

1935.
NEW ZEALAND.

OFFENDERS PROBATION

UNDER OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920, AND CRIMES AMENDMENT ACT, 1910
(REPORT ON OPERATION OF), FOR THE YEAR 1934-35.

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, 30th August, 1935.

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 ended 31st December, 1934.

I have, &c.,

JOHN G. COBBE,

Minister of Justice.

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

SIR,—

I have the honour to present my annual report on the working of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act and the Crimes Amendment Act for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

Appended hereto also are statistical tables, together with an epitome of the reports from the principal District Probation Officers.

Probation was first adopted in New Zealand in 1886, on the passing of the First Offenders Probation Act. Until the passing of the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, probation was applied exclusively to first offenders, but now it is open to the Courts to exercise a free discretion as to what cases should be admitted to probation. Owing to the initial Act being limited to first offenders, probation popularly became recognized as the "first chance" given to first offenders. It has been so described by some of our Judges, but this was not the intention of the Legislature. The rationale of the system is that the Courts shall have regard to the character and personal history of a person convicted of an offence, and only in cases where the Court is satisfied that the best interests of the public and the offender would be served by release on probation is the offender to be so released. Release on probation is conditioned liberty. Some of the restrictions are that a probationer is subject to the supervision and direction of a Probation Officer. He may be forbidden to associate with any person or class of persons; his abode and employment must be approved of by the Probation Officer; and he is to be of good behaviour and to abstain from crime. The probationer is required to report regularly to the Probation Officer for two reasons. Firstly, it enables the Probation Officer to be kept periodically informed of the probationer's activities, employment, change of employment, earnings, expenditures, savings, recreation, problems, &c., and, secondly, these interviews assist the Probation Officer in habitually checking up the probationer's response to the plan of treatment, and in modifying it with his active co-operation. Properly recorded this period serves as an index to the probationer's amenability to suggestion and discipline, and his increasing adjustment to life in the community.

It will be seen that probation is not a substitute for punishment, as it definitely involves a curtailment of liberty, but it does not depend solely on the coercive sanctions of authority. The Department, with the aid of public-spirited citizens who co-operate with Probation Officers, aims at readjustment in the community under a system of firm but sympathetic and constructive oversight.

The reports from the District Probation Officers show that despite the adverse conditions prevailing during the past year, particularly with regard to the paucity of opportunities for placing probationers in permanent employment, the results of the year's work have been exceedingly satisfactory, and that few probationers have failed to respond to requirements. The most striking feature in this connection has been the increase in the amount of restitution-money collected.

The total amount paid by probationers during the year was £2,914, representing £475 for costs of prosecutions, and £2,439 for restitution to persons robbed or defrauded.

A total sum of £60,192 has been collected since the inception of the provision under which the Courts are empowered to order restitution to be made.

Although these financial results demonstrate strikingly a positive advantage of probation over imprisonment, where the offender becomes a charge on the taxpayer and the injured party receives no redress, it is the human factors that are, by far the more important considerations, and if a means other than incarceration can be devised whereby erring humans can be salvaged for future usefulness with less disruption of social ties and responsibilities, with less risk of harmful reactions psychologically, and at less expense, then in appropriate cases such alternative method should be availed of.

Probation is constructive rather than destructive. It is economical and it is humane. Probation is not suitable for every case, and humanitarian considerations should not eclipse the right of society to protection. It has been stressed previously that the more generous impulses of the law are not intended for crimes involving deliberation and brutality. Wherever the protection of the community demands incarceration or segregation from the general social group probation would be inappropriate.

It is recognized by all authorities as being essential, in the interests of the efficient working of the system, that if probationers do not conform to the conditions of their probationary license either through failing to report as required, or by ignoring their obligations in other respects, they require to be dealt with by the Courts in a salutary manner. Formal probation without strict enforcement of conditions is futile and tends to bring the administration of criminal justice into disrepute. Dr. Sheldon Glueck in "Probation and Criminal Justice" states, *inter alia* :—

"The Probation Officer's work is to a great extent conditioned by the intelligence and sympathetic attitude of the Courts. . . . If they exercise poor judgment in the selection of offenders to be placed on probation the supervisory efforts of the Probation Officer are bedevilled by a clientele that is not suited to extra-mural oversight. If Judges are either angrily repressive or sentimentally lenient—considerations that are beside the point if one truly believes in a scientific administration of criminal justice—then, again, the efforts of the Probation Officer too often come to naught. If, for example, a probationer again and again violates the conditions imposed by the Court and Probation Officer, and yet goes unscathed, then the prestige of the Probation Officer suffers not only in the offender's eyes, but in his own, and the system in the opinion of the public."

