11d. paid for costs of prosecution. These figures, in comparison with those shown for the previous period, indicate an increase of £227 3s. 8d.

While some of this may be put down to the fact that there was a larger aggregate sum ordered to be paid, much of the increase is a reflection of the slightly better earning conditions noticeable during the period.

Apart from the defaulters shown, the majority of the probationers behaved very well indeed, and showed by their conduct their appreciation of the chance given to prove themselves and to "make good." Experience in this work has shown that, in most cases, the chance given has proved to be a definite turning-point, and very many instances could be cited of past probationers who are now in steady work, many happily married, good citizens, who are assets to the community, and outstanding proof of the merit of the probation method of dealing with certain offenders.

Thanks are due to the members of the Probation Committee for assistance rendered in the work during the period.

Probationers on release from Prison and Borstal Institutions.—The total number dealt with was 209, of whom 72 completed the probationary term. Of those who completed their terms, all, with the exception of 4, whose conduct was doubtful, did so with credit to themselves and to the satisfaction of the Probation Officer.

Three probationers were discharged by the Prisons Board, 4 left the Dominion by permission, 1 was committed to the Mental Hospital, and 1 probationer committed suicide because of domestic infelicity.

One probationer in the habitual-criminal class who committed an offence was sentenced to a further term of imprisonment, and his license was cancelled. Seven who had been released on probation after serving part of their terms of reformatory detention, and 7 released on probation from Borstal Institutions again came before the Court, and were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment for further offences committed, while 5 probationers failed to report as required, and had not been traced up to the end of the period under review.

The foregoing figures show a total defaulters' list of 20. The number remaining on the register at the 1st April, 1936, was 80.

There are always those who, under any conditions, will again transgress, but, as has been the case for some years past, the difficulty experienced in obtaining steady employment has, in some degree, been the cause of the failure to "make good." The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society has done much to assist in very many cases, and much credit is due to that society for their invaluable assistance, which did much to lessen the problems of the Probation Officer in dealing with those released on probation.

The results obtained during the period under review may be considered very satisfactory in view of the difficulty in getting steady and assured employment by this class of probationer.

This report would not be complete without recording an appreciation of the courtesy and sympathetic understanding shown by the Judges and Magistrates, and of the assistance given by the social workers and the police at this centre.

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

It is my privilege to submit my report on the past year's work in this city under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920.

I think it would be correct to say that there has been a very big improvement all round during the year, more especially in the last few months. With the exception of those who are quite unemployable, very little difficulty has been found in placing men in employment, and I can say that the majority have stuck to their jobs and have worked really well. So far as their conduct is concerned, I have never known a year that was so free from complaints, and this is substantiated by the very small number who have again appeared before the Courts.

The amount collected during the year by way of restitution shows a considerable increase over the previous year's total, and, although it includes one large amount, is indicative of the improvement in the economic position. There has been no slackening-off of interest in our work, and all classes of the community to whom I have appealed for assistance have responded willingly and gladly. It is therefore extremely difficult to single out any one organization, but to the members of the Voluntary Probation Committee, the Salvation Army, Rev. Revell and his Guest House, our very best thanks are due. It is also difficult to express in mere words the very kindly interest taken by the Bench and Bar in our work and the assistance given by the different Government Departments in the city. Everybody has worked like one big team without a single discordant note. The outlook for the coming year is certainly very much brighter in view of the hoped-for improvement in the economic situation, and I am confident that a number of probationers who have been unable to meet their financial obligations will be in a position to do so.

The following are the statistics for the year: Restitution collected, £501 11s. 1d.; costs, £36 1s. 4d.

Probationers reporting at 1st April, 1935, 98. Probationers received from Courts, 96; transferred from other districts, 13. Completed probation, 97; transferred to other districts, 30; imprisoned, 9; left Dominion by permission, 1. Probationers reporting at 31st March, 1936, 80.

Probationers reporting under Crimes Amendment Act at 1st April, 1935, 47; completed their term, 39; imprisoned, 10; period expired while defaulting, 2. Returned to Borstal, 1; transferred to other districts, 8. Probationers reporting at 31st March, 1936, 49.

Mr. J. GARBUTT, District Probation Officer, Dunedin.

