

1928.
NEW ZEALAND.

OFFENDERS PROBATION

UNDER OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920, AND CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT, 1910
(REPORT ON OPERATIONS OF), FOR THE YEAR 1927-28.

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, 10th August, 1928.

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 1927-28.

I have, &c.,

F. J. ROLLESTON,

Minister of Justice.

The CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER to the Hon. the MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

SIR,—

Office of the Chief Probation Officer, Wellington, 7th August, 1928.

I have the honour to present my annual report on the work of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act and the Crimes Amendment Act, together with the reports of the Field Organizer and the principal district Probation Officers for the year ended 31st December, 1927.

This report covers the forty-second year that the system of probation has been in force in New Zealand. It came into operation with the passing of the First Offenders Probation Act in 1886, the provisions of which were later extended by the Offenders Probation Act of 1920.

Last year the working of the probation system was rendered more effective by the establishment of voluntary committees, somewhat on the lines of those provided for in the Imperial Criminal Justice Act, 1925.

The reports from the district Probation Officers show that in the great majority of cases those admitted to probation have satisfactorily responded to this method of treatment. The somewhat depressed economic conditions and the amount of unemployment that has existed have made the task of rehabilitation more difficult, but, due principally to the splendid assistance from voluntary helpers, these difficulties have not proved to be insuperable.

The statistics appended hereto show that during the year 720 persons were placed on probation and came under the care of this Department under the provisions of the Offenders Probation Act. This was forty-four less than the number dealt with during the previous year. Of the total number, 586 persons were admitted to probation by the Courts direct, and 134 came under the provisions of the Act under the scheme of deferred sentence.

The Justice statistics show a total of 1,036 cases where convictions were recorded during the year and the offenders ordered to come up for sentence when called upon, but only in those cases where conditions are imposed by the Court concerning the payment of costs of prosecution or the making of restitution, or other special conditions to be observed by the offender, do they come under the supervision of Probation Officers.

The following is a comparative table showing the number of offenders placed under the supervision of Probation Officers during the past five years.

Year.					Direct Admissions.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
1923	..	..	..	..	572	43	615
1924	..	..	..	..	586	73	659
1925	..	..	..	..	658	102	760
1926	..	..	..	..	656	108	764
1927	..	..	..	..	586	134	720

It will be noticed that there has been a reduction on last year's figures of seventy in the number of cases committed direct by the Courts. Against this, however, there has been an increase in the number of cases of deferred sentence, and the net reduction of forty-four in the probation figures is to some extent explained by the increased committals to the Borstal institutions.

During the year under review there were 200 offenders between the ages of fifteen and twenty admitted to probation as compared with 243 in this age-group for the previous year. Apparently the Courts, in an effort to suppress the growth of delinquency among adolescents, have had recourse to a more deterrent method of treatment than probation. In Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin there have been several youthful criminal gangs whose exploits have ranged from motor-car thefts to burglaries, and it has been with the object of breaking up these combinations that the youthful gangsters have been sent for terms of discipline and training to the Borstal institutions.

To ensure that probation will be extended in all appropriate cases it is necessary to reiterate the gist of some of the observations made in my report for last year, showing the success that the extension of the probation system had made in England; and in this respect I would quote a statement made by Mr. Clarke Hall, the London Metropolitan Magistrate, and an authority on probation:—

“I feel convinced that knowledge and experience and a complete understanding will give a realization of the immense value of probation which no statistics can afford. It is worthy of note that those who employ probation most often and most extensively, like Sir Robert Wallace, at the London Sessions, are those most wholly and emphatically in its favour, and that adverse criticism of the system comes mainly from those who know least about it or who have experienced it under unsatisfactory conditions.”

The reduction in the English prison population, which was ascribed mainly to the increased use of probation, and the consequent saving to the community in the cost of prison-maintenance alone are important economic considerations; but these are secondary to the social advantages in the saving of the stigma of imprisonment to the offender, the avoidance of the ill influences of penal establishments, the possibility for individual oversight and care of the offender in the community as a useful productive unit, and the provisions for making restitution to the victim. The sum total of these advantages places the probation system in the forefront of modern methods of dealing with suitable cases of delinquency.

Probation is not claimed to be appropriate for all cases, but where the offences are due to circumstances rather than to character the probation system has been proved to be an effective means of dealing with them. The results in England, Scotland, on the Continent of Europe, and in America demonstrate the success of the system, while our own figures show that the number of failures are relatively small. The total number who committed breaches of the Offenders Probation Act, who for statistical purposes are regarded as failures, represent 8 per cent. of the total cases dealt with. Considering all the circumstances, particularly the prevailing economic conditions and the difficulty of finding employment for probationers, this figure must be regarded as highly satisfactory.

Another feature of the year's work has been the collection of £2,916 from probationers: £2,191 was restored to victims, and £725 represents costs of prosecution recovered. The total amount collected from probationers under the above heading since the inception of the scheme amounts to £37,261. The total number of probationers dealt with by the Department up to the 31st March last was 8,266, and as the cost to the State for a probationer is estimated at only 5 per cent. of the cost of imprisonment the general saving has been considerable. Reviewed from another angle, the statistics show that the average term is one and a half years, and estimating the *per capita* institutional cost at £60 per annum a small calculation will show that the saving to the community has been prodigious; but, as has already been suggested, of greater consequence from a social point of view is the fact that if a married man with a family to support is committed to prison the home is often broken up, the family is frequently reduced to a state of poverty and becomes a charge upon the charitable-aid authorities—there being no earnings for the first three months of imprisonment—and on discharge there is the difficult problem of rehabilitation and the delay in finding fresh employment. Under probation it is possible for this break to be avoided, and at the same time eliminate the almost inevitable hardship and suffering for the innocent members of the offender's family.