There is statutory provision (Offenders Probation Act) that when an offender is brought before the Court for a breach of probation the Court, in addition to dealing with the breach, may also deal with the offender on the original charge by the imposition of a salutary term of imprisonment or reformatory detention.

The statistics show that in practically 85 per cent. of the cases dealt with under the Act the offences were against property.

The total number of cases dealt with during the year under the Offenders Probation Act was 2,170, which was 31 less than the number for the previous year. The number of fresh admissions to probation was 821, which was 54 more than the total for the year 1933. It is satisfactory to observe that the Courts are gradually increasing their use of this form of treatment of offenders.

Over 50 per cent. of the total number admitted to probation during the year were under twenty-five years of age. It has been stated that the adolescents and the post-adolescents are the most difficult age-groups to deal with, as these, in the majority of cases, have neither the plasticity and readiness of children to accept authority nor the more sober sense of the responsible adult. Probation Officers find that the handling of these requires firmness combined with infinite tact and patience. A sympathetic understanding of human nature is an essential qualification of a Probation Officer.

The results on the whole are gratifying. The statistics show that, of the total number of persons on probation, 182, or approximately 8 per cent. only, failed to conform to the conditions of their probationary license, and only half of these committed an actual criminal offence.

The Crimes Amendment Act statistics deal with parole probationers, that is persons who have been released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board after serving a term of imprisonment or detention. There were 371 persons released on probation during the year under review. Of these, 2 were recommitted to prison for a breach of the conditions of their license, and 29, including 6 habitual criminals, had their licenses cancelled for further offences. Considering the many difficulties and handicaps with which these individuals are beset in rehabilitating themselves, it is gratifying to find the percentage of failures so small.

The effectiveness of the efforts in after-care work and parole may be judged from the fact that during the five years ended 31st December last 1,581 prisoners (excluding habitual criminals) were released on probation, and during this period only 137, or 9 per cent., were returned to prison for failing to comply with the conditions of their release, or for other offences whilst on probation; and only 24.79 per cent. have again been convicted subsequent to discharge.

After-care and probation work was systematized and extended a few years ago, and voluntary committees were appointed to assist Probation Officers. The purpose was to spread the burden so as to limit the number of probationers to that which could be effectively supervised, and also to more widely diffuse the interest in probationers so as to assist in finding avenues of employment.

In addition to the Probation Committees there are five Prisoners' Aid Societies operating in various towns in the Dominion. The main function of these is to assist in the rehabilitation of released prisoners. The Prison Gate Mission at Christchurch also gives valuable help in this connection, and the Salvation Army co-operates in a sympathetic and practical manner.

There are two Borstal Associations whose purpose is mainly to cater for the after-care and placement of young persons released from Borstal institutions. The Women's Borstal Association is now a Dominion-wide organization, having associates throughout the country.

Rehabilitation work is mainly a community service in New Zealand, and practically the whole of the after-care work is carried out on a voluntary basis, the Government, owing to financial stringency, being able to make only small grants annually to the Prisoners' Aid Society and the Borstal Associations.

In addition to the large number of voluntary workers, there are 230 official Probation Officers: 10 of these are full-time officers; 4 part-time officers; 4 are Salvation Army Women Probation Officers; and 206 are Police Officers who act as Probation Officers in the smaller country towns.

I have much pleasure in again placing on record the Department's appreciation of the valuable assistance given in this probation work by the large number of public-spirited citizens referred to above, for their help to probationers, and their co-operation with Probation Officers.

I desire to record my gratitude to my own staff for their loyal co-operation, and also to the Salvation Army officers, Police officers, and others, who act as Probation Officers.

B. L. DALLARD,
Chief Probation Officer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. W. J. CAMPEELL, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I have the honour to submit my thirteenth annual report as Probation Officer of the Auckland District for the period ending 31st March, 1935.

