

Public Account, and the balance, £21 7s. 4d., paid to the Police Department. The restitution required to be made amounted to £301 2s. 3d., of which £86 19s. 3d. was collected and handed over in accordance with the orders made by the Courts.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers, and Prevention of Crime (Borstal Institutions Establishment Act) Probationers :—

	Males.
On register at the beginning of the year	4
Received from Borstal institutions during the year	2
Transferred from other institutions	8
Total dealt with during the year	14
Completed probation in course of the year	1
Transferred to other districts	6
Total removed from roll during the year	7

As in the previous group, the probationers here enumerated are all males; the total (14) being 2 in excess of last year's total. The conduct of those admitted to probation from Courts has been satisfactory with one exception. In this case the offender was dealt with on a fresh charge and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

One of the principal duties of a Probation Officer, if not the most important, is to see that those under his care are suitably placed as regards employment. If the offender who is endeavouring to win his way back to citizenship is busily employed his rehabilitation is practically assured. During the past year the unemployment question has been acute all over the Dominion, and it is but natural that it should be our most difficult problem. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, however, I think we have been fortunate in finding work for our probationers, even if it has been only temporary. For this state of affairs much credit is due to the members of the Probation Committee, who have spared neither time nor effort to assist those cases brought under their notice from time to time. To have a sympathetic friend to appeal to in time of need is invaluable for sustaining each sincere trier in the difficult task of winning an honourable place again in the community.

Towards the end of the year the Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. G. Cruickshank, who had been chairman of the voluntary committee since its inception, relinquished the position upon his retirement from the Magistracy on superannuation. During the twenty-five years Mr. Cruickshank presided over the Courts of this district he turned to the best account his opportunities of proving his understanding of delinquent types and his friendly purpose towards each offender. In voluntary as well as in his official capacities Mr. Cruickshank lent sympathetic help in furthering modern reformative schemes for dealing with law-breakers. He was a firm believer in the probation system, and made full use of its provisions to the lasting advantage of many an unfortunate. From all associated with him in this hopeful sphere of service he bears with them their enduring good wishes.

To the Court officials and the police I desire to tender my thanks for assistance so ungrudgingly given whenever sought.

Mr. W. H. DARBY, District Probation Officer, Christchurch.

In presenting my second annual report in connection with my work as Probation Officer of the Christchurch District, it gives me great pleasure to say that I believe the system continues to make substantial progress, in that it is better understood to-day than it was two years ago. Day by day, week in and week out, we have striven to let all those we have come in contact with know that our chief aim is to endeavour to make decent healthy-minded citizens out of all those who come under our supervision. It is quite true that in some cases we have failed in our endeavour, but it has not been for want of trying. Some exceedingly difficult cases have come under our notice, involving much time and thought, but I am very glad to say that, with the exception of one or two, these cases now show some signs of definite progress.

Apart from the number already on probation at the commencement of the year, it will be seen that there is a big increase in the numbers released from the local Courts on probation during the year as compared with the previous year. Much of this increase is due to the satisfactory reports we have been able to submit, and also proves that the system finds favour with the authorities concerned. Only once or twice during my term of office here has my plea for the releasing of offenders on probation been refused. The difficulty that I anticipated in my last annual report regarding employment did not eventuate, and we have had little or no trouble in that respect.

I am very glad to be able to report on the success of our efforts to encourage thrift among the young fellows coming under our notice. In some cases it has taken weeks of effort to get some to make a start, but once they start there is no stopping them. The realization that week by week their account in the savings-bank is growing has given them a new lease of life. Every now and then some young fellow, without being asked, will very proudly bring his book along for me to see. Some of their own free will have asked me to take care of their books and make their deposits. In all cases now, where young fellows are released on probation and have not already got an account at the savings-bank, I make it a condition that they start one right away.

Once again we are constrained to gratefully acknowledge the very valuable assistance we have received from the Voluntary Probation Committee. Whenever I have found it necessary to appeal to them for help of any kind they have most generously given of their best.