

The success of the probation system cannot be denied, and to many youths a short term of probation is sufficient to deter them from further wrongdoing.

For the period 1st April, 1945, to 31st March, 1946, the sum of £1,264 15s. 5d. was collected as restitution and £252 15s. 4d. was collected as costs of prosecutions, making a total of £1,517 10s. 9d. This is an increase of £53 14s. 7d. over the previous year. There were further amounts paid by service allotments by probationers serving in the Armed Forces and accounted for in Head Office. This side of probation is also a matter for special comment, as in a number of cases the amounts ordered to be paid were substantial, and the probationers have met their obligations readily.

During the year the Magistrates at this centre have on a number of occasions adjourned cases for periods of from three to six months and placed the offenders under the supervision of the Probation Officer, and at the expiration of the period discharged them under section 18 of the Offenders Probation Act. This has added to the work of the Probation Office, as it meant special supervision in many cases and the furnishing of a number of special reports to the Court. This procedure has proved of great benefit to youthful offenders, and to my knowledge not one case so dealt with has made a second appearance before the Court.

In addition to the above offenders, the Probation Officer here has also had under his supervision a number of youths under the age of twenty-one years who have appeared before the Court for minor breaches of the law, when they have been fined and placed under the supervision of the Probation Officer in terms of the Summary Penalties Act, 1939.

The numbers dealt with in both the adjourned cases and Summary Penalty Act are not included in the figures given at the commencement of this report.

*Probationers on Release from Prisons and Borstal Institutions.*—There were 91 probationers in this class on the 1st January, 1945.

One hundred and forty probationers were received on release from the various institutions and 53 were received on transfer from other districts, making a total of 284 dealt with during the period. Of that number, 75 completed the probationary term more or less satisfactorily, 67 were transferred to other districts, 3 were discharged by the Prisons Board, 1 died, and 1 left New Zealand. Fifty-seven probationers came before the Court for other offences, and, of these, 48 received further terms of imprisonment and did not revert to probation either through their probationary licenses being cancelled or on account of the sentence being in excess of the probationary term. The remaining 9 reverted to probation. Four of the offenders who appeared before the Court again were habitual criminals.

The number remaining on the register at the close of 1945 was 89. The total number of defaulters was 48, being 20 per cent. of the total number dealt with. Fourteen per cent. of these defaulters were Maoris. Of the 48 individuals appearing before the Court for other offences, in 16 cases the unlawful conversion of motor-vehicles was involved.

As has been the case over the past few years, there has been little difficulty in securing employment for persons released from Borstal institutions and prisons.

The valuable assistance and ready co-operation received from the staff of the National Service Department and the Vocational Guidance Centre here has relieved the Probation Officer of the necessity of making the matter of employment one for special attention.

One of the features of probation which has always caused the Probation Officer and the probationer some concern was the necessity for keeping the fact that a person was on probation from his employer. However, it is pleasing to know that employers are gradually becoming more sympathetic and broad-minded in their attitude towards these cases. Over the past twelve months some very helpful and sympathetic consideration has been shown by employers to employees who have offended against the law. This attitude is not only helpful to the probationer, but also to the Probation Officer.