

The total sum of £1,593 8s. 11d. was received during the year by way of costs of prosecution and restitution. The further increase in the amount paid may be partly explained by increasing earning-capacity, but, on the whole, payments have been a fair measure of response and of the recognition of a responsibility to make reparation.

During yet another year one has been conscious of immediate post-war conditions that have made for increased earning-power, but also in some cases a lack of any sense of values, especially concerning money. There has been noticeable a somewhat unsettled outlook on the part of some young people who find adjustment difficult, and in regard to whom advice, firm control, and a measure of tolerance are essential in these times.

Generally, the conduct and response on the part of probationers has been up to the average, and evidences of regained self-esteem and of determined efforts towards rehabilitation have more than compensated for inevitable disappointments and the lack of response often on the part of those from whom much was expected.

*Probationers released from Prisons and Borstals.*—The year commenced with 43 reporting under this group; 99 were received from various institutions during the year, and, together with 23 received on transfer, made a total dealt with of 165. Of that number 65 were discharged in the ordinary way, 30 were transferred to other districts, 1 was discharged by the Prisons Board, 2 absconded, 3 left the country with consent, 1 died, licence was cancelled in 1 instance and 14 were imprisoned for subsequent offences, leaving 48 reporting under this heading at the end of the year.

*General.*—There has been continued difficulty in dealing with and advising certain youthful types of both groups in an endeavour to assist them towards a more rational way of life. In some cases the difficulty has been occasioned by lack of suitable living conditions in a city where even reasonable accommodation for people without homes of their own is at a premium. In others there has been evident that same lack of a sense of values, for which there may be various reasons. In some instances, however, surprising results have been achieved in the matter of thrift—with an increasing savings-bank account, there has been a more practical sense of values, a provision that makes for more self-reliance and a feeling of well-being that possession alone engenders in those who have otherwise so little else in the world that they can value.

While certain hostels do exist to cater for particular groups of young people or workers and there are social agencies in the community that fulfil a useful purpose, it is felt that there is a very definite need in this community for further hostel accommodation, especially for youths of post-adolescent age and young men. In addition to the very necessary living-accommodation that such hostels would provide, the opportunity that would exist to encourage a normal social life and the proper recognition of the responsibilities of citizenship would be inestimable and, it is considered, would fulfil a very urgent need at the present time, even in itself. In Wellington alone there are many youths and young men who are more or less adrift, living in rooms—as distinct from having full board, which is becoming a rarity—and of whom a large percentage lack almost entirely any social sense; some will be found to have no established homes anywhere, nor parents nor even interested relatives, while others have fended for themselves since adolescence. Living in rented rooms as many are of necessity, it is not surprising that some of them develop “corner lounging” habits, make undesirable associations, and live an irregular life not far removed from actual criminality. Generally, it is considered they live an existence bereft of the refining influences of a normal social life usually associated with ordered and useful living and the home circle denied to so many of them. It is felt very strongly, therefore, that, apart from the aspect of possible larrikinism, if not criminality, this growing army of young people represents a social problem that is worthy of consideration.

The problem of the young Maori living in the city continues, but with the provision of steady employment and the interest of the Maori Welfare Officers and the activities of the Ngati-Poneke Maori Association much is being accomplished.