Offenders Probation Act.—The number on the Register at 1st April, 1935, was 69, admissions and transfers increased the total to 138, while the usual transfers to other districts and probationers who completed their term totalled 60. Moneys recovered: Restitution, £71 19s. 5d.; costs, £7 7s.: Total, £79 6s. 5d.

Crimes Amendment Act.—The number at the commencement of the year was 25, increased by 28 releases and 11 transfers, while sentences completed totalled 22, transfers 16, and licenses cancelled 2, leaving 24 on the register at 31st March, 1936.

While an examination of the figures for the year under review indicate a consistency in regard to the total number dealt with, there is also revealed a decrease in the number admitted to control by the local Courts, while the number discharged from probation during the same period shows a decided increase. This increase may be attributed to the fact that previously quite a number of offenders had been admitted to periods of probation of one year and less.

Reparation that has been made by way of restitution reached a total somewhat lower than is usual for this district, but nevertheless representing a comparatively satisfactory response on the part of those directly concerned. In this connection it might be interesting to mention that of the total amount of restitution ordered to be made during the past year the portion remaining unpaid at date, apart from transfers, is 17.2 per cent., represented by only one probationer. The remainder has been paid, in some cases, in a lump sum according to circumstances, but more often by small, regular instalments, the gleanings from the earnings of lower category workers.

The relief schemes in operation under the Unemployment Board, together with the practical and helpful co-operation of the local Unemployment Bureau, have rendered incalculable assistance in regard to securing employment. The main difficulty would appear to be that so many probationers have no particular trade or training in a special type of work, and consequently are more or less dependent upon the slender prospects of an already over-loaded labour-market. On the other hand, the comparatively improved economic situation has resulted in more probationers being placed in suitable employment. In consequence of this, the materialistic attitude towards probationary control so often met with and so difficult to dispel has perhaps been less in evidence than during the past few years.

With the usual and apparently unavoidable exceptions, the general response and conduct of probationers reached a more or less satisfactory standard, while the number of defaulters dealt with by the Courts was about the average for this district.

One noticeable feature of the past year's activities has been the comparatively small number of youthful types admitted to control by the local Courts. This, of course, may be a matter of some satisfaction in the community.

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.

Major H. HART, Probation Officer for Women, Auckland.

I am pleased to submit my annual report as Probation Officer for Women.

Probationers on register 1st April, 1935, 26, admissions during the year totalled 28, and transfers 6—the total dealt with being 60. During the year completions totalled 22, and transfers 2, leaving at 31st March, 1936, 36.

Moneys recovered: Restitution, £54 1s. 11d.; costs, £5 2s. 6d.: Total, £59 4s. 5d.

Very few of the probationers have given any trouble, the majority have done well, and have appreciated the help and advice given them.

Work has not been so difficult to obtain, and wages are better.

I desire to express my appreciation of the kindness and sympathetic understanding shown by Magistrates, Court officials, and Police Department.

Adjutant V. D. WOOD, Probation Officer for Women, Christchurch.

I have pleasure in submitting my annual report for the year ending 31st March, 1936.

The number on the register at 1st April, 1935, was 18, admissions during the year totalled 29, giving a total of 47 dealt with. During the period completions totalled 15, transfers 1, recommitments 2, leaving 29 on the register at 31st March, 1936.

Restitution amounting to £32 5s. 5d. was recovered.

The results of the year are very gratifying. A small number of probationers have failed to respond to the benefits afforded them from the system. With a tactful and sympathetic understanding of human nature much can be accomplished.

The amounts collected for restitution have meant a real sacrifice on the part of the probationers and speaks well of their determined efforts to re-establish themselves in a creditable way.

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

I beg to submit my eighth annual report as Probation Officer for the city of Wellington and district for the year ended 31st March, 1936.

The number of probationers reporting on 1st April, 1935, was 32, 21 were admitted to probation, 8 were received on transfer from other districts, 2 were received from Borstal and 2 from reformatories, making a total of 65 dealt with. Of these, 26 completed probation, 8 were transferred to other districts, 2 were reconvicted, and 1 absconded, leaving 28 reporting at 31st March, 1936. A total of £21 6s. 4d. was collected by way of costs of prosecution and restitution.