The effectiveness of the probation system is mainly contingent upon the earnestness with which it is carried out. If probation is to be really constructive it is essential that close and persistent attention shall be given in each case.

A review of the position in New Zealand shortly after I assumed control of the Department revealed that with the number of probationers each Probation Officer was expected to deal with it was wellnigh impossible for him to give the requisite individual attention, consequently, with your approval, full-time Probation Officers were appointed in the main centres, and arrangements were also made for the appointment of a Field Organizer to assist in the formation of Voluntary Probation Committees throughout the Dominion to co-operate with Probation Officers in the supervision and

oversight of probationers and to assist in finding employment. The ready response of citizens with a high sense of public duty who were willing to come forward and assist with this work was most encouraging, and the success with which the scheme has been launched has surpassed all expectations. In each of the centres, as well as in the main secondary towns, strong committees, representative of all sections of the community, and comprising leading business men, who are in a position of vantage so far as the finding of employment is concerned, are now available at call when required by the Probation Officer. The response of the Churches and other religious and social organizations was also most gratifying, and, following the English practice, the Department has linked up with these organizations, so that whenever a probationer is taken in hand not only is an effort made to arrange for oversight and to secure employment, but an attempt is made to link him up with a permanent organization that will continue to take an interest in him after the probationary period has expired. In each place where a committee has been formed the local Magistrate has kindly consented to act as chairman. This also follows the English practice. The interest taken by Magistrates is not only encouraging to the Probation Officer, but the acceptance of the office as chairman imparts a judicial sanction to the scheme that is in accord with the relationship of the committee as an organization of the Court.

A special committee set up by the Home Secretary in England when the scheme was first inaugurated brought forward the following suggestion :—

“ The Magistrates very often encourage a local interest in probation, and even, when opportunity offers, assist the formation of local committees and co-operate in the work. They can further help the Probation Officer by assisting him to get in touch with persons in different parts of his district who will aid in finding employment for probationers and who will inform him of social agencies qualified to exercise a useful influence on the offenders placed upon probation. . . . There could be no greater encouragement to a Probation Officer and no more potent means of contributing to the success of the probation system than for Magistrates themselves to show the interests of which we have spoken.”

Lord Hewart, the Lord Chief Justice for England, more recently went a step further, and said :—

“ Justices of the Peace would render a useful service if, when they released an offender on probation, they followed up the case and saw for themselves that the probationer was behaving himself and abiding by the conditions.”

At the end of the year under review there were 140 voluntary workers attached to committees in various parts of the Dominion dealing with male probationers, and in addition there were thirty ladies giving voluntary service in finding employment and maintaining oversight of women offenders and girls released on parole from the Borstal institutions. The reports from the Probation Officers show that this assistance is greatly appreciated both by the probationers themselves and by the Probation Officers. A perusal of the reports attached hereto will disclose several interesting examples of practical help being rendered at a crucial time, when the absence of such assistance would probably have resulted in the abandoning of good resolutions and a further lapse into crime.

Shortly after the appointment of the full-time Probation Officers, in order to ensure uniformity of methods and ideas, a conference of Probation Officers was arranged at Wellington, over which I had the honour of presiding, and a number of matters incidental to the system were discussed. Opportunity was taken by those who attended the conference to raise points connected with the various problems and difficulties that they had met with from time to time in connection with the administration of the scheme. The unanimous opinion of those attending was that the conference had been both helpful and stimulating.

Dealing with the Crimes Amendment Act statistics for the past year, it is to be noted that during the year 140 cases were admitted to probation on the recommendation of the Prisons Board, and only thirty-three of these, which includes eighteen habitual criminals, were recommitted to prison for breaches of their license. The success of the cases paroled may be judged from the fact that during the quinquennium ended the 31st December last 957 prisoners who had been sentenced to terms of reformatory detention or hard labour were released on parole, and during the five years only 120, or 12·5 per cent., were recommitted for breaches of conditions of their probation or for other offences, while 4 per cent. only were convicted for lapses subsequent to discharge. These figures not only reflect creditably on the reformatory influence of our present penal methods, but they also to some degree bear evidence of the effectiveness of our system of parole and after-care.

In conclusion, I desire to place on record the Department's appreciation of the helpful co-operation of the Magistrates who have taken up the chairmanship of the Voluntary Probation Committees. I also desire to thank all those voluntary helpers who have given both time and money in the furtherance of this important public service.

I have again pleasure in recording my grateful thanks to the members of the staff of this Department, and to the police officers who act as Probation Officers, for the zealous manner in which they have co-operated with me, as well as for the sympathetic way in which they have dealt with probationers coming under their care.

B. L. DALLARD, Chief Probation Officer.

REPORT OF FIELD ORGANIZER.

In submitting the following report on the formation of the Voluntary Probation Committee system of the Dominion for the year ended 31st March, 1928, three factors suggest themselves as of special importance.

The first is the dependence of the whole scheme on the calibre of voluntary assistance available. The ultimate success of the probationer largely depends on the committeeman directly concerned, for it is mainly through his enthusiasm and co-operation with the Probation Officer that the reformation of the probationer is most surely accomplished.

The second is the attitude that those who can give employment adopt towards a probationer seeking a position and the chance to prove himself. The satisfaction that comes from being instrumental in giving this chance and in assisting the effort made, coupled with ultimate successful accomplishment, is an experience that can be recommended to all employers.

The third factor is the extent to which religious and social organizations appreciate their responsibility to the young men and women dealt with by this Department. Some of these organizations are already making invaluable contributions towards the fundamental rehabilitation of probationers.

The effectiveness of the work of any individual committeeman depends in no small degree on the intensity of his interest in the case allotted to him, and on the extent to which that interest withstands the discouragements that are inevitable when such a complex problem as readjusting human behaviour is being dealt with.

