

the taking-out of a prohibition order is required. This means that, in the judgment of the Prisons Board, in one-third of the cases of serious crime in the Dominion, the person convicted is addicted to drink to a degree affecting his behaviour and sense of responsibility (R. 21 and 966). The crimes of which these persons have been convicted are rarely forgery, false pretences, or breaking and entering. They are usually crimes in which the passions have been aroused, and include murder, assault, rape, and other sexual offences (R. 967).

430. The evidence of social workers shows that drink is still a cause of domestic misery, though the extent of it appears to vary with the locality. Mr. James Robert McClune, the Superintendent of the Child Welfare Branch of the Education Department, gave evidence that in his view and in the view of the District Child Welfare Officers, there had been a gradual reduction in the number of parents who, by reason of drunkenness, neglected the home or family and whose children had therefore been committed to the care of the State (R. 381 and 810). Mr. McClune also supplied the following table :—

Year.				Number of Children committed.	Number of Families.	Mother addicted to Drink.	Father addicted.	Both addicted.
1927	..	..	..	540	41	7	25	9
1936	..	..	..	440	16	1	8	7
1937	..	..	..	432	13	3	9	1
1938	..	..	..	503	17	1	16	..
1939	..	..	..	501	13	..	13	..
1940	..	..	..	509	11	2	8	1

On the other hand, the impression of the Superintendent and his officers was that, though drunkenness had been decreasing among parents, drinking was more widespread.

431. The view expressed by Mr. McClune was not accepted, in so far as it applied to the City of Auckland, by Mrs. R. M. Metcalfe, the Inspector of the Auckland Branch for the Society for the Protection of Women and Children. She thought the position had remained much the same. During the last four or five years of war, more trouble had been caused by women drinking. Statistics were kept in Auckland of the work of conciliators under the Domestic Proceedings Act, 1938. In the year 1939-40, out of 109 cases referred to conciliation, 33 (or about one-third) were attributed to drink (R. 966). Again, during 1944 the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Society for the Protection of Women and Children found that, out of 267 fresh complaints of domestic unhappiness, 86 (or about one-third) were directly attributable to liquor (R. 2344). Of these 86 cases, in only 11 did the wife or mother drink to excess (R. 2345). In most cases infidelity had been associated with drink (R. 2342). Evidence was also given by Dr. Richards, medical practitioner, of Auckland, of his experience in the ordinary course of his practice during the previous fortnight. He gave details of fourteen cases he had met with in that period in which alcoholic liquor had caused domestic misery, destitution, or ill health (R. 3452 ff.).

432. In Wellington the Rev. Harry Squires, the Missioner in charge of the Wellington City Mission in Taranaki Street, gave evidence of his experience as a conciliator under the Domestic Proceedings Act. He said he had gone through his papers for the last six or seven months and was of opinion that, in at least 60 per cent. of the cases, the complaint had been habitual drunkenness (R. 1377). The Wellington Public Opinion Group of the National Council of Women, represented by Mrs. May, said they had reports through social workers of fathers drinking to excess and then returning to their homes (R. 1691).