

1929.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT
PRISONS BOARD
(ANNUAL REPORT OF) FOR 1928.

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

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.

Hon. Mr. JUSTICE REED, C.B.E. (President); WILLIAM REECE, Esq.; Sir DONALD MCGAVIN, Kt., C.M.G., M.D. (Lond.); D. G. A. COOPER, Esq.; JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq., C.M.G.; and B. L. DALLARD, Esq., Controller-General of Prisons.

SIR,—
I have the honour to forward herewith the report of the Prisons Board for the year 1928.
The Hon. the Minister of Justice.
26th July, 1929.
I have, &c.,
A. L. HERDMAN, Acting-President.

REPORT OF THE PRISONS BOARD
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

THE Board has to report that during the year ended 31st December, 1928, it dealt with a total of 1,366 cases at meetings held at Wellington and the various institutions of the Dominion. The following table sets out under their respective statutory headings the number of cases considered at each meeting, together with the decisions reached:—

TABLE A.

Month of Meeting.	Cases considered of								Totals.	Decisions showing how Cases were disposed of.										Totals.
	Borstal Inmates.	Habitual Criminals.	Persons undergoing Reformative De- tention.	Hard-labour Pri- soners.	Habitual Offend- ers.	Habitual Criminals for Remission of Hard-labour Sentence.	Probationers for Discharge from Probation or Variation Terms of Release.			Recommended for Release on Pro- bation.	Petitions deferred.	Petitions declined.	Recommended for Discharge from Institution or from Probation.	Offender Pro- bationers or- dered Discharge.	Habitual Crimi- nals Remission of Hard Labour.	Recommen- d Variation Terms of Probation.				
							Crimes Amend- ment Act.	Offender Probation- ers.												
January	..	7	8	3	1	..	..	2	..	1	19	..	13	..	6	..	..	..	19
"	30	1	22	33	..	..	..	..	..	1	89	15	48	13	13	..	..	..	89
February	..	8	16	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	41	7	19	9	6	..	..	..	41
"	..	..	13	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	7	7	1	3	..	..	..	18
"	..	..	17	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	23	4	18	..	1	..	..	..	23
April	241	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	243	50	187	4	2	..	..	..	243
"	4	5	49	29	..	2	..	1	..	..	90	21	37	29	3	..	..	..	90
"	..	1	8	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	5	5	2	..	..	..	..	12
June	22	3	39	68	..	3	..	3	10	..	148	27	38	51	22	10	..	..	148
September	36	3	39	29	..	3	..	..	..	..	110	36	53	8	9	..	4	..	110
"	32	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	36	12	24	..	..	..	..	..	36
"	..	5	20	13	..	..	..	..	1	..	39	7	25	7	..	..	..	..	39
"	..	..	32	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	47	17	25	2	3	..	..	..	47
November	73	38	96	98	..	1	..	..	4	..	310	71	203	21	7	4	4	..	310
"	116	..	22	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	141	39	100	..	2	..	..	..	141
	554	71	386	321	1	11	6	16	1,366		318	802	147	77	14	8	..	..	1,366

TABLE B.—SHOWING RELEASES AND DISCHARGES, ETC., EFFECTED EACH MONTH FOR 1928.

1928.	Released on Probation.				Discharged from Prison.				Discharged from Probation.					Hard-labour Remissions.	Totals.
	Hard-labour Cases.	Habitual-criminal Cases.	Reformatory-detention Cases.	Borstal-detention Cases.	Hard-labour Cases.	Habitual-criminal Cases.	Reformatory-detention Cases.	Borstal-detention Cases.	Hard-labour Cases.	Habitual-criminal Cases.	Reformatory-detention Cases.	Borstal-detention Cases.	Offender-probationer Cases.		
January	6	1	8	10	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28
February	3	3	3	17	3	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	32
March	3	6	18	15	7	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	56
April	3	4	5	3	2	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
May	8	2	11	27	3	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	54
June	8	1	2	8	6	..	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	30
July	4	..	5	6	2	..	2	1	..	1	..	..	10	..	31
August	4	..	2	7	3	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
September	4	..	4	8	5	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	27
October	4	..	8	19	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	35
November	3	..	4	9	3	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
December	7	..	14	13	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	3	2	43
	57	17	84	142	40	..	28	6	..	2	..	..	15	5	396

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920.

During the year sixteen applications for discharge from probation were considered by the Board, and of this number fifteen were granted.

TABLE C.—REFORMATIVE-DETENTION CASES DEALT WITH BY THE BOARD FROM JANUARY, 1911, TO DECEMBER, 1928.