The objective of this movement is well expressed in the words of a Probation Officer in a recent statement to his Voluntary Probation Committee:—

“Despite the dearth of employment of which unfortunately at the present time we have all too abundant evidence, it will be pleasing indeed for members to know that approximately 96 per cent. of our probationers are in work. While there is cause for much congratulation in this satisfactory statement regarding employment, there is, however, a further stage in which to a great extent the ultimate success or failure of the probationer depends. I refer to the real object of our work in stressing the need for after-care, or, in other words, a befriending process which tends to uplift the probationer and combat the anti-social influences into which his folly has allowed him to drift.”

At the present time twenty-two of these Voluntary Probation Committees have been established—four in the four centres and eighteen in the main secondary towns of the Dominion. As the necessity arises additional committees will be formed. Committees have already arranged for associates in the surrounding country districts, who will assist in securing employment and in supervising the after-care of probationers.

One of the most pleasing experiences in the organizing of this movement has been the co-operation of the Magistrates, who without exception have undertaken the Chairmanship of the various committees and are assisting their Probation Officers to make probation a constructive agency in the reformation of offenders.

The whole-hearted response of the 140 Voluntary Probation Committeemen throughout the Dominion and the assistance so readily given by the religious and social organizations have considerably lightened the heavy responsibility involved in launching the movement.

Personal Work.—In many cases it is only the incessant and painstaking efforts of our Probation Officers, backed by the members of Voluntary Probation Committees, who fully appreciate the privilege of being given this opportunity of acting as counsellor and friend to the probationer, can save the individual for the community. The Probation Officer must feel assured that this co-operation is spontaneous and enthusiastic. The number of cases under his charge, particularly in the four centres, and the many details for which he is responsible preclude him from being more than a passing agent in the life of the probationer. It is, however, a striking fact that there are many instances of a definite friendship being continued long after the probationary period has expired; this is proof of the valuable contact that the Probation Officer so often establishes with his charges. In the smaller towns, where the probationers are, fortunately, few in number, valuable work has been done by committeemen in finding employment for short-sentence prisoners on their discharge, and also in assisting in cases where the Magistrate had remanded men on the condition that if work could be found for them they could be released. On a number of committees medical men are serving—their assistance and advice is much appreciated by the Probation Officers, especially as the physical and mental health of the probationer is often the reason of his delinquency.

Confidence of the Court.—It must be realized in considering the cases of those probationers who have been again brought before the Court for failing to comply with the conditions of their probationary licenses that in many instances the Courts place such confidence in their Probation Officers that they entrust them with increasingly difficult cases and thus lower the percentage of successes. Another aspect of what might otherwise be considered as evidence of failure is that in many cases a warning or extension of the probationary period is sufficient to make the probationer realize his responsibilities. The Probation Officer, from his knowledge of the cases under his charge, uses his discretion as to which individual probationer shall be linked with committeemen for assistance and after-care. In many cases where relations and friends can be relied upon to help and not to hinder, it is advisable to encourage their co-operation.

Police Probation Officers.—Many of the police officers in charge of the secondary towns and country districts are acting as Probation Officers. The experience throughout the Dominion during the year under review has proved that the majority of these police officers, notwithstanding their many other duties, make time to assist and advise the probationers under their charge. This helpful co-operation is much appreciated.

Notes on some of the Cases.—The following examples will give some idea of the varied types that have been recently dealt with:—

A lad of twenty, the only son of a widow, was convicted of theft and as a result lost his employment: placed on probation. Put under the care of two committeemen, who interviewed the management of a factory and secured employment for him. Later he was linked with religious and social agencies; now quite contented and making good progress in his employment, the happiest relationship existing with employers and co-workers.

A discharged prisoner with twenty-two convictions for drunkenness spread over the past eighteen years, now on probation, was persuaded to take out a prohibition order. Work was secured for him in the country and arrangements made to bank his cheque when due.

A lad on probation from Borstal institution: Family history bad—parental strife and subsequent divorce. Took advantage of tuition in Borstal to learn wool-classing, obtaining all but his final certificate. A committeeman was advised of his case; his fees for the final certificate were paid; he was entered in the wool-classing section of the local agricultural show, and introduced to a wool-merchant, with whom there is reasonable prospect of employment in the near future. He joined the literary class of the W.E.A., and is now linked up with religious and social agencies.

A probationer released from the Borstal institution was placed in touch with several committeemen. In every instance he was kindly received. Work in congenial surroundings was found for him, and he is in constant touch with these gentlemen, visiting them in their own homes on occasions. In this case encouraging reports from both employer and committeemen have been received.

A probationer with wife and child has had much difficulty in obtaining employment and making payment in restitution. Through the kindly exertions of a member of committee he has been kept going in various casual jobs and has improved his position so much that he has recommenced paying his restitution-moneys. This has put a good deal of heart into the probationer and he now promises well.

A youth of seventeen came from the country to the city to seek work, stole clothing from lodgings: placed on probation. Committeemen secured congenial work for the lad; found board in good home, linked up with Church of his choice, opened savings-bank account: progress excellent.

A probationer who arrived on transfer from a southern city, quite down and out and very despondent, was referred to a member of committee, who was able to obtain temporary employment for him at his trade, to be followed later on by a permanent situation. During the interval he was content to work a few hours daily for the social-welfare organization for bed and meals. Now he is a much happier man, with a good position and prospects, and with every probability of becoming a decent citizen.

There are many instances in which saving has been encouraged, especially amongst the younger probationers, a number of whom now have savings-bank accounts for the first time in their lives. One Probation Officer, by keeping their savings-bank books for them, manages to encourage deposits and discourage withdrawals. This officer quotes a case of a lad who, working on a farm, saved in four months sufficient to pay his passage to South Africa, where his people resided.