The following are the figures for the period :—

Probationers remaining on register at 1st April, 1934	..	..	177
Probationers received from Auckland Courts	..	..	101
Probationers received on transfer	..	..	58
			— 159
Total dealt with	..	..	336
Of these there were—			
Probationers completed probationary term	..	..	82
Probationers transferred to other districts	..	..	51
Probationers discharged by Prisons Board	..	..	8
Probationers left Dominion by permission	..	..	2
Probationers sentenced on original charge	..	..	7
Probationers sentenced on other charges	..	..	2
			— 152
Total remaining on register at 1st April, 1935	..	..	184

In addition to the above-mentioned defaulters, 9 in number, there were 4 probationers who were convicted of breach of probation and later resumed reporting, 5 who were convicted on other charges and also resumed reporting, while there were 7 probationers who failed to report and had not been traced at the end of the period. This shows a total of 25 defaulters for the year, this figure being approximately 7 per cent. of the number dealt with.

A slight increase over the amount collected during the previous period is shown in the money paid as restitution and costs of prosecution, the figures being restitution, £418 10s. 9d; costs of prosecution, £48 8s. 2d.: a total of £466 18s. 11d. As so very many of those probationers who have restitution to make are earning scarcely sufficient to meet actual living-expenses, the amount paid in shows a very creditable effort. Many, of course, find it impossible to make payments, or at the best can only make very small payments. With due regard to all the circumstances, care is taken to make the burden as light as possible.

I am pleased to report that, apart from the defaulters shown, very few of the probationers have given trouble, and the majority have done very well, despite the adverse conditions with which many of them have to contend. The members of the Voluntary Probation Committee have done whatever was possible to assist in those cases brought under notice, and my thanks and appreciation are due to the committee for their assistance.

Probationers on release from prison and Borstal institutions: In this class the average number reporting monthly during the period was 96, and 73 completed the probationary term during the period under review. All, excepting 8 of that number whose conduct was not quite satisfactory, completed their terms with credit. Nine probationers left the Dominion by permission, 3 were discharged by the Prisons Board, and 1 was committed to the Mental Hospital. There were 14 defaulters who came before the Court on other charges. Of these, 4 had their licenses cancelled, 2 remained on probation, and 8 were sentenced to terms longer than the remaining probationary period. There are also 6 probationers who absconded and had not been traced to the end of the period, 3 of whom have had their licenses cancelled. The number remaining on the register at 1st April, 1935, was 88.

It is noteworthy that no probationer in the habitual criminal class came before the Courts during the period under review.

The conditions regarding employment have been much the same during the year, and the majority of probationers in this class have been employed on local relief works, or at public-works, forestry, or other relief camps.

In conclusion, I have pleasure in again recording my appreciation of the courtesy and sympathetic understanding shown by the Judges and the Magistrates at this centre.

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

Although there is nothing of an outstanding nature to report on concerning the past year's work here, it is pleasing to be able to say that it has been a year of steady progress. Despite the fact that unemployment has been as bad as ever, a smaller number of probationers than in former years have defaulted. It was stated during the past year by a gentleman doing important social work in one of our large cities that unemployment was driving the younger men in New Zealand to commit crime, but I would like to say emphatically that is not our experience in Christchurch: and I would go further and state that the statement referred to above is a gross libel on the unemployed men of our country. There never has been any real difficulty in obtaining work of a kind in this district, provided the offender has been willing to undertake it for the time being, and it is an old saying, but a very true one, "that half a loaf is better than none at all." With one or two exceptions, the men reporting to this office have worked well and conducted themselves excellently.

Although the amount collected by way of restitution (£284 2s. 1d.) does not appear to be a very large sum, when the circumstances under which it has been earned and the very real sacrifices made to pay it in are taken into consideration, I think it represents a very fine effort. Costs of prosecution amounting to £23 15s. 10d. were also paid in. There are still a few married men on our books with large families, who have restitution to make, but as they are only able to obtain relief work it is absolutely impossible for them to make any payments.

During the year there were 93 persons released by the local Courts under the Offenders Probation Act, 60 completed their term of probation, 7 defaulted and received fresh sentences, 1 was sent to Weraroa Training Farm, 26 transferred to other districts, and 21 received on transfer from other districts, leaving a total of 98 on our books at 31st March, 1935. Regarding those persons reporting to this office under the Crimes Amendment Act, 64 were reporting at 1st April, 1934, 14 defaulted and received fresh sentences or had their licenses cancelled, 1 died, 15 were transferred to other districts, and 43 completed their period on license, leaving 47 reporting at close of year. Taking everything into consideration, the conduct and industry of these men has been excellent, and it is quite safe to say that a very large proportion of them will never offend again.

