

than one occasion during the year, the total number of distinct individuals dealt with being 362. These were made up as follows: Habitual criminals, 81; prisoners undergoing reformatory detention, 267; hard-labour prisoners, 14.

HABITUAL CRIMINALS.

Thirty-eight habitual criminals were recommended for release on probation, and, of these, 36 were released before the end of the year. Two habitual criminals on probation were recommended for discharge, but in one case the recommendation was afterwards rescinded owing to the misbehaviour of the probationer.

Of those released on probation 8 left New Zealand with the Reinforcements, 4 were returned to prison for fresh offences or for breaches of their licenses, 1 died, 1 absconded, and 2 left the Dominion for their former domiciles, leaving 20 still reporting to the Probation Officers at the end of the year.

REFORMATIVE DETENTION CASES.

One hundred and twenty persons of this class were recommended for release on probation, and of this number 81 were released before the end of the year. Thirty-eight persons who had been recommended for release in the previous year were also released, making a total of 119 for the twelve months. Seven were discharged from prison (including 1 recommended in the previous year). Four were discharged from probation on the recommendation of the Board.

Of those released on probation 14 were returned to prison for fresh offences or for breaches of their probationary licenses, 16 left New Zealand with Reinforcements, 5 left the Dominion for their former domiciles, 1 was committed to a mental hospital, 1 absconded, 1 was accidentally killed, and 34 completed their terms of probation, leaving 47 still reporting at the end of the year.

EXTENSION OF THE BOARD'S JURISDICTION.

Under the provisions of section 14 of the Statute Law Amendment Act, 1917, the Board was empowered to consider, at the request of the Minister of Justice, the cases of prisoners who had been sentenced to imprisonment with or without hard labour for periods exceeding two years, after half of the full term of imprisonment had expired, and to make recommendations to the Governor-General as to the release on probation of any such prisoner. The names of fourteen hard-labour prisoners were submitted to the Board towards the end of the year, but after due consideration the Board did not see its way to make any recommendations so far as releasing the delinquents was concerned.

GENERAL.

The Board in its various inspections saw nothing calling for any criticism. Many of the prisoners seemed to have improved in physique, and many were striving to improve themselves in discipline and industry.

Some of those released have proved unable to resist the temptations to which they are subjected out of gaol, showing that reform does not come easily. The shadow of our great war is cast over even prisons and prisoners, and further reforms that might be suggested in dealing with those undergoing punishment or reformation cannot be brought into operation at present.

Signed on behalf of the Board.

ROBERT STOUT, President.

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