It is exceedingly difficult to collect restitution from married women in charge of a home—it seems hopeless to expect it. The question of unemployment and small wages is ever with us, but as I am able to send girls to the Women's Unemployment Bureau there is no question of any probationer being without food or accommodation. Any girl who reported there last year received 10s. per week and meals.

I am very grateful to the Justices of the Peace Association for a grant of money to help necessitous cases, also my thanks are due to the police and Magistrates' Court staff for their ready help.

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

I beg to submit my annual report as Probation Officer for year ending 31st December, 1935.

Received during year under the Offenders Probation Act, 33, and under the Crimes Amendment Act, 8. The costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected during the year amounted to £48 10s. 5d. Three probationers were dealt with during the year under Offenders Probation Act. One probationer had his license cancelled under Crimes Amendment Act, and was returned to prison.

I wish to thank the Probation Committee, also the Secretary, Y.M.C.A., for their kindness and help during 1935.

Employment seems easier to find, especially on farms and stations.

I had 36 on the register at close of the year.

Mr. H. ROBINSON, Probation Officer, Greymouth.

I respectfully present hereon the annual report on the working of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, together with the Crimes Amendment Act, for the year ended 31st December, 1935.

Offenders Probation Act.—Total dealt with, 8. Costs of prosecution and restitution-money collected was £38 5s. 6d.

I am pleased to state that all probationers have found employment in this district.

Crimes Amendment Act.—The number dealt with was 3.

The conduct of all probationers has been satisfactory.

Mr. M. McCORMACK, Probation Officer, Hamilton.

At the commencement of the year there were 28 probationers reporting, 6 were admitted to probation by the local Court, and 17 were transferred from other districts, making 51 dealt with. Costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected totalled £71 13s. 6d.

The conduct of all probationers has been very satisfactory, and the majority are in steady work. I appreciate the co-operation of the Voluntary Probation Committee, especially Mr. Findlay, who spares no effort to find employment for any probationer out of work.

Mr. J. R. ESSON, Probation Officer, Hastings.

I have the honour to submit my report on the working of the probation system in Hastings during the year ended 31st March, 1936.

Total numbers dealt with during the year, 41; at present on register, 25; transferred, 5; completed terms of probation, 16. Total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys paid, £44 10s. 10d. With a few exceptions the conduct of probationers has been most satisfactory, and the majority seem determined to lead a straight life for the future. Several of them have failed to make restitution, but I am hopeful that this will be paid during the coming year. It is pleasing to note that nearly every probationer is in employment of some sort. The working of the system has been most satisfactory.

Mr. R. W. ARNOLD, Probation Officer, Invercargill.

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year ending 31st March, 1936, on the working of the probation system in the Invercargill district.

Offenders Probation Act.—At the commencement of the year the register number was 23, transfers from other districts totalled 18, and new admissions 15, making a total of 56 dealt with. Transfers to other districts totalled 21, 2 were reconvicted, 15 completed probation, leaving 18 reporting at close of year.

Moneys recovered: Restitution, £46 16s. 5d.; costs, £12 7s. 8d.: Total, £59 4s. 1d.

Three of the probationers at present on the register have actually completed the term of probation imposed by the Court, but have not as yet paid all the restitution-money owing by them.

At the beginning of the year 8 were reporting under the Crimes Amendment Act. Ten were received from Borstal during the year, 5 from other institutions, and 5 were transferred from other districts, making a total of 28 dealt with. During the year 6 completed probation, 9 were transferred to other districts, 3 had their licenses cancelled, and 1 committed a further offence, leaving 9 on the register at the end of the year.

The conduct of probationers has, on the whole, been most satisfactory, although 2 probationers were sentenced to six months reformatory detention and three months hard labour respectively, one received a further term of six months' probation, and 3 had their licenses cancelled and were returned to institutions.

All probationers are employed, most of them working on small farms in the district, where, with a good home and a healthy life, they have every inducement to keep out of further trouble. A few are employed by the Labour and Forestry Departments at the camps and on relief works.

With only one or two exceptions, those probationers owing restitution-money have done their level best to discharge their debts, although some, earning low wages and having families to support, find this a very hard task.