Although the Court work was not so heavy as in previous years, nevertheless it is of such an exacting nature that it requires close scrutiny all the time. My relations with the Bench and Bar have been of a most helpful nature, and I am very grateful for the kindly interest they take in our work. Our contact with all the social and charitable and Government institutions in the city has been of the best nature possible, very largely contributing to the success of the work. The members of the Voluntary Probation Committee when called upon to serve have done so very willingly, and we are very grateful to them.

Mr. J. GARBUTT, District Probation Officer, Dunedin.

Statistics for the past year indicate an increase over the preceding period in the number of offenders admitted to probation by the Courts in this district, with a corresponding increase in the numbers dealt with under various headings.

The increase referred to includes restitutional and other payments which, in comparison with the small sum left outstanding at the period ending, may be considered as a satisfactory statement. This does not imply that restitution has been made without some degree of personal difficulty and self-denial, or that the means to such an end through securing employment is guaranteed in any way to an offender against the law to enable him to meet his obligations.

In the latter respect and consistent with the slightly improved economic outlook, opportunities for providing employment other than unemployment relief work have correspondingly increased, more particularly where an aptitude is expressed for farm work or other employment outside the city area.

There is, however, a section who are always reluctant to break away from town life and prefer to depend upon the rather slender opportunities provided through casual employment, and, in their frequent disillusionment, are inclined to adopt a disgruntled attitude towards society in general and show a feeling of resentment against the restrictions of probationary control.

The numbers dealt with by the Courts for breaches of probation approximate to the average for this district, and the general response of those under our control may be gauged accordingly.

It is our experience that a better response is made by the younger type of offender, who is possessed of a possible background of moral training however sketchy, than is obtained from the older, more callous, and perhaps criminally minded type.

In order to deal effectively with the more difficult cases, it is essential that they should realize that the Courts have within their power authority to support the Probation Officer in his endeavours to secure a reasonable response, and indeed occasionally do exercise that authority to ensure a closer observance of the conditions laid down.

Borstal Institutions and Crimes Amendment Act: The number of releasees from institutional control dealt with during the year shows a substantial increase over previous years.

In close association with the local Patients' and Prisoners' Aid Society, releasees are assisted, materially and otherwise, as befits their particular needs, and the individual application of a will that recognizes the moral necessity of making good is thereby encouraged.

Handicapped, as many of these men are, by an acquired bias and the necessity of readapting themselves to social and economic conditions, it is rarely that an ex-prisoner, possessed of even a measure of good faith, fails to some extent to make good; if he is prepared to apply himself in a spirit that brooks no denial of or deviation from the purpose that he has set out to accomplish, then he receives the encouragement and consideration that his efforts deserve.

For the most part, those whose licenses were revoked during the year incidental to their having committed further offences or failed to appreciate the advantages of conditional liberty, represent recidivist types who, possessed of a definite criminal outlook, would not under any circumstances tender an adequate response to either advice or control.

The opportunity is taken to express gratitude to those members of the Voluntary Probation Committee who by their valuable assistance and kindly interest at all times have shown some practical interest in our work.

Likewise, the same is due to the executive of the local Patients' and Prisoners' Aid Society for their practical interest and loyal co-operation in our common task.

I also desire to place on record my appreciation of the efficient service rendered by my assistant, Mr. R. Watt, on whose service and qualities I place a very high estimate.

Statistics for the Year ending 31st March, 1935.

Offenders Probation Act—

Number on register at 1st April, 1934	..	..	..	..	62
Admitted to probation by local Courts	..	..	..	..	57
Received on transfer	..	..	..	..	21
					— 140

Less—

Discharged on completion of period	..	..	..	..	31
Transferred to other places	..	..	..	..	29
Discharged by the Prisons Board	..	..	..	..	4
Discharged by other means	..	..	..	..	2
Defaulters dealt with by Courts on subsequent charges and breaches of probation	5
					— 71

Leaving on register at 31st March, 1935	69
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				£	s.	d.
Restitutional recoveries	140	7 8
Costs of prosecution	4	16 0
				£145	3	8

Crimes Amendment Act—

Number on register at 1st April, 1934	..	..	..	..	20
Released on license during the year	..	..	..	..	39
Received on transfer	..	..	..	..	14
					— 73

Less—

Discharged on completion of sentence	..	..	..	..	23
Transferred to other places	..	..	..	..	17
Absconded	1
Licenses cancelled	7
					— 48

Leaving on register at 31st March, 1935	25
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MR. T. P. MILLS, District Probation Officer, Wellington.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st March, 1935.

