

wise counsel and personal influence, retard tendencies towards anti-social conduct. The Probation Officer, subject to the advice and counsel of the chairman of his committee, will be responsible for the effective organization and working of his voluntary committee; he will maintain a general oversight over all probationers, and will act as liaison officer between the probationers and the Courts; but beyond this the personal work with each probationer will be entrusted to the voluntary Probation Officers whose main function will be to counsel, advise, and befriend—in other words, to make the system a positive and helpful force rather than a negative and repressive relationship.

The underlying principles of probation are aptly summed up by Dr. Muirhead, of the Birmingham University, as follows:—

“ Probation is a recognition in the field of crime and punishment—first, of the sensitiveness of unformed character to the influence of circumstances; second, of the responsibility of society itself for the direction of those influences; and third, the superiority in certain well-defined cases of the method of home oversight to any form of prison discipline as a means of improvement . . . The oversight without stigma of imprisonment, the replacement in normal circumstances, engagement in ordinary industry, the opportunity of applying individual care, the power of applying the wholesome discipline of making compensation where the offence is against property by small self-earned instalments, and, lastly, the saving to the community equivalent to the expense and support in an institution, place the advantages of the system in suitable cases beyond all question.”

I desire to place on record my appreciation of the ready assistance given at all times by the members of the staff of the Department, and would also take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the splendid work done by the honorary Probation Officers who have been displaced by the appointment of full-time officers already referred to.

B. L. DALLARD,
Chief Probation Officer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

W. J. CAMPBELL, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I have the honour to submit my fifth annual report as Probation Officer of the Auckland District.

While the total numbers dealt with during the period under review show a slight decrease compared with those of the previous period—the difference in the totals dealt with being 22—the total remaining on register shows a considerable reduction—i.e., 75 probationers less. The reduction in the number admitted to probation can be attributed to several causes, chief of which has been that many cases which might be said to be in the probation category have been such that they could be met by fine, or by deferred sentence where it was not required that the offender should report to the Probation Officer.

Appended are the complete figures for the year ending 31st March, 1927:—

Probationers on register at 1st April, 1926	..	..	..	..	297
Probationers received from Auckland Courts	..	..	..	..	109
Probationers received on transfer from other districts	..	..	..	..	57
					166
Total dealt with	..	..	..	..	463
Of these there were—					
Probationers discharged by Prisons Board	..	..	..	..	4
Probationers completed probationary term	..	..	..	..	129
Probationers transferred to other districts	..	..	..	..	89
Probationers left the Dominion by permission	..	..	..	..	9
Probationers sentenced for other offences which the termination of the period of probation antedated	..	..	..	..	10
					241
Total remaining on register at 1st April, 1927	..	..	..	..	222

The total number of probationers who came before the Court again was 41. The 31 probationers who were sentenced or fined for minor offences and breaches of probation reverted to probationary conditions after release, and with a few exceptions, who had to be dealt with again, they continued to behave in a satisfactory manner. The number of defaulters, 41, is approximately 9 per cent. of the total number dealt with during the year. This result, while not fulfilling expectations, compares favourably with the results shown in previous years.

The amounts received as restitution and costs during the year were—Restitution, £995 3s. 10d.; costs of prosecution, £118 15s. 2d.: a total of £1,113 19s.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—The average number reporting during the year was 37. In this category 35 probationers completed the term of probation, 3 were discharged from probation by the Prisons Board, 4 committed fresh offences and were sentenced to further terms of imprisonment, while 4 probationers had their licenses cancelled for failing to carry out the probationary conditions. With a few exceptions where the conduct of the probationer was not all that could be desired, those who completed the probationary term did so in a creditable manner. It is pleasing to record that, while the majority did well, there are outstanding cases where some of these men have done exceptionally well, and are now in good remunerative positions where ability and honesty are essential.