

The Honorary Probation Committee has continued to function during the year under the Chairmanship of Mr. J. H. Luxford, S.M. The efforts of the gentlemen constituting the Committee have met with considerable success and I wish to express thanks for their able help and co-operation.

I also express gratitude for assistance received from the Rev. D. Caswell, of the City Mission; the Rev. Geo. Moreton, Secretary of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society; Mr. M. Curran, of the Catholic Youth Centre; the officers of the various Salvation Army institutions and the Maori Welfare Officers.

Mr. R. WATT, Probation Officer, Wellington

*Probationers Released Under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920.*—The year commenced with 194 reporting under this heading; during the year 161 were released on probation by the Courts and, together with 104 received on transfer or taken on to the register, made a total dealt with of 459. During the same period 107 were discharged, 116 were transferred to other districts, 9 are in prison, 7 were dealt with on original charges, 8 left the Dominion with consent, 2 died, and 9 absconded, leaving 201 reporting at the end of the period.

Despite difficulties peculiar to present-day city living, response and general conduct have reached a reasonably high standard. While failures and disappointments are inevitable, there have been few cases of deliberate non-co-operation. For instance, in some cases of failure to report, the failure often resulted from lack of moral courage, a failing that as frequently was connected with the original offence.

The amount paid by way of costs and restitution, £1,110 17s. 10d., is a fair indication of the response of those concerned, besides earning-power. In addition to the intrinsic value of this obligation to make reparation, a useful habit is formed by the weekly or periodical payments by which means the amount was paid. In many cases, when payment has been completed, the periodical instalments have been diverted to a savings account and an attempt made to more firmly establish a habit of thrift.

*Probationers Released From Prisons and Borstals.*—The year commenced with 49 reporting under this heading; 79 were received from institutions and, together with 28 received on transfer, made a total dealt with of 156. Of that number, 42 were discharged, 35 were transferred to other districts, 9 left the country with consent, 12 are in prison, 2 licences were cancelled, 3 were discharged by the Prisons Board, and 3 absconded, leaving 50 on the register at the end of the year.

Those reporting in this group have also proved responsive for the most part. The process of rehabilitation on release from an institution can often be a difficult and disheartening experience, but in many cases industry and regular living, and impelled by a desire to regain self-respect, have brought their own reward.

*General.*—The main difficulty has been experienced in dealing with adolescent and youthful types, among some of whom regular and industrious habits are lacking, and among others helpful associations are an urgent need. Some such cases often tax one's patience, but frequently firmness and necessary tolerance have encouraged a response, and in time one was able to recognize more ordered living and an improved social sense which formerly were entirely lacking.

The want of an established home is a serious hindrance in many cases, and one finds it difficult to cope with undesirable living conditions and consequent inevitable associations. Among other difficulties, such as poor mentality and lack of ability, is the lack of a sense of values, especially concerning money.