The year began with 123 probationers, 80 were released on probation during the year, 45 were transferred from other districts; 248 in all passing through my hands. Of these probationers, 69 successfully completed the period of probation, 62 left for other districts, 2 were dealt with under section 14 of the Act and imprisoned, 2 others were sentenced to reformatory detention, 1 was committed to a borstal institution, and 2 were discharged by the Prisons Board, leaving 110 reporting at the end of the year.

The chief difficulty, as in the last few years, has been to secure employment for probationers, and in both country and city very little work outside that provided by the Unemployment Board has been available. It speaks well for the general conduct of these probationers in these lean times that the lapses were less than 3 per cent. of the total dealt with, the 7 defaulters including 2 which were prosecuted for breach of probation under section 13.

The collection of costs and restitution-moneys has always been a problem, this year being no exception. The total costs received amounted to £111 1s., and restitution-moneys to £271 3s. 9d. In very few instances has there been any studied evasion of their obligations, but nevertheless it has been no easy matter to keep many probationers up to the mark.

Crimes Amendment Probationers: The numbers dealt with this year were 180. Forty-nine were reporting at the beginning of the period, 97 were received direct from various institutions, 34 were transferred from other districts. Sixty-two satisfactorily completed the terms of their probation, 45 left for other districts, 7 left the Dominion, 8 were subsequently imprisoned, 1 had his license cancelled, 1 died, and 56 were reporting at the close of the year.

Irrespective of the above 9 unsatisfactory probationers, 2 were before the Court for breach of probation, 1 was fined, and the other imprisoned for a short term. These 11 cases represent a trifle over 6 per cent. of the total dealt with.

It has often been asked whether the depression has caused an increase in crime, and, without attempting to discuss the general question, it is rather of interest to note that the tendency towards rehabilitation shows an improvement amongst the probationers of this district. The percentages of failures during the last three years were as follows: 1933, O.P., 5 per cent.; C.A.A., 8 per cent. 1934, O.P., 4 per cent.; C.A.A., 8 per cent. 1935, O.P., 3 per cent.; C.A.A., 6 per cent. The depression is an ugly problem, but there are very few things that do not have their uses.

This report would not be complete without an appreciative reference to the work of the Voluntary Probation Committee, as well as the efforts of the Police and Court officials, which so materially contribute to the success of the probation system.

Major GORDON, Probation Officer for Women, Auckland.

I am pleased to submit my annual report as Probation Officer for women.

The total number of cases dealt with was 63, and the total moneys collected for prosecution and restitution were £28 0s. 6d. Of the cases dealt with, 3 were transferred, 2 failed to comply with the conditions of their probation, 1 was brought before the Court, 1 left the district without permission and got into trouble, being arrested and sent to prison, and 5 were out on probation from prison and have done well, not coming before the Court again. I found no difficulty in placing either women or girls in employment.

I find the Probation Act a splendid thing for helping women and girls. On the whole they appreciate the counsel and help given. Three have married very happily and comfortably. It is the personal touch which counts most in this work.

I must express my thanks to Magistrates, Court officials, and the Police for their extreme kindness and help in this work.

Adjutant V. D. WOOD, Probation Officer for Women, Christchurch.

Total number of probationers dealt with, 29; total costs of prosecution and restitution-money collected, £22 18s.

The money collected from probationers means a good deal of personal effort and privation in many cases, and therefore speaks well of their desire to do better.

The results of the year are very gratifying, very few probationers having failed to respond to the advice, discipline, or other measures adopted for their advance and welfare.

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

I beg to submit my seventh annual report as Probation Officer for the City of Wellington and district for the year ended 31st March, 1935.

Offenders Probation Act—

Probationers reporting on 31st March, 1934	27
Admitted to probation during the year	34
Received on transfer from other districts	5
	— 66

Crimes Amendment Act and Prevention of Crimes Act—

Received on parole from institutions	2
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Total number dealt with 68

Probation Register—

Completed probation	22
Transferred to other district	9
Reconvicted	1
To mental hospital	1
Deceased	1
Left the Dominion	1
Gazetted	1
	— 36

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Owing to the small wages paid at the present time, it is very difficult to collect restitution. There is a married woman who has been on the register since 1931, and, as her husband is a relief worker, it seems hopeless to expect her to pay the restitution owing, which amounts to £17.