Discharged Prisoners placed on Probation.—The difficulties of re-establishing the discharged prisoner can only be appreciated by those who are voluntarily making such heroic efforts to secure an opportunity for these men to live as they should. Nothing is more discouraging to the ex-prisoner than the experience of tramping the city day after day in search of employment, of having his hopes raised by a promise of consideration, and of meeting final disappointment when the prospective employer discovers that he has served a term of imprisonment. The best Probation Officer, with the united efforts of his Voluntary Probation Committee, cannot re-establish these men without the co-operation of those who can give employment.

A man who has spent thirty years as a prisoner has recently made this statement: "Whatever measure of reformation I won was due to my two friends" (here he names two men who acted in the capacity of our committeemen). "They took a chance with me—a long chance—and it will be long time before they regret it. I have learned to work, and some day may learn to like it. Yet it is so easy, and simple, and *safe*, and secure that I now wonder how any man coming out of prison could think of doing anything else. The pity of it is that so many ex-prisoners who do think of trying to work cannot get it."

An invitation to address the national convention of the Y.M.C.A. recently held in Christchurch, on the possibilities of co-operation, resulted in the following resolution being forwarded to this Department: "The convention expresses its readiness to co-operate with the officers of the Department in any work which such officers may feel the Association fitted to undertake."

GERALD M. SILVER, Field Organizer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

W. J. CAMPBELL, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I have the honour to submit my sixth annual report as Probation Officer of the Auckland District, for the period ended 31st March, 1928.

During the year 111 males were admitted to probation by the Auckland Courts for terms ranging from one year to four years. While these figures show an increase of 2 over the number admitted to probation in the 1926-27 period, a considerable falling-off is shown in comparison with the two years previous to that period. The completed records show a further reduction in the number remaining on the register, there being 30 less than last year's figures.

Appended are the complete figures for the year under review :—

Probationers on register at 1st April, 1927	222
Probationers received from Auckland Courts	111
Probationers received on transfer	58
	<hr/> 169
Total dealt with	391
Of these there were—	
Probationers discharged by Prisons Board	5
Probationers completed probationary term	95
Probationers transferred to other districts	77
Probationers left Dominion by permission	6
Probationers sentenced for other offences which the termination of the probationary period antedated.. .. .	10
Probationers who absconded and were not traced whose term expired during the period	6
	<hr/> 199
Total remaining on register at 1st April, 1928	192

The number of probationers who came before the Court again charged with other offences or with breach of probation was 20. To this figure there must be added 11 probationers who absconded and were not traced, 5 of whom still remain on the register. This shows a total defaulting list of 31, which is approximately 8 per cent. of the number dealt with throughout the period, this result being much the same as that shown over the previous two years working.

The sum of £844 3s. 9d. was paid in by probationers during the year, being £699 19s. 1d. for restitution and £144 4s. 8d. as costs of prosecution.

Owing to the prevailing unemployment considerable difficulty has been experienced by many of the probationers in making the necessary payments towards restitution or costs of prosecution.

A large number of the younger probationers have not been in steady employment, some of them over long periods, and many of them are dependent on their parents and other working members of the family. It is not possible to write in more than general terms regarding the effect of unemployment, but it may safely be assumed that lack of work has had some bearing on the conduct of those who came before the Courts for breaches and other offences, and in a greater degree has affected the payments towards restitution. Lack of employment is the primary cause for there being so many probationers on the absconding list. It was noted that during some periods as many as 40 probationers were either out of work or only casually employed for a few days at a time.

The members of the Voluntary Probation Committee, which was formed at the latter end of 1927, have assisted in so far as was possible to obtain employment for those probationers who were unemployed and who were unable to get work. Several probationers were placed in positions, but, due to the prevailing unemployment in this centre, it was manifestly impossible for members to assist in this respect in any greater degree. Efforts in this direction are still maintained, and my thanks are due to the committee for their efforts and assistance along these lines. In cases where there is a good home environment and supervision on the part of parents it has not been considered necessary or advisable to enlist the voluntary aid. There are many cases, however, where some interested and friendly oversight is essential to ensure success from a probationary point of view, and in cases of this nature considerable assistance is being given by members of the Voluntary Committee.

Apart from those probationers who were brought before the Court, the majority of probationers were well behaved and reported regularly, their conduct fully justifying the action of the Court in admitting them to probation.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—The average number reporting throughout the year was 35. Of these probationers, 27 completed the term of probation, 2 were discharged from probation by the Prisons Board, 7 committed fresh offences and were sentenced to further terms of imprisonment, 3 absconded and their licenses were cancelled, 5 left the Dominion by permission, and 1 was committed to the mental hospital, leaving 33 probationers in this category on the register at the end of the period.

With three exceptions those who completed the probationary term did so in a creditable manner, despite the fact that many of them found difficulty in obtaining steady employment owing to the prevailing scarcity of openings. Of the 10 probationers whose licenses were cancelled, 6 were in the habitual-criminal class. Failure in most cases was due to some extent to the fact that work was

scarce, but to a greater extent to the renewal of associations which, from their nature, inevitably led to further offences.

The two who were discharged from probation by the Prisons Board earned their discharge by their steady conduct and industry over a lengthy period. Both men had served several sentences prior to their release from prison. Owing to the nature of his employment, one of these men had to reside in a district where he came much into contact with old associates, from some of whom he had to withstand threats and intimidation, and it required no little determination on his part to resist, and it is pleasing to record that he succeeded, and, in his own words when informed of his discharge, "did it."

In many cases it is difficult for men released from prison to rehabilitate themselves, particularly so when employment is scarce, and it is pleasing to record that so many probationers in this category made good after release, despite adverse conditions.

In concluding my report I desire to acknowledge the very kindly interest and courteous treatment which it has been my privilege to experience from the Judges of the Supreme Court and the Magistrates of this centre. The interest taken in the probation work and the confidence shown, has been very encouraging.

