

If, in the matter of having a previous conviction, reformatory-treatment prisoners (less Maoris) be compared with distinct-convicted persons received during the year, other than those sentenced to reformatory treatment, the percentage proportions are as follows:—

	Reformatory Treatment.	Others.
Males	77.20	55.13
Females	44.44	74.67
Total	75.17	56.77

Among those sentenced to reformatory treatment, 9 were convicted of sexual offences, of whom 6 were under 25 years of age. With the exception of the above, and one case of arson, the offences of prisoners sentenced to reformatory treatment upon their first conviction were of an ordinary character not calling for special enumeration. Eighteen juvenile-adults among the above were, speaking generally, of the class upon whom the reformatory influence of the indeterminate sentence may be expected to react beneficially. It must not be presumed that persons with previous offences are hopeless—that that fact of itself makes it impossible to turn misdirected energy into a useful channel, or fit a man to adjust himself to a more moral environment; but the above table, read with the lengths of the head sentence in Table G in the appendix, demonstrates that a fair proportion of those sentenced to reformatory treatment are, as a class, no better than prisoners serving moderately long hard-labour sentences. With this may be said to go the corollary that no considerable number of those sentenced to reformatory treatment can be put into the same class. As far as possible selection has been made, and a number were placed at Invercargill, where they have open-air employment on the reclamation-works, and a number are tree-planting at the first-offenders' camp at Waipa, a place removed from public haunts and in an excellent climate.

The site of the projected reformatory at Waikeria, near Kawa, on the Main Trunk Railway, is admirably suited for the purpose. The land, 1,200 acres, is good, and practically all ploughable, and the gravel in the streams is of proper quality and sufficient quantity for making cement blocks for prison-construction. Buildings have been erected by paid labour for 20 prisoners and the staff, with the intention of making a start, and that start should be made without delay. The Government possesses a more valuable asset in this property than can be figured on a balance-sheet.

As giving some idea of the physique of those sentenced to reformatory treatment, the following calculations have been based upon the height of the European prisoners. Of the youths, estimating height for age, about 29 per cent. were undersized, and 14 per cent. were on the tall side. The average height, for what it is worth, may be stated at 5 ft. 5.95 in. The average height of those aged 21 years and over was 5 ft. 6.92 in. Ranging between 5 ft. 10½ in. and 6 ft. 0½ in. were 8.5 per cent., and 30 per cent. ranged in height between 5 ft. 1 in. and 5 ft. 5¾ in.

During the year the Prisons Board advised the release upon the following terms of 7 prisoners undergoing reformatory treatment: 4 women and 1 man on probation adjusted to the needs of each case, 1 man unconditionally, and a youth on transfer to the Burnham Industrial School. The recommendations were given effect to.

The question of release upon probation is an important one, whether it be under the First Offenders' Probation Act, or extended to habitual criminals, or prisoners undergoing reformatory detention. Without wishing to minimize the *role* of heredity, it must be acknowledged that environment, even in its most restricted and least scientific sense, plays a very important part in the production of the criminal and his continuance in that character. In gaol his anti-social proclivities are repressed—frequently the bad criminal is a “good prisoner”—the environment is simplified, his life is ordered for him, and he soon recognizes that it is hard to kick against the pricks. When in due course the Board thinks fit to recommend his release, all the time and labour will have been wasted if on being turned into a complex world he should find and follow the line of least resistance. In a world rendered less complex by placing him in an occupation for which he is fitted, in a suitable locality, and for a time keeping over him the hand of the law, unseen but lightly touching, sufficiently to steady him, he will find conditions to which he is able to adjust himself. Hitherto, release on probation has not presented the difficulties which one foresees, because, the number dealt with being comparatively small, it has been possible to find suitable occupation and to make arrangements for periodical reporting; but the time is approaching when more extensive and systematic arrangements must be made. The valuable work done by voluntary bodies, especially the Prisoners' Aid Societies, should be co-ordinated with any scheme introduced. The matter has been discussed with the Visiting Adviser, and the scheme he has drafted commends itself as being on practical lines, making provision as it does for seeking out employment in anticipation, instigating necessary investigations regarding its suitability, placing the probationer therein, reporting on his progress, and carrying out adequate supervision without having recourse to police surveillance.

Table C in the appendix divides the distinct-convicted persons received during the year according to degree of education. The influence of education on statistics of crime is interesting. It has been observed that, in general, the more liberally educated a people the less tendency there is to crime, especially to crimes of violence. (One excludes from the category of crime, for obvious reasons, the irresponsible acts of mentally defective persons.) In some countries endemic forms of crime, which have defied the severe penalties of the law for centuries, are of recent years, with the advancement of education among the people, tending to steadily disappear. Without exception, our older Warders and Gaolers when questioned have stated that they have not now to contend with the desperate and dangerous class of criminals with which they had to deal when first they entered the service. In this case due allowance must, of course, be made for more humane