My thanks are due to the Magistrates' Court staff and the Police for their courtesy.

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

I beg to submit my annual report as Probation Officer for the year ending 31st December, 1934.

Received during the year under the Offenders Probation Act, 25 males and 3 females, and under the Crimes Amendment Act, 3 males. Total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected during the year amounted to £42 15s. 2d. Three probationers were dealt with under section 13, Offenders Probation Act.

Employment is still hard to find, but through the kindness of the Probation Committee and Y.M.C.A. I have been able to place several young men on stations.

Mr. H. ROBINSON, Probation Officer, Greymouth.

I respectfully present hereon the annual report on the working of the probation system under the Offenders Probation Act and the Crimes Amendment Act for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

Offenders Probation Act: Total dealt with 7; total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected, £8 3s.

I am pleased to state that all probationers have found employment in this district, the majority being on the gold subsidy. The conduct of probationers has been satisfactory.

Crimes Amendment Act: The number dealt with was 3. The conduct of these probationers was good, with the exception of 1.

Mr. R. W. ARNOLD, Probation Officer, Invercargill.

I have the honour to submit the following report for the year ending 31st December, 1934, on the working of the probation system in the Southland district.

Offenders Probation Act—

On the register at the beginning of the year	..	..	..	..	37
Admitted to probation during the year	..	..	..	..	18
Received on transfer from other districts	..	..	..	..	20
					—
Total dealt with during the year	..	..	..	..	75
Completed probation during the year	..	..	..	..	14
Transferred to other districts	..	..	..	..	37
Reconvicted	..	..	..	..	1
					—
Total removed from roll during the year	..	..	..	..	52
					—
On register at 31st December, 1934	..	..	..	..	23

During the year those admitted to probation were ordered to make restitution amounting to £49 15s. 2d., and in each case the probationers were transferred to other districts before any payments were made. Costs of prosecution amounting to £5 10s. 6d. were ordered to be paid, and the sum of 12s. was collected from one probationer, the others being transferred immediately after conviction. The total amount collected during the year amounted to £22 7s. 6d.

Twelve offenders were convicted and ordered to come up for sentence during the year. In these cases restitution amounting to £1 5s. was paid in full, while of the costs amounting to £11 2s. 6d., the sum of £7 12s. was paid, the balance of £3 10s. 6d. representing money due by offenders who were transferred to other districts.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers—

On the register at the beginning of the year	..	..	..	..	7
Received from Borstal institutions	..	..	..	..	7
Received from other institutions	..	..	..	..	4
Received from other districts	..	..	..	..	4
					—
Total dealt with during the year	..	..	..	..	22
Completed probation during the year	..	..	..	..	8
Transferred to other districts	..	..	..	..	6
					—
Total removed from roll	..	..	..	..	14
					—
On register at 31st December, 1934	..	..	..	..	8

On the 1st November, 1934, Major B. Schroeder, of the Salvation Army, was appointed Probation Officer for female delinquents in Invercargill, and the 3 female probationers on the register were transferred to her charge.

The conduct of all probationers has, on the whole, been most satisfactory, 2 offenders being sentenced on fresh charges to the following terms—viz., one month hard labour and three years Borstal detention respectively.

During the year the majority of probationers have been employed on relief works, some on public works, some on local work, while others have obtained work as general farm hands. Owing to this fact, and consequently the low wages that are being earned, it has been very difficult to collect the restitution-money due, and the payments have been seriously affected. It is pleasing to be able to record, however, that in all cases probationers are doing their best under the circumstances.

I desire to express my appreciation for the services rendered by Dr. R. Burns-Watson as Honorary Medical Officer.

Mr. T. STOCKER, Probation Officer, Napier.

I have the honour to submit my report on the working of the probation system in the Napier district for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

Offenders Probation Act: There were 27 probationers on the register at the beginning of the year, and 32 were received during the year, making a total of 59 probationers dealt with. Thirteen probationers completed their probation satisfactorily, 16 were transferred to other districts, and 2 received terms of imprisonment for breaches of probation, leaving 28 on the register at the end of the year. This number included 3 who have absconded and cannot be traced.

The general working of the system may be considered very satisfactory, very few of the probationers failing to carry out the conditions of their probation. It is very gratifying to note that almost without exception every probationer is in employment of some description, the majority being on relief work, others being employed at the local freezing-works.