Mr. T. P. MILLS, District Probation Officer, Wellington.

The year just ended has shown increased activity in many directions, the most notable being an increase of 50 per cent. in the numbers reporting at its close. There were 30 more dealt with during the year, and 20 more than last year transferred to this district.

The total numbers passing through my hands were 252. The year commenced with 92 offenders reporting, 97 were placed on probation, and 63 were transferred from other districts, several of these in quest of work. The removals were made up as follows: 60 successfully completed the period of probation, 49 were transferred to other districts, 3 left the Dominion permanently, 1 was discharged by the Prisons Board, 3 were imprisoned, and 3 sent to a Borstal institution, leaving 133 on the register at the end of the year. Several probationers were dealt with and punished by the Court for minor breaches of probation, and a few others for subsequent offences, such as idle and disorderly, obscene language, trespassing on a racecourse, the failures and partial failures representing 9 per cent. of the total dealt with. This shows an increase on last year's favourable figures, but it may be mentioned that the absolute failures do not exceed $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; the balance, comprising the partial failures, in most instances are doing very well, a Court prosecution proving very wholesome and effective. In the majority of cases where success has followed the initial prosecution little other than a reminder is sufficient, and it is noteworthy that not a single lapse has occurred amongst those whose names were suppressed by the Court.

As in the previous year, the stress of unemployment has been felt very acutely, and failures due to that cause may be expected. In spite of this adverse condition, payments have been comparatively well maintained during the year, £60 9s. 6d. being received in costs and £471 2s. 2d. in restitution.

The appointment of the Voluntary Probation Committee is already materially supplementing my efforts. In the past the help of business men and employers of labour had always been sought, and it was not difficult, therefore, to secure a band of gentlemen who would willingly give their time and services to further the interests of probationers. The official seal on their kindly efforts is much appreciated by the members of committee, and will bring into greater prominence the humanitarian side of probation work.

It is exceedingly satisfactory to see so many probationers doing remarkably well, and many a young man marks his term of probation as the starting-point of a completely altered life.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—These and those released from the Borstal institutions are, on the whole, proving quite satisfactory. There were 24 in all reporting at the beginning of the year: 66 have been received—50 direct from various institutions and 16 from other districts—a total of 90 having thus passed through my hands during the period. Of this number, 3 were discharged by the Prisons Board, 14 were transferred to other districts, 5 were imprisoned or returned to a Borstal institution, 7 left the Dominion, and 32 satisfactorily completed the term of their probation, leaving 29 reporting at the close of the year. Of these only two or three are giving any trouble. On the whole, the conduct of these probationers has been very good, and it is a pleasure to encourage men who are endeavouring to seize every opportunity to gain a place in the citizenship of the community and efface the stain of a faulty past.

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

It is my privilege to present to you my first annual report as Probation Officer of the Christchurch District.

Although the routine work was quite new to me I found the men we had to deal with just the same as had been dealt with in past years. The past year's work has been largely a matter of getting acquainted with everybody and everything, and from my point of view results have been very gratifying. One very important thing I learnt early in the year was that if one was to be successful in this work and get the best out of those who come in contact with me I would have to keep in very close personal touch with them all. This has been difficult at times, for there are those who are forgetful and wander away, with the result, of course, that they do not forget a second time. But on the whole it has been a real joy and inspiration to note the ready manner with which the majority respond to the lead given. I can definitely say that I have noticed a very marked improvement in the lives of

very many of the young men who come under my notice. Failures there have been, and it is to be regretted that the general make-up of some does not tend to the results we would desire. Despite the fact that the spectre of unemployment has been haunting many during the year, I am glad to say that we have not experienced a great deal of difficulty in that respect. There are always a few who will not work unless they are forced to, but with the remainder it has been an easy task, very largely due to the very great assistance rendered by the recently appointed voluntary Probation Committee, and many other well-disposed citizens. Without being at all pessimistic, I do anticipate a little difficulty during the winter regarding employment, but if prompt action is taken by the authorities concerned it will probably turn out all right.

To thoroughly appreciate the effort that many probationers are making to "make good," a study of the amount paid into this office by way of restitution is necessary. The sum paid in (£128 8s. 10d.) represents a slight increase over the previous year, and in view of the lean times we have been going through must be considered extremely satisfactory. Regarding costs of prosecution, &c., the sum of £125 8s. was paid, which also shows an increase over the previous year.

Dealing with the number who have come under our notice during the year, the following figures will prove interesting :—

Probationers on register at 1st April, 1927	..	..	..	..	114
Probationers received from Christchurch Courts	..	..	..	53	
Probationers transferred from other districts	..	..	..	25	
				—	78
Total dealt with	..	..	..	..	192
Of these there were—					
Probationers discharged by Prisons Board	..	..	..	2	
Probationers completed term of probation	..	..	..	39	
Probationers transferred to other districts	..	..	..	34	
Probationers left Dominion by permission	..	..	..	2	
Probationers sentenced for breaches of probation and other offences	..	..	..	17	
Probationer admitted to mental hospital	..	..	..	1	
Probationers defaulted	..	..	..	4	
				—	99
Probationers on register at 31st March, 1928	..	..	..	..	93

It will be seen that these figures show a slight decrease over the previous year.

Regarding those who have been released from different institutions under the Crimes Amendment Act and are reporting to this office, the position must also be considered quite satisfactory :—

Number reporting during the year 1927–28	..	..	..	..	58
Completed and discharged	..	..	..	23	
Left the Dominion	..	..	..	2	
Transferred to other districts	..	..	..	3	
Sentenced to fresh term of imprisonment	..	..	..	2	
Defaulted	..	..	..	1	
Admitted to mental hospital	..	..	..	1	
				—	32
On probation at 31st March, 1928	..	..	..	..	26

It will also be seen that there is a decrease in number of failures under this section, and it is to be hoped that this state of affairs will continue. With just one or two exceptions, these men have been making splendid efforts during the year, and it is quite noticeable that the State is making some effort to reform these individuals during the time of incarceration in the different institutions, despite the misleading statements made to the contrary. We have had little difficulty in getting these men to settle down in civil life again, and in several instances they are doing really well.

