

The Board, having completed its circuit of the various Prisons and Borstal institutions during the year, has to express satisfaction at the continued progress being made by the Administration in the treatment of those under its care. The wise policy of constructive work, mostly in the open air, education, and the conditions generally, is doing much to effect the reformation of those who have come within the ban of the law.

The Board has at its disposal the services of specialists in psychiatry attached to the Mental Hospitals Department and regularly takes advantage of their assistance when there is any suggestion of mental abnormality.

The practical value of the assistance given voluntarily by the various after-care organizations and other members of the community, in the very important matters of employment and oversight, call for the Board's commendation.

Since the Board commenced to function in 1911 no less than 27,847 cases have been considered by it. This includes prisoners undergoing sentences of reformatory detention, hard labour, habitual criminals, Borstal inmates, and probationers for discharge from probation or variation of terms thereof. Dealing with these cases under their particular headings the results have been as follow :—

#### *Reformatory Detention.*

During the period from January, 1911, to December, 1939, 5,337 prisoners were sentenced to reformatory detention under the provisions of the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910. The number of cases that have been recommended for release or discharge is 4,284. In 655 cases prisoners were required to serve the full sentence imposed by the Court. Of the total number released after undergoing reformatory detention 27·9 per cent. have been returned to prison either for non-compliance with the conditions of the release or for committing further offences, 2·65 per cent. left the Dominion or absconded, 0·49 per cent. died or were transferred to mental hospitals, leaving 68·96 per cent. who have not further offended and who may therefore reasonably be assumed to have become useful and law-abiding members of the community.

#### *Hard Labour.*

Since the passing of the Statute Law Amendment Act, 1917, which extended the scope of the Prisons Board to the consideration of cases of prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment involving hard labour, 6,258 cases have been considered by the Board up to December, 1939. In 2,627 cases the prisoners were released on probation or discharged prior to expiry of the full time on the recommendation of the Board. Of this number, 1,617 completed probation satisfactorily, 150 were recommitted for other offences, and 54 were still reporting on probation at the 31st December, 1939.

#### *Habitual Criminals.*

During the period from January, 1911, to December, 1939, 641 habitual criminals were released on license on the recommendation of the Prisons Board. Of those so released, 56·78 per cent. were returned to prison either for committing further offences or for non-compliance with the conditions of probation. No offences are recorded against the remaining 43·22 per cent., and, allowing for those who have left the Dominion or died, this leaves 21·22 per cent. who remain in the Dominion and have not further offended.

#### *Borstal Cases.*

Since the coming into operation of the Prevention of Crime Act, 1924, 2,671 young persons have been detained under this Act, either by original commitments by the Court or by transference of youthful offenders from penal institutions or industrial schools. There have been 2,492 inmates released on the recommendation of the Board, 2,280 being on probation, and 212 on the expiration of their sentence. Of the total number released, 51 have been returned to the institution for non-compliance with the conditions of release, 216 were recommitted for further offences whilst on probation, and 460, or approximately 18 per cent. of the total released, have been sentenced for offences committed after discharge or on expiry of their period of probation.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given ; printing (710 copies), £2 5s.

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.— 1940.

*Price 3d.]*