

In terms of the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, 15 probationers, as compared with 12 in the previous year, applied to the Board for respite from the conditions of their probation. Discharge was granted to 13 petitioners, and the remaining 2 cases were deferred.

GENERAL

Since the Board commenced to function in 1911 no less than 33,779 cases have been considered by it. This includes prisoners undergoing sentences of reformatory detention, hard labour, habitual criminals, Borstal inmates, and probationers for discharge from probation or variation of terms thereof. Dealing with these cases under the particular headings, the results have been as follows:—

Reformatory Detention.—During the period from January, 1911, to December, 1945, 6,225 prisoners were sentenced to reformatory detention under the provisions of the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910. The number of cases that have been recommended for release or discharge is 5,087. In 701 cases prisoners were required to serve the full sentence imposed by the Court. Of the total number released after undergoing reformatory detention, 25·10 per cent. have been returned to prison either for non-compliance with the conditions of the release or for committing further offences, 2·49 per cent. left the Dominion or absconded, 0·38 per cent. died or were transferred to mental hospitals, leaving 72·03 per cent. who have not further offended and who may therefore reasonably be assumed to have become useful and law-abiding members of the community.

Hard Labour.—Since the passing of the Statute Law Amendment Act, 1917, which extended the scope of the Prisons Board to the consideration of cases of prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment involving hard labour, 7,904 cases have been considered by the Board up to December, 1945. In 3,871 cases the prisoners were released on probation or discharged prior to expiry of the full time on the recommendation of the Board. Of this number, 2,503 completed probation satisfactorily, 248 were recommitted for other offences, and 62 were still reporting on probation at the 31st December, 1945.

Habitual Criminals.—During the period from January, 1911, to December, 1945, 726 habitual criminals were released on license on the recommendation of the Prisons Board. Of those so released, 58·67 per cent. were returned to prison either for committing further offences or for non-compliance with the conditions of probation. No offences are recorded against the remaining 41·33 per cent., and, allowing for those who have left the Dominion or died, this leaves 20·68 per cent. who remain in the Dominion and have not further offended.

Borstal Cases.—Since the coming into operation of the Prevention of Crime Act, 1924, 3,803 young persons have been detained under this Act, either by original commitments by the Court or by transference of youthful offenders from penal institutions or industrial schools. There have been 3,604 inmates released on the recommendation of the Board, 3,344 being on probation and 260 on the expiration of their sentence. Of the total number released, 89 have been returned to the institution for non-compliance with the conditions of release, 441 were recommitted for further offences whilst on probation, and 675, or approximately 19 per cent., of the total released, have been sentenced for offences committed after discharge or on expiry of their period of probation.

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