A report of this nature would not be complete if appreciation was not recorded of the very kindly interest taken by the Bench and Bar of this city in the Probation Officer's work, and the emphasis they place on his reports. I must also say that the officers of the Police Force and detective office have been very helpful during the year, and they, too, are taking a good deal of interest in our work. The very valuable assistance that has been rendered by the Superintendent of the Sunnyside Mental Hospital and his assistants in examining a number of cases at my request must also be recorded. Without doubt their work has saved a number of persons from undergoing terms of imprisonment, and enabled those concerned to give the right consideration to their respective cases. To those social organizations who have assisted us financially and otherwise our warmest thanks are tendered.

Mr. J. GARBUTT, Probation Officer, Dunedin.

I have pleasure in submitting my first annual report as Probation Officer for the Dunedin District for the year ended 31st March, 1928. While doing so, and after giving particulars of the numbers dealt with during the year, I shall give an idea as to the manner in which I have tried to make the work entrusted to me as effective as possible in the interests of all concerned.

Court probationers for the year are represented as follows :—

Probationers on the books at 1st April, 1927..	..	..	69	
Admitted to probation by central Courts ..	..	..	64	
Received on transfer from other places ..	..	..	14	
			—	147
Probationers who completed their period ..	..	..	35	
Transferred to other places ..	..	..	21	
Discharged by Prisons Board ..	..	..	3	
Sentenced for breach of probation ..	..	..	3	
Left the Dominion ..	..	..	2	
Deceased ..	..	..	1	
			—	65
Probationers on the books at 31st March, 1928 ..	..	..		82

The number absconding during the period has been 11, of whom 8 were subsequently traced and dealt with. It will thus be seen that the total number of defaulters has been very small indeed.

Restitution to the amount of £119 13s., excluding costs of prosecution, £33 14s. 7d., also received, was made by probationers during the year. Compared with the previous year these figures show a decline, but this is accounted for by the fact that, while there was a larger number of offenders involved, the individual amounts received were on the average smaller, and represent a greater effort in consequence of the trade depression through which we are passing making it more difficult for restitution to be made.

Licenses from Borstal and other institutions were as follows :—

Number of probationers released on recommendation of the Parole Board during the year ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Number at present reporting ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Discharged on the recommendation of the Prisons Board ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Returned to prison ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

Taking into consideration their youth and the removal of institutional restrictions and discipline, a remarkably good standard of conduct has been maintained by this section, reflecting credit as it does on the training and those responsible for their preparation for return to communal life. I am in the happy position to state that in almost every case employment was forthcoming and steady progress maintained.

The difficulty with regard to securing suitable, or, indeed, any, employment for offenders on their admission to probation, and thus laying the foundation for mutual confidence and constructive effort, reached an almost acute state. The formation of a committee representative of the organized religious, social, and business life of the community, with its object in befriending and guiding the probationer in his uphill fight towards rehabilitation, has so far proved of such assistance as to enable us to secure employment for no less than 96 per cent. of those placed under our care. Although it is only a little over six months since the Voluntary Probation Committee system was organized locally with the help of the Field Organizer, I am convinced already that we can look forward with pleasurable anticipation to much useful work from this committee under the sympathetic chairmanship of Mr. Bartholomew, S.M. To carry on the work successfully, country districts and employers will require organizing as an outlet for the surplus labour created as the result of certain types, for different reasons, being unfitted to remain among the greater temptations of city life. There are those who can best be assisted in work away from city life—on farms and similar classes of labour—but who at present have perforce to run the gauntlet of exposure and rejection by making application through ordinary channels and labour agencies in the city. To do our work thoroughly with a view to producing the best results, everything is done to keep in as close touch as possible with probationers, their employers, and also, where practicable, with their relatives and friends. Thus, with systematic and sympathetic work and without undue publicity, every effort is made to assist those under our charge to lift themselves to a higher level.

In conclusion, my report would be incomplete without placing on record my appreciation of the help and encouragement received at the hands of the local Bench and Bar and others associated with the Courts, also the members of the Voluntary Probation Committee, the Patients and Prisoners' Aid Society, and numerous others who have assisted me in my efforts.

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

I beg to submit my first annual report as Women's Probation Officer for the City of Wellington and district for the year ended 31st March, 1928.

The following figures show the number of probationers dealt with during the year, viz. :—

Probationers on register at 1st April, 1927 ..	..	..	..	28	
Admitted to probation during the year ended 31st March, 1928 ..	..	..	..	24	
				—	52
Completed probation ..	..	..	..	14	
Received permission to leave Dominion ..	..	..	..	2	
Committed to Pakatoa Island ..	..	..	..	1	
Committed to prison for breach of probation ..	..	..	..	1	
				—	18
On probation at 31st March, 1928 ..	..	..	..	..	34

Of the above, the two probationers who left the Dominion have gone to Australia with their families. The probationer at Pakatoa Island is a drug-addict, and at the request of her relatives was committed to the island for two years. The probationer serving a sentence of imprisonment was sentenced in Auckland in 1926 to five years' probation for false pretences. Of the girls who are serving terms of probation under the Offenders Act, the majority are domestics or waitresses. Some of these girls have been in the same situation throughout the year. Others, never having been trained to work and craving for excitement, move from one situation to another every few weeks. I have kept in touch with their homes, and, when possible, with their employers.