I desire to express my appreciation for the services rendered by Dr. Burns Watson as Honorary Medical Officer; also to the members of the Borstal Society who, as Honorary Parole Officers, have interested themselves in a most practical manner in the welfare of the lads placed under their control.

Mr. T. STOCKER, Probation Officer, Napier.

I have the honour to submit my report on the working of the probation system in the Napier district for the year ended 31st December, 1935.

Offenders Probation Act.—There were 28 probationers on the register at the beginning of the year and 22 were received during the year, making a total of 50 probationers dealt with. Thirty-six probationers completed their probation or were transferred to other districts, leaving 14 on the register at the end of the year.

The conduct of the probationers on the whole has been good, and the working of the system has been very satisfactory. The majority of probationers are employed on relief work, and it has consequently been found difficult to collect the full amounts of restitution-money and costs of prosecution.

The amounts collected as restitution totalled £28, and the costs of prosecution totalled £27.

Thanks are due to the Voluntary Probation Committee for their assistance during the year.

Crimes Amendment Act.—There were 10 probationers on the register at the beginning of the year, 19 probationers were received from other districts, making a total of 29 dealt with. Twenty-three were transferred to other districts or completed probation, leaving 6 on the register at the end of the year.

Without exception these probationers have behaved exceedingly well and have caused no anxiety whatever.

Mr. M. CUSSEN, Probation Officer, Nelson.

I respectfully present my report on the working of the probation system in Nelson for the year ended 31st March, 1936.

Offenders Probation Act.—Total dealt with during the year 26, completed probation 11, total on register at 31st March, 1936, 23. Costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected during the year amounted to £102 2s. 1d.

I am pleased to state that the conduct of the probationers has been very satisfactory on the whole. At times it has been difficult to keep them all in work. There are several relief workers amongst them, but in spite of all this they have struggled hard to pay restitution-money where it was due.

I again wish to thank the Honorary Probation Committee for assistance given me during the year, and also the Salvation Army.

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

Report on the work of the Offenders Probation Act and probation under the Crimes Amendment Act in the New Plymouth district for the year ending 31st March, 1936.

Offenders Probation Act.—On register beginning of year, 32; admitted, 18; transfers, 4—total dealt with 54. Completed term, 16; transferred to other districts, 14; absconded, 1—leaving 23 on register at end of year.

Of the 18 probationers received from the local Court, 14 had committed offences of dishonesty. Of the remaining four, 1 was charged with assault, 1 with being illegally on premises, 1 with damaging property, and 1 with carnal knowledge.

Seven of the probationers were ordered to pay costs of prosecution, while eight were ordered to make restitution to their victims.

The sum of £36 13s. 5d. was collected from probationers during the year.

The conduct of the probationers was satisfactory with the exception of 1 man, who absconded. He was re-arrested and committed to prison for a term of two years' reformatory detention on a fresh charge.

Crimes Amendment Act.—The year commenced with a total of 12, while 15 on license and 4 on transfer were received, totalling 31 dealt with. During the year transfers to other districts accounted for 14, while 1 was readmitted and 12 completed their term.

With the exception of 1 probationer who committed a fresh offence and was returned to prison, the conduct of these probationers has been good.

Mr. H. COLE, Probation Officer, Palmerston North.

Offenders Probation Act.—Total dealt with, 80; total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected, £118 10s. 7d.

The conduct of the majority of the probationers reporting at this centre has been satisfactory during the year, but many have been unable to pay the restitution-money ordered by the Court, due to their having to rely on relief work for a livelihood and having families to support.

Mr. G. MCKESSAR, Probation Officer, Timaru.

I am pleased to submit my annual report on the working of the probation system in the Timaru district for the year ending 31st March, 1936.

The total number dealt with during the year (48) comprised 30 on the register at the beginning of the year, 11 admitted to probation, 2 transfers from other districts, and 5 from institutions. Of these, 20 completed their terms, 4 were transferred to other districts, and 4 were reconvicted, leaving 20 reporting at the close of the year.

The above schedule indicates that the number dealt with during the year was considerably less than during the previous year, when 64 persons were dealt with. It is very gratifying to note this decrease, and it is hoped that the improvement will last.

The conduct of the probationers generally has been most satisfactory, although in some cases they fail to realize their responsibilities to pay restitution.

