

1947
NEW ZEALAND

OFFENDERS PROBATION

UNDER OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920, AND CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT, 1910
(REPORT ON OPERATION OF), FOR THE YEAR 1946

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, 31st July, 1947.

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, 1946.

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 the annual report on the operation of the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, and the parole system under the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910, for the year ended 31st December, 1946. I also append hereto a synopsis of each of the reports furnished by the principal district Probation Officers. These reports and the general statistics show that probationers, in the main, have responded reasonably satisfactorily to the opportunities afforded under the probation system, just over 10 per cent. of the total number of cases dealt with during the year being required to be brought up for breaches of the conditions of their probationary licence. The tables appended hereto show that a total of 992 persons were placed under the care of Probation Officers during the year, which is again in excess of the number recorded for many years past. Of the 919 formally admitted to probation, as distinct from the 73 placed under a deferred sentence, it is to be noted that 61 per cent. were under twenty-five years of age (31 per cent. being under twenty).

Probation is not confined to young offenders, nor, as originally conceived when the Act was first introduced in 1886, to first offenders, but may be used by the Courts as a means of dealing with any offender whose offence renders him liable to imprisonment and who, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, is deemed worthy of a chance and is considered likely to respond to probationary treatment. It is interesting to note that 3 persons over the age of seventy years were admitted to probation.

An examination of the table headed "Nature of Offence" reveals that the majority of cases dealt with under the Offenders Probation Act were for offences against property, no less than 73 per cent. being of a predatory nature. There were an unusually large