The amount of restitution-money collected (£38 7s.) may be considered satisfactory in view of the hard times, but the amount still outstanding is very considerable, the total amount in two individual cases alone amounting to approximately £100, which it is not possible to collect at present. Thanks are again due to the voluntary probation helpers for their assistance, which was gratefully availed of during the year.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers: There were 2 probationers on the register at the beginning of the year, 15 were received, making a total of 17 dealt with. Five were transferred or completed probation, and 2 received further terms of imprisonment, leaving 10 on the register at the end of the year.

With the exception of the 2 men who were returned to prison, the conduct of these probationers was very satisfactory indeed. There was no difficulty experienced in helping them to fulfil the terms of their release.

Mr. M. CUSSEN, Probation Officer, Nelson.

Offenders Probation Act: Total number dealt with, 27. Total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys paid, £18 15s. 6d.

The conduct of the probationers has been very good on the whole, considering the difficulty of securing permanent employment. I feel grateful and desire to tender my sincere thanks to the "Toc H," St. Vincent De Paul Society, Salvation Army, and the honorary committee for the valuable assistance given me during the year.

Mr. W. DINEEN, Probation Officer, New Plymouth.

Herewith my report of the working of the Probation Act in the New Plymouth district, for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

The number of cases on the register brought forward from the previous period was 21. Twenty-four probationers were received from the local Court during the year, and 5 were received on transfer from other districts, making a total of 50. During the year 12 were released from probation, having completed their term satisfactorily, 9 were transferred to other districts, and 1 absconded during the Christmas holidays after issuing false cheques to the value of £70 on Christmas Eve. It is supposed that he has gone to Australia. Twenty-eight remained on the register at the end of the year.

Eleven offenders were ordered to make restitution in the sum of £104 3s. 5d., of which sum £22 14s. 9d. had been paid before the end of the year. Six probationers were ordered to pay costs of prosecution in the sum of £68 10s. 3d., of which £9 7s. 4d. has been paid. One of those who was ordered to pay costs amounting to £55 13s. 11d. was transferred to Auckland.

Twenty-eight probationers were dealt with under the Crimes Amendment Act, and their conduct has been quite satisfactory.

Mr. H. COLE, Probation Officer, Palmerston North.

Offenders Probation Act: Total dealt with, 63; total costs of prosecution and restitution-moneys collected, £66 19s. 5d.

The still prevailing depression makes it difficult to find suitable employment for probationers, and those who have to make restitution find it a very hard task, as most of them in this district are on relief work. Conduct generally speaking has been good, also the reporting, with one or two exceptions.

My thanks are due to the Honorary Justices' Association of this district for monetary assistance to help those who come under my jurisdiction that are in dire straits.

Mr. G. McKESSAR, Probation Officer, Timaru.

I have pleasure in submitting the annual report as under in connection with the working of the Offenders Probation Act in this district for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

During the year the total number of cases dealt with in this district was 64, which number is slightly in excess of the number dealt with during the previous year. This total is made up of 19 who were on the register on the 1st January, 1934, 19 admissions from the local Court, 21 transfers from other districts, and 5 persons who were released from prison. Of the total number dealt with 4 were females.

During the year 21 persons were transferred from this district, 3 were sentenced to terms of imprisonment for further offences, and 11 completed their periods of probation. However, one of these latter was immediately brought before the Court on a charge of breaking, entering, and theft, and was admitted to a further period of probation.

A total of £14 4s. 6d. was paid by way of reparation by various probationers, this being a decrease of approximately £9 as compared with the amount collected last year.

The conduct of the majority of the probationers reporting during the year has been very satisfactory, but many have been unable to pay the restitution ordered by the Court in view of the fact that they have had only relief work to rely upon for livelihood, and many have families to support.

With the exception of a very small proportion, these probationers have appreciated the leniency of the Court in granting probation, and have honestly endeavoured to rehabilitate themselves as decent citizens.

Mr. E. CHING, Probation Officer, Wanganui.

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1934.

At the commencement of the year there were on the register 34 males and 2 females, and at the end of the year there were 30 males and 4 females. During the year there has been placed on the register 30 males and 5 females, being 2 males less and an increase of 3 females over the previous year.

During the year there has been paid by the probationers £99 16s. 10d. restitution-moneys and £35 7s. 2d. costs, this being £45 14s. 1d. more than was received during the previous year.