Total number sentenced to reformatory detention	3,366
Released and discharged on recommendation of Board	2,436
Discharged from reformatories on completion of full sentence	534
Total number released	2,970
Of whom there were—	
Returned to reformatories for non-compliance with conditions of release ..	87
Committed to reformatories for further offences whilst on probation ..	176
Sentenced for offences committed after discharge or expiry of period of probation	428
Total number returned and recommitted	691
Absconded and not traced	26
Died	7
Left Dominion to return to former domiciles	52
Known to have been killed in action whilst on active service	3
Returned to Weraroa	1
Transferred to Rotorua Inebriates Institution	1
Transferred to mental hospitals	3
Transferred to Mount Magdala Home	1
Transferred to Salvation Army Home	1
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1928	41
Number who have not offended since their discharge or expiration of period of probation, and presumably doing well	2,143
	2,279
	2,970

Of the total number released after undergoing reformatory detention 23·25 per cent. have been returned to prison either for non-compliance with conditions of release or for committing further offences, 2·63 per cent. have left the Dominion or absconded, 0·57 per cent. have died or been transferred to mental hospitals, &c., and 73·55 per cent. have not further offended.

TABLE D.—HABITUAL CRIMINALS DEALT WITH BY THE BOARD FROM JANUARY, 1911, TO DECEMBER, 1928.

Total number declared habitual criminals	455
Of whom there were released on recommendation of Board	403
Of whom there were—	
Returned to prison for non-compliance with conditions of release	46
Committed to prison for further offences	144
Sentenced for offences committed after their discharge from prison or from probation	42
Total number returned	232
Absconded and not traced	30
Died	14
Left Dominion to return to former domiciles	51
Transferred to mental hospital	1
Transferred to consumptive sanatorium	1
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1928	20
Number who have not offended, as far as known, since their discharge from probation, and presumably doing well	54
	171
	403

Of the total number of habitual criminals released on probation, 57·56 per cent. were returned to prison either for non-compliance with the conditions of probation or for committing further offences. No offences are recorded against the remaining 42·44 per cent., but our tables show that 3·97 per cent. died or were transferred to mental hospitals, whilst 20·09 per cent. left the Dominion or absconded. This leaves a definite percentage of 18·38 who have remained in the Dominion and have not further offended.

Since 1917 the Board has dealt with the following hard-labour cases :—

TABLE E.—HARD-LABOUR CASES.

Total cases considered	..	..	..	..	..	2,259
Number discharged from prison on recommendation of Board	..	..	..	..	..	350
Number released on probation on recommendation of Board	..	..	..	..	..	506
Left the Dominion	..	..	..	..	..	23
Absconded	..	..	..	..	..	3
Recommitted for other offences	..	..	..	..	..	30
Completed probation	..	..	..	..	..	371
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1928	..	..	..	..	..	26

TABLE F.—BORSTAL CASES DEALT WITH BY THE BOARD FROM JANUARY, 1925, TO DECEMBER, 1928.

Total number committed to Borstal Institutions	..	..	..	..	..	911
Released and discharged on the recommendation of Prisons Board	..	..	..	..	..	375
Released on expiration of term	..	..	..	..	..	64
Total number released	..	..	..	..	..	439

Of whom there were—

Returned to institutions for non-compliance with conditions of release	..	..	5
Recommitted to institutions for further offences whilst on probation	..	..	26
Sentenced for offences committed after discharge or expiry of period of probation	..	..	33
Total number returned and recommitted	..	..	64
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1928	..	..	151
Number who have not been recommitted since their discharge or expiration of period of probation, and presumably doing well	..	..	224
	..	..	375
	..	..	439

Of the total number of 439 released since the coming into operation of the Prevention of Crime Act, 64 have subsequently been recommitted, or 14·57 per cent. only.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

The following table shows the cases considered year by year by the Board over the last decade :—

TABLE G.

Year.	Habitual Criminals and Offenders.	Reformative Detention.	Hard Labour.	Borstal Detention.	Habitual Criminals for Remission Hard Labour.	Probationers for Discharge from Probation or Variation Terms of Probation.		Totals.
						Crimes Amend-ment Act.	Offender Probationers.	
1919	97	471	115	..	..	18	..	701
1920	74	467	75	..	..	32	..	648
1921	75	564	167	..	..	18	17	841
1922	93	594	271	..	..	19	30	1,007
1923	74	671	304	..	4	16	24	1,093
1924	80	683	302	..	3	13	21	1,102
1925	70	747	295	..	1	12	9	1,134
1926	49	822	237	..	2	12	16	1,138
1927	115	766	325	..	11	13	20	1,250
1928	72	386	321	554	11	6	16	1,366
Totals	799	6,171	2,412	554	32	159	153	10,280

Having but temporarily assumed the office of Acting-President of the Prisons Board during the absence from the Dominion of the Hon. Mr. Justice Reed, C.B.E., President of the Board, I do not propose to comment on the foregoing statistics except to note that the satisfactory results shown by the statistics for previous years have continued to be maintained.

During the last year the Board has availed itself considerably of the services of the mental specialists attached to the Mental Hospitals Department, in conformity with an arrangement recently made whereby the psychiatrists attached to that Department would be available to make reports on any prisoner as required for the Board's information.

The Board also records its appreciation of the assistance given by the many citizens who help in connection with the after-care of prisoners, both by way of finding employment and in assisting in their rehabilitation in the community.

The Board desires to place on record its deep sense of loss in the passing of its late President the Hon. Sir William Sim, and the high regard and affection in which he was held by the members.

A. L. HERDMAN, Acting-President.

26th July, 1929.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (750 copies), £5.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1929.

Price 3d.]