

I desire to gladly acknowledge the uniform courtesy and assistance I have received during the past seven years from gaol, Court, and police officials. The work accomplished could not have been done without the sympathetic help I have received on all sides. The Judges and Magistrates have been exceedingly good to me during all these years. The public can little realize the labour and effort that the responsible officers of justice put into their work to give every one a fair deal and every delinquent a fighting chance to "make good." Members of the Auckland Bar have helped me in ways too numerous to mention, and I gratefully acknowledge their numerous acts of kindness and advice.

As this is my final report, I may be forgiven for drawing a comparison between prison and probation systems of work. It takes a staff of at least fifty and a large institution to care for 320 prisoners at great cost to the country. Three of us manage to care for 200 probationers, with probably less cases for discipline and punishment than in the prisons.

In conclusion, sir, I desire to heartily thank you for all you have done to support me in every way you have been able to. Only the claims of orphan and destitute children in our midst make it possible for me to relinquish this work and break an official relationship that has been without interruption of the most pleasant nature. If I can ever help you in any way I trust you will call upon me. I do hope the day is not far distant when the social problems will be grappled with by some central organization and not dealt with in the present piecemeal fashion.

REV. FRANK RULE, PROBATION OFFICER, CHRISTCHURCH.

I have to report that during the year ended 31st March, 1922, the work of the Probation Officer under the Offenders Probation Act, 1920, has very materially been increased. The humane provisions of the 1920 Act are being taken advantage of by all the Magistrates that sit in Christchurch as well as by the Judges that preside in our Supreme Court. During most of the year under review I was out of the Dominion, and the work of this office was ably done by Mr. D. H. Fawcett.

While on holiday in America and Great Britain it was gratifying to find that in neither country was the work of seeking the reformation of those tempted to live by crime done any more effectively than in our own Dominion. The numbers that come before the Court again after being given the chance this system provides is gratifyingly small.

The following figures show the cases dealt with during the year: Number on books at the beginning of the year, 49; put on probation during the year, 69; received on transfer from other districts, 20; completed and discharged, 34; transferred to other districts, 23; to inebriates institution, 1; defaulted and not traced, 4; sent to prison, 7; on the books at close of the year, 69.

REV. F. G. CUMMING, GENERAL PROBATION OFFICER, DUNEDIN.

In giving a brief report of the probation work in this district for the last twelve months covering Offenders Probation Act and Crimes Amendment Act probationers it is pleasing indeed to be able to say nothing but good concerning the systems under the two Probation Acts. At the present moment I have reporting to me some eighty men and women who are making a determined effort to "make good." I have only had to recommend the cancellation of some three licenses during the past twelve months.

Yes, the provisions of both Acts are good, and the country is to be congratulated upon the satisfactory results which one is pleased to record. Most men and women can and do behave well under supervision, and that supervision, in most cases, can be made as effective outside an institution as inside; and one thanks God not only for the chance given, but for the results obtained. There is, in my opinion, only one principle in penology that is worth any consideration: it is to find out why a man or woman does wrong and make it not worth his or her while to continue in such wrongdoing. This is what our new Probation Act really does, and in this lies its success. I again point out what valuable opportunities Probation Officers really have. It is more than pleasing to look upon the year's work and see the triumphs in the way of true reform, and further to witness these men and women making such an heroic attempt to do things satisfactory to themselves and to the community.

I find that one of the best methods of getting and keeping the confidence of the probationer is to make him feel that the responsibility of "making good" is his, and is not so much due to the oversight of the Probation Officer. In other words, there is given to him full confidence that he is capable of becoming a new man. The more that I see of the new Act the stronger becomes my conviction that it is most humane.

I ought to say further that I have very little difficulty in placing these men and women in good positions. My work during the year has been a decided pleasure.

MR. A. McLEAN, GENERAL PROBATION OFFICER, INVERCARGILL.

I beg to report that at the beginning of the year there were seven probationers on the register, exclusive of two probationers residing in another district whose payments of restitution-moneys were disposed of through this office. Twenty-six persons—twenty-three males and three females—were placed on probation from the Supreme and Magistrate's Courts, and five were received on transfer from other districts. Of the number placed on probation through this office twelve were from the Supreme Court and fourteen from the Magistrate's Court. The periods of probation were—twelve for three years, two for two years, eleven for one year, and one for six months. Eight were under twenty years of age, ten were between twenty-one and thirty, five from thirty-one to forty, and three were over forty years of age. During the year twenty-two were transferred to other districts, fourteen of whom returned to their homes immediately on release from the Courts; and in eight instances probationers removed to other districts to improve their positions and environment;