Restitution collected during the year amounted to £19 18s. 6d. It is very pleasing to note an increase, particularly in view of the fact that there are fewer probationers on the register, and also that the majority are in very straitened circumstances.

I think that most of the probationers on the register in this district appreciate the opportunity given them to mend their ways, and consider that the probation system is of great value.

Mr. E. CHING, Probation Officer, Wanganui.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ending 31st March, 1936.

At the commencement of the year there were on the register 34 probationers and at the end of the year 26. During the year 26 persons were placed on probation, being 7 less than the previous year.

Restitution and costs amounting to £54 11s. 3d. have been collected during the year, and I have found that probationers will respond if a little latitude is given them, though there are some who have to be reminded of their obligations.

Generally speaking, the conduct of the 19 discharged from prison institutions and placed on the register during the year has been satisfactory.

Appreciative reference is due to the Voluntary Probation Committee, Magistrates' Court officials, and the Police for their kindly interest and co-operation.

STATISTICS.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920.

AGES AND TERMS OF PROBATION OF THE OFFENDERS ADMITTED TO PROBATION DURING THE YEAR 1935

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 ..	7	80	5	66	10	..	..	168
20 and under 25 ..	9	73	2	69	8	2	..	163
25 „ 30 ..	5	43	2	42	8	1	1	102
30 „ 40 ..	3	43	5	40	2	..	1	94
40 „ 50 ..	3	20	3	12	5	..	..	43
50 „ 60 ..	..	13	..	15	2	..	..	30
60 and over ..	..	1	..	4	..	..	..	5
Totals ..	27	273	17	248	35	3	2	605

SUMMARY OF CASES DEALT WITH DURING THE YEAR 1935.

	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Number reporting on 1st January, 1935 ..	1,192	182	1,374
Admitted to probation during 1935 ..	605	154	759
Resumed probation during year (previously struck off) ..	2	3	5
Totals ..	1,799	339	2,138
Completed probation during 1935 ..	611	147	758
Discharged by Prisons Board ..	20	..	20
Deceased ..	4	1	5
Left the Dominion ..	3	..	3
Absconded and not traced (term expired) ..	6	2	8
Resentenced on original charge ..	28	7	35
Committed further offences ..	35	8	43
Totals ..	707	165	872
Number reporting at 31st December, 1935 ..	1,092	174	1,266

BREACHES OF CONDITIONS OF RELEASE COMMITTED DURING 1935.

Failed to report, &c. ..	62
Committed further offences ..	83
Absconded (still untraced) ..	25
	170

COSTS OF PROSECUTION AND RESTITUTION-MONEYS COLLECTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1936.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of costs of prosecution collected by Probation Officers ..	445	16	6
Amount of restitution-moneys collected ..	2,937	4	0
Total ..	£3,383	0	6

OFFENCES FOR WHICH OFFENDERS RECEIVED THE BENEFITS OF THE PROBATION ACT DURING THE
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1935.

Offence.	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Theft	356	76	432
False pretences	47	16	63
Breaking, entering, and theft	37	1	38
Common assault	18	10	28
Receiving stolen property	20	3	23
Disorderly and threatening behaviour	18	4	22
Unlawful conversion of property	17	..	17
Mischief and wilful damage	12	3	15
Carnal knowledge	13	1	14
Forgery and uttering	14	..	14
Fraud and conspiracy to defraud	10	4	14
Obscene language	6	3	9
Offences under Unemployment Act	1	7	8
Indecent act	7	1	8
Attempted suicide	1	6	7
Intoxicated in charge of vehicle	2	4	6
Unlawfully on premises	1	4	5
Rogue and vagabond	3	1	4
Released under section 15 (in lieu of bail)	4	..	4
Indecent assault	1	3	4
Negligent driving	2	1	3
Procuring noxious drug	3	..	3
Bigamy	2	1	3
Cruelty to animals .. .. .	..	3	3
Cattle-stealing	2	..	2
Bookmaking	2	..	2
Trespass	1	1	2
Manslaughter	1	..	1
Breach of Licensing Act	1	..	1
Supplying illegal instrument	1	..	1
Keeping brothel	1	..	1
Default maintenance	1	..	1
Permitting unlicensed vehicle to be used	1	1
Totals	605	154	759

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