

1934.  
NEW ZEALAND.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT :  
  
PRISONS BOARD  
  
(ANNUAL REPORT OF) FOR 1933.

*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); Sir DONALD MCGAVIN, Kt., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.S.;  
D. G. A. COOPER, Esq., O.B.E.; Hon. JOHN ALEXANDER, M.L.C., C.M.G.; THEO. G. GRAY, Esq., M.B., M.P.C.;  
Mrs. C. A. FRAER; 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 1933.  
I have, &c.,  
The Hon. the Minister of Justice. J. R. REED, J., President.

REPORT OF THE PRISONS BOARD  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1933.

THE Board has to report that during the year it visited each of the prisons, prison camps, and Borstal institutions in the Dominion. It dealt with a total of 1,639 cases at fifteen meetings held at the various institutions.

The following summary gives details of the cases considered and the decisions arrived at :—

<i>Cases dealt with.</i>			<i>Board's Decisions.</i>		
Persons undergoing Borstal detention	..	581	Recommended for release on probation	..	580
Persons sentenced to reformative detention		562	Deferred for further consideration	..	945
Persons sentenced to hard labour	..	392	Petitions declined	..	64
Habitual criminals	.. .. .	61	Recommended for discharge	..	21
Habitual offenders	.. .. .	2	Discharged from probation	..	29
Habitual criminals for remission of head sentence	..		Recommended remission of head sentence	..	
Probationers under Crimes Amendment Act		8	Modification of terms of probation	..	
Probationers under Offenders Probation Act		33			
		1,639			1,639

Reviewing the operations of the Board briefly, the results on the whole may be regarded as very satisfactory. The number of cases considered by the Board shows a steady increase yearly, due chiefly to the Courts recognizing the advantage of substantial sentences of Borstal detention and reformative detention over short sentences of imprisonment, as a corrective. The statistics show that the percentage of those who respond and evidently made good is well maintained.

The Board observes that the prisoners who have been dealt with under the system of reformative detention are, of course, less prone again to offend than those who have been declared habitual criminals, but it is nevertheless a source of gratification that a fair proportion of the latter have proved themselves sufficiently trustworthy once more to take and to keep their places among their fellow-citizens. It is to be remembered that they are often heirs to criminal tendencies that have in many cases been aggravated by the surroundings of their youth; to discard this heritage and become useful citizens is no easy task.