All the probationers appear to be doing as well as the times will permit. Only two were brought before the Court for not complying with their probation, and when it is taken into consideration that the probationers have to go to shearing-sheds, harvest-fields, dairy-farms, &c., to obtain work, I think they have done well both in making payments and in good behaviour.

I desire to thank the Honorary Committee for their ready assistance to probationers. The Court officials, the Police, and the press all have given assistance and help, for which I am very grateful.

During the year there has been placed on the register of those discharged from prison institutions 18 males, being an increase of 4. They have, generally speaking, done well, and their conduct has been satisfactory.

STATISTICS.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT, 1920.

AGES AND TERMS OF PROBATION OF THE OFFENDERS ADMITTED TO PROBATION DURING THE YEAR 1934.

Age, in Years.	Six Months or under.	One Year.	Eighteen Months.	Two Years.	Three Years.	Four Years.	Five Years.	Total.
Under 20 years of age ..	3	75	4	63	7	..	..	152
20 and under 25 ..	12	105	3	89	11	..	..	220
25 „ 30 ..	8	46	..	46	11	..	..	111
30 „ 40 ..	4	41	3	36	10	1	..	95
40 „ 50 ..	4	28	1	15	3	..	..	51
50 „ 60 ..	2	13	1	12	..	..	..	28
60 and over ..	1	5	..	1	..	..	..	7
Totals ..	34	313	12	262	42	1	..	664

SUMMARY OF CASES DEALT WITH DURING THE YEAR 1934.

	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Number reporting on 1st January, 1934 ..	1,182	162	1,344
Admitted to probation during 1934 ..	664	157	821
Resumed probation during year (previously struck off) ..	5	..	5
Totals ..	1,851	319	2,170
Completed probation during 1934 ..	546	122	668
Discharged by Prisons Board ..	21	2	23
Deceased ..	3	..	3
Left the Dominion ..	10	..	10
Absconded and not traced (term expired) ..	10	2	12
Resentenced on original charge ..	30	8	38
Committed further offences ..	39	3	42
Totals ..	659	137	796
Number reporting at 31st December, 1934 ..	1,192	182	1,374

BREACHES OF CONDITIONS OF RELEASE COMMITTED DURING 1934.

	Total.
Failed to report, &c. ..	77
Committed further offences ..	90
Absconded (still untraced) ..	15
	182

COSTS OF PROSECUTION AND RESTITUTION-MONEYS COLLECTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1935.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of costs of prosecution collected by Probation Officers ..	475	3	7
Amount of restitution-moneys collected ..	2,438	18	8
Total ..	£2,914	2	3

OFFENCES FOR WHICH OFFENDERS RECEIVED THE BENEFITS OF THE PROBATION ACT DURING THE
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1934.

Offence.	Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Theft	394	82	476
False pretences	63	19	82
Breaking, entering, and theft	51	..	51
Common assault	16	4	20
Carnal knowledge	16	..	16
Forgery and uttering	14	2	16
Attempted suicide	5	10	15
Unlawful conversion of property	14	..	14
Mischief and wilful damage	7	6	13
Receiving stolen property	11	..	11
Obscene and insulting language	9	2	11
Drunk in charge of vehicle	7	4	11
Vagrancy	9	1	10
Indecent assault	6	2	8
Indecent exposure and offensive behaviour	5	3	8
Offences under Unemployment Act .. .. .	..	7	7
Offences under Post and Telegraph Act	5	..	5
Obstructing police and inciting disorder	4	1	5
Illegally on premises	1	3	4
Arson and attempted arson	3	..	3
Released under section 15 (in lieu of bail)	3	..	3
Supplying means of procuring abortion	2	1	3
Indecent act	2	1	3
Disorderly or threatening behaviour	1	2	3
Attempted rape	2	..	2
Breaches of Bankruptcy Act	1	1	2
Intimidation .. .. .	..	2	2
Bigamy	1	..	1
Bookmaking	1	..	1
Incest	1	..	1
Assault causing actual bodily harm	1	..	1
Manslaughter	1	..	1
Impairing security	1	..	1
Abduction	1	..	1
Aiding and abetting dangerous driving	1	..	1
Sly-grog selling	1	..	1
Cattle-stealing	1	..	1
Demanding money with menaces	1	..	1
Failing to stop after an accident	1	..	1
Presenting loaded firearms	1	..	1
Permitting instrument to be used .. .. .	..	1	1
Laying poison in a borough	1	1
Stowing away	1	1
Taking native game	1	1
	664	157	821

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