Prevention of Crime.—Two girls are on license under the Prevention of Crime Act, and are very satisfactory probationers. Industrious, thrifty, amenable, they are in regular employment, and steady application to work, as is well known, counteracts a tendency to delinquency. Both girls are church-goers, have linked up with the Y.W.C.A., and have Post Office Savings-bank accounts. One woman released on license under the Crimes Amendment Act was on probation for a few months before finally completing her term. This probationer behaved in a satisfactory manner. When one considers the difficulty of the position in which an old offender finds herself on release from prison—no associates of the right class to create a new and wholesome environment—it is not surprising that some of them drift back into crime. It is in this work of rehabilitating the fallen that the practical social worker is required. Old offenders, as well as many of our young delinquents, respond to the appeal of the genuine and sincere Christian social worker who can approach them in the right manner. It is considered by many that the most successful social workers among women offenders are those who have gained an understanding through hard experience of the lives and habits of the working-class women, from whom, unfortunately, the great majority of such offenders have sprung.

In quite a number of cases parents, employers, and the Magistrate have sought my assistance with wayward girls, and I have endeavoured to do preventive work with, I hope, satisfactory results.

A Voluntary Probation Committee has been formed during the year, and it has proved most helpful, the women doctors providing medical services, other members helping in obtaining employment and providing the necessary personal touch. All this tends to make the work successful. Members have also supplied magazines and books, which I loan to the girls from time to time.

In every case where I have recommended probation the Court has been pleased to grant it, and so far no probationer has given me cause to regret my recommendation.

Mr. C. G. L. POLLOCK, Probation Officer, Invercargill.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the working of the probation system in the Invercargill District for the year ended 31st March, 1928:—

Offenders Probation Act Probationers.—At the beginning of the year there were 31 males and 1 female on the register. During the year 20 males and 1 female were admitted to probation, and 8 males received on transfer from other districts, making a total of 59 males and 2 females dealt with during the period under review. This is 4 more than for the corresponding period last year. Thirteen males and 1 female satisfactorily completed the term of probation; 15 males and 1 female were transferred to other districts; 1 male left the Dominion with permission; for failing to comply with the terms of release 1 male was sentenced to six months' hard labour on the original charge, and 1 male was committed to the Borstal Institution for three years for a similar offence, leaving 28 males and no females reporting at the end of the year.

Of those admitted to probation, 9 were for a period of one year, 5 for two years, and 7 for three years. In ten cases costs of prosecution, amounting to £26 6s. 6d., were ordered to be paid, and restitution amounting to the sum of £136 11s. 9d. was ordered to be made. For the period under review the sum of £8 19s. 4d. was received under the former heading and lodged to the credit of the Public Account, while the sum of £82 12s. 6d. collected as restitution-moneys was paid over in accordance with orders made by the Courts.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—At the beginning of the year there were 3 probationers reporting, 3 were received from the Borstal Institution, 6 were transferred from other districts, making a total of 12 dealt with during the year, which is an increase of 1 on last year's figures. During the period under review 7 probationers satisfactorily completed their terms, 1 was transferred to another district, leaving 4 reporting at the end of the year.

With two exceptions the conduct of those admitted to probation from the Courts has been satisfactory. In one case the offender was dealt with on a fresh charge and committed to the Borstal Institution, while in the other the conduct of the probationer was so unsatisfactory that he was dealt with on the original charge and sent to prison. With reference to those released from institutions on probationary license it is gratifying indeed to be able to report that their conduct has been all that could be desired: In no single instance was it necessary to recommend the cancellation of a license.

This year a forward move has been inaugurated in a direction which past experience has indicated with repeated emphasis. Organized voluntary reinforcement of the efforts to give effect to the purposes of probation has been put into practical shape. In July last a visit was paid to this district by the Field Organizer, who was instrumental in having a Voluntary Probation Committee set up under the chairmanship of the Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. G. Cruickshank. One of the important functions of the Committee is to assist the Probation Officer in seeing that his charges are placed in suitable employment; and I am greatly indebted to its members for help in this connection. But friendly good offices are exercised in a variety of ways to the encouragement of young people endeavouring to rehabilitate their good name. Especially to a probationer who has had no one to take a personal interest

in his welfare, the influence of a sympathetic mentor may prove the one thing needful to secure his perseverance in his better purposes ; and the personal touch may prove equally timely when, at the close of the probation period, the will to self-control is apt to relax.

Mr. E. CHING, Probation Officer, Wanganui.

I respectfully beg to submit this my report for the year 1927 for those sentenced under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920. During the year there were placed on the register 30 males and 7 females, and at the end of the year there remained on the register 20 males and 7 females. The conduct of the probationers, generally speaking, has been very good. There were 4 males convicted for other offences, and I am of the opinion that such results demonstrate the discretion exercised by the Courts and justify the granting of probation wherever such treatment is merited.

I am pleased to state that all moneys ordered to be paid by the Court are being paid up. In some instances it may be slow, but it is nevertheless sure, and is being paid regularly and very creditably when so much unemployment is taken into consideration and a great many of the probationers have to make a fresh start in life. It is very pleasing to know that every probationer was in employment, temporary or otherwise, almost throughout the year. All probationers have reported themselves very regularly and have given very little trouble. I have paid unexpected visits in many instances and found all going well.

I have to thank the Court officials and the police for the great assistance given to me, and also the general public for the many acts of courtesy and assistance given. It is pleasing to know that many ladies and gentlemen are still taking an interest in the probationers, which, without doubt, is a great inducement to probationers to try to do better. There were 7 men placed on the register of those discharged from prison, and of that number 6 have done and are doing very well. Only 1 offended again and was returned to prison, which is a very satisfactory result, and much credit for this is due to the assistance of voluntary helpers.

Mr. W. R. Cook, Probation Officer, Napier.

I respectfully beg to submit this my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1927.

