

1916.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.
PRISONS BOARD
(ANNUAL REPORT OF) FOR 1915.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

22nd May, 1916.

I have the honour to forward herewith the report of the Prisons Board for the year 1915.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Justice, Wellington.

ROBERT STOUT, President.

REPORT.

DURING the year 1915 the Board held meetings at Wellington, Waikeria, Waipa, Kaingaroa, New Plymouth, Auckland, Lyttelton, Addington, Paparua (Templeton), and Invercargill. The following table shows the dates of the meetings, and the cases considered :—

Date.	Place of Meeting.	Cases considered of		Total.
		Habitual Criminals and Offenders.	Persons undergoing Reformative Detention.	
February 17 ...	Wellington ...	39	16	55
March 15 ...	Waikeria ...	3	56	59
„ 17 ...	Waipa ...			
„ 17 ...	Kaingaroa ...			
April 26 ...	Wellington ...	...	1	1
May 3 ...	New Plymouth ...	43	59	102
„ 5 ...	Auckland ...			
June 4 ...	Wellington ...	3	20	23
August 27 ...	„ ...	7	23	30
October 12 ...	„ ...	...	1	1
November 23... ..	Lyttelton ...	6	97	103
„ 23... ..	Addington ...			
„ 23... ..	Paparua ...			
„ 25 and 26 ...	Invercargill ...			
Totals ...	...	101	273	374

The total number of cases considered during the year was 374, of which 101 were habitual criminals and 273 prisoners undergoing reformative detention. Several of the cases were those of persons who came more than once before the Board: the total number of distinct cases being 329, of which 86 were habitual criminals and 243 reformative detention prisoners.

Thirty-six habitual criminals were recommended for release on probation, of which number 34 were actually released during the year. The number of prisoners undergoing reformative detention who were recommended for release on probation was 112, and 99 of these were so released before

the close of the year. Five prisoners serving sentences of reformatory detention were recommended for discharge and were so discharged during the year. Eight habitual criminals who had been released on probation were discharged during the year on the recommendation of the Board, and 4 persons with sentences of reformatory detention who had been released on probation were recommended for discharge and were so discharged.

Of the 99 persons undergoing reformatory detention who were released on probation, 33 satisfactorily completed their terms during the year, 17 were returned to prison for fresh offences or for failing to observe the conditions of their release, and 1 absconded.

Thirteen of the 34 habitual criminals released on probation were returned to prison during the year for fresh offences or for failing to comply with the terms of their release, and 2 absconded.

PRISON BUILDINGS AND WORK.

Great progress has been made at Waikeria with the permanent buildings, which are now nearing completion. The way in which almost all of the prisoners have worked on these buildings is worthy of praise. The road across the Waimarino Plains, a most useful piece of work, is nearing completion.

The work done by the prisoners in all the gaols is satisfactory, and there are few complaints.

In this time of "strain and stress" it is not fitting that demands should be made on the Executive Government save the needs are clamant, and members do not think it therefore opportune to refer to some requirements that will have to be met when the din of battle ceases.

On the whole the Dominion has much reason to be satisfied with the administration of its Prisons Department.

Signed on behalf of the Board,

ROBERT STOUT, President.

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