

MRS. ANNIE GORDON, AUCKLAND.

I beg to submit my first annual report on the working of the Offenders Probation Act. As this is my first report since taking over the work, I will give the numbers dealt with since 1921: The total number dealt with to the end of March of this year is eighty-five. During the past year thirty have been admitted to probation; these, with fifty-three who were on the register, and two received on transfer, show that eighty-five have been under my care. One probationer was transferred, and two received, leaving fifty-four reporting at the 1st April, 1925.

These are the figures; but I desire to show something of what lies behind the bare numbers given. Let me record first of all that I am fully convinced of the great value of the Offenders Probation Act, and can testify to the success of its working in the majority of the cases that have come under my care. Full success has not been attained in every case, and it can be readily understood that much time and care is involved in dealing with some of the young women who are admitted to probation. The majority, however, have shown great appreciation of probation, and of the efforts put forth on their behalf to assist them to make good.

I have found that the chief causes resulting in the appearance of these offenders before the Court has been indulgence in drink, smoking, stealing, and the cheap dance-rooms, and in many cases the absence, in varying degrees, of parental control. The offenders being admitted to probation, and coming under the care of the Probation Officer, come under that control and guidance which has been lacking, and which was all that was required to keep them from further lapses. It has indeed been gratifying to have so many expressions of appreciation from probationers for the efforts made in assisting them to rehabilitate themselves. It has often been just the kindly interest shown that has been the incentive to better things.

From my long and varied experience of work amongst women, and the bad results in so many cases where young offenders have been sent to prison, I feel that the probation work is a success, despite the few that have failed to make good. The making of restitution is one of the greatest things in the probation system.

MISS HANNAH L. COOMBS, DUNEDIN.

It is with pleasure I report to you on the work entrusted to me. As Probation Officer only my duties are not heavy, but as Police Court Officer I devote every morning to assisting in any and every way possible.

Only one female released on probation had to be brought before the Magistrate to receive sentence during the year; not one failed to pay restitution in the time specified; while five have married, are comfortably settled and doing really well; two others have just become engaged. These girls do not call on me only to report, but to confide their joys or their sorrows. I study to find congenial environment and employment for the different types and temperaments.

As Probation Officer I am always in attendance at the Supreme Court sittings as long as female witnesses are to attend Court. His Honour is always particularly gracious when I have had occasion to report to him.

In conclusion, I must say I have to thank the Magistrate and officials for the courtesy and consideration shown; never have I sought their advice or assistance without a ready and cheerful response.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT.

AGES AND TERMS OF PROBATION OF THE OFFENDERS ADMITTED TO PROBATION DURING YEAR 1924.

Age, in Years.	Six Months or under.	One Year.	Eighteen Months.	Two Years.	Three Years.	Four Years.	Five Years.	Total.
10 and under 15 ..	2	..	1	2	..	..	..	5
15 .. 20 ..	8	62	8	63	40	1	1	183
20 .. 25 ..	5	53	4	56	26	..	1	145
25 .. 30 ..	6	24	3	27	17	..	..	77
30 .. 40 ..	4	32	2	49	14	1	..	102
40 .. 50 ..	4	12	1	25	11	..	1	54
50 .. 70 ..	2	8	..	4	4	..	..	18
70 and over ..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	2
Totals ..	32	191	19	227	112	2	3	586

SUMMARY OF CASES DEALT WITH DURING YEAR 1924.

				Admitted to Probation.	Deferred Sentence.	Total.
Number reporting on 1st January, 1924	..	..	..	929	43	972
Admitted to probation during 1924	..	..	..	586	73	659
Totals	..	..	..	1,515	116	1,631
Completed probation during year	..	..	..	463	37	500
Deceased ..	..	..	..	3	..	3
Left the Dominion ..	..	..	..	5	..	5
Committed to an industrial school	..	..	..	1	..	1
Serving term of imprisonment	..	..	..	44	..	44
Discharged by Prisons Board	..	..	..	18	2	20
Totals	..	..	..	534	39	573
Reporting on 31st December, 1924	..	..	..	981	77	1,058