Hereunder are appended statistics relating to probationers in this district. During the year a Voluntary Probation Committee has formed, and I am pleased to state the numbers whom I have appealed to for assistance have readily given their help. Many probationers from other districts have come here penniless, and this, coupled with the unemployment problem, has made the work difficult to cope with ; but, considering all the circumstances, the results are satisfactory. I desire to express my thanks to those who have assisted me in this work.

On taking charge of this probation district in May of last year the following probationers were on the register :—

				Males.	Females.
Under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920	..	..	..	12	3
Placed on probation during year	..	..	..	11	1
Received from other districts	..	..	..	6	1
				29	5
Transferred to other districts	..	..	..	8	..
Discharged during year	..	..	..	3	1
Left the Dominion	..	..	..	2	..
Gazetted for arrest	..	..	..	1	..
Return to prison for other offences	..	..	..	3	..
				17	1
On register, 31st December, 1927	..	..	..	12	4
Under the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910—					
Placed on probation (on register)	..	..	..	5	..
Received during year	..	..	..	5	..
				10	..
Returned to prison for other offences	..	..	..	3	..
Discharged	..	..	..	2	..
Transferred to other districts	..	..	..	3	..
				8	..
On register, 31st December, 1927	..	..	..	2	..

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

I beg to forward annual report on probationers dealt with here during the year 1927.

Offenders Probation Act.—On the register, 1st January, 1927, 25; placed on probation during the year, 29; received from other districts, 5: total, 59. Transferred to other districts, 22; completed probation and discharged, 14; leaving 23 on the register at the end of the year.

Crimes Amendment Act.—On the register, 1st January, 1927, 1; received from other districts, 2; transferred to other districts, 1; discharged, 1; leaving 1 reporting at the end of the year. With one exception those discharged from probation during 1927 are doing well.

STATISTICS.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920.

AGES AND TERMS OF PROBATION OF THE OFFENDERS ADMITTED TO PROBATION DURING THE YEAR 1927.

Age, in Years.	Six Months or under.	One Year.	Eighteen Months.	Two Years.	Three Years.	Four Years.	Five Years.	Total.
10 and under 15 ..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	4
15 „ 20 ..	11	73	5	94	15	2	..	200
20 „ 25 ..	11	63	2	57	20	..	1	154
25 „ 30 ..	3	33	..	29	10	..	..	75
30 „ 40 ..	4	34	2	39	10	..	..	89
40 „ 50 ..	3	13	..	19	8	..	..	43
50 „ 60 ..	2	7	..	5	2	1	..	17
60 „ 70 ..	1	1	..	2	..	..	..	4
Totals ..	35	228	9	245	65	3	1	586

SUMMARY OF CASES DEALT WITH DURING THE YEAR 1927.

	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Number reporting on 1st January, 1927	1,131	99	1,230
Admitted to probation during 1927	586	134	720
Totals	1,717	233	1,950
Completed probation during the year	527	97	624
Discharged by Prisons Board	13	..	13
Deceased	9	..	9
Left the Dominion	15	2	17
Absconded and not traced (term expired)	35	4	39
Resentenced on original charge	18	4	22
Committed further offences	63	5	68
Totals	680	112	792
Number reporting on 31st December, 1927	1,037	121	1,158

BREACHES OF CONDITIONS OF RELEASE COMMITTED DURING 1927.

Failed to report, &c.	39
Committed further offences	91
Absconded (still untraced)	39
	169

COST OF PROSECUTION AND RESTITUTION-MONEYS COLLECTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1928.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of costs of prosecution-moneys collected by Probation Officers	725	7	6
Amount of restitution-moneys collected	2,191	9	5
Total	£2,916	16	11

OFFENCES FOR WHICH OFFENDERS RECEIVED THE BENEFITS OF THE PROBATION ACT DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1927.

Offence.	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Theft	370	47	417
False pretences	45	18	63
Breaking, entering, and theft	36	9	45
Vagrancy	13	19	32
Forgery	20	1	21
Assault	11	8	19
Wilful damage	13	3	16
Obscene language	10	6	16
Attempted suicide	2	12	14
Unlawful conversion of property	12	1	13
Indecent assault and indecent acts	12	..	12
Failing to maintain	4	4	8
Sheep and cattle stealing	6	..	6
Receiving stolen property	4	2	6
Carnal knowledge	5	..	5
Breach of probation	4	1	5
Arson	2	..	2
Drunk while in charge of a vehicle	2	..	2
Reckless driving	2	..	2
Harbouring escapees from an industrial school	2	..	2
Breach of Arms Act	2	..	2
Drunkenness .. .. .	..	2	2
Illtreating a child	1	..	1
Breach of Bankruptcy Act	1	..	1
Abduction	1	..	1
Abandoning a child	1	..	1
Unnatural offence	1	..	1
Sly-grog selling	1	..	1
Bigamy .. .. .	..	1	1
Released under Section 15 (in lieu of bail)	3	..	3
Totals	586	134	720

CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT.
PROBATION STATISTICS.

Year.	Admitted to Probation by Prisons Board.				Recommitted for Breaches of Conditions of Release and for other Offences during Period of Five Years.				Convicted subsequent to being discharged from Probation.			
	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reforma- tive Detention.	Total.	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reforma- tive Detention.	Total.	Habitual Criminals.	Hard Labour.	Reforma- tive Detention.	Total.
1923 ..	28	80	185	293	15	6	34	55	1	5	11	17
1924 ..	14	59	153	226	7	4	22	33	3	5	33	41
1925 ..	15	50	125	190	9	7	18	34	4	14	35	53
1926 ..	21	45	142	208	7	5	9	21	7	14	37	58
1927 ..	22	42	76	140	18	11	4	33	3	4	36	43
Total..	100	276	681	1,057	56	33	87	176	18	42	152	212

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given ; printing (750 copies), £16 7s. 6d.

By Authority : W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1928.

Price 6d.]

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Year	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100
1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	

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С. С. Заварзин

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