

centres. It is among such elements that they find their associates, and among such associates there are invariably people of anti-social tendencies. Thus, bad associations are early and easily established.

Influences of this kind are diffusive in their effect. Natives who have acquired anti-social habits naturally lead other members of their race astray, they being readily susceptible, for the reasons already given.

There are other fundamental causes which seem to operate in the great majority of cases. The Maori whose experiences of life are entirely rural brings to the cities a primitive conception of social life and obligations and an ignorance that might be described as almost entire of European standards of conduct and morality. The conflict between the two conceptions produces bewilderment, and a surrender to the temptations that city life offers is a result. Then, too, living-conditions for Maoris in the cities are extremely difficult. They are congested at best, and there is a tendency for them to congregate in those areas which most closely approximate to slum conditions.

The application of ameliorative measures is a social question for other agencies, but it is in the hope that our conclusions from a great number of individual cases may be of service to them that this subject is adverted to in this report.

The efforts of the Board to understand proclivities and motives in individual cases continue to be very substantially aided by the officers of the Mental Hospitals Department. The ready and generous assistance rendered by those officers is of the greatest value and is deserving of the highest appreciation.

It is fitting, too, that appreciation should be expressed of those organizations and the many individuals who give assistance in the rehabilitation of offenders after release. Their efforts are productive of much good.

GENERAL

Since the Board commenced to function in 1911 no less than 36,923 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, 1948, 6,963 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 5,726. In 730 cases prisoners were required to serve the full sentence imposed by the Court. Of the total number released after undergoing reformatory detention, 25·91 per cent. have been returned to prison either for non-compliance with the conditions of the release or for committing further offences, leaving approximately 74 per cent. who have not been convicted of any further offence.

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, 8,633 cases have been considered by the Board up to December, 1948. In 4,390 cases the prisoners were released on probation or discharge prior to expiry of the full time on the recommendation of the Board. Of this number, 2,904 completed probation satisfactorily, 334 were recommitted for other offences, and 66 were still reporting on probation at the 31st December, 1948, making approximately 67 per cent. who have not subsequently been reconvicted.