

1930.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT:
PRISONS BOARD

(ANNUAL REPORT OF) FOR 1929.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.

Hon. Mr. JUSTICE REED, C.B.E. (President) ; Sir DONALD MCGAVIN, Kt., C.M.G., M.D. (Lond.) ; D. G. A. COOPER, Esq. ; JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq., C.M.G. ; THEO. G. GRAY, Esq., M.B., M.P.C. ; Mrs. C. A. FRAER ; and B. L. DALLARD, Esq., Contoller-General of Prisons.

SIR,—

23rd July, 1930.

I have the honour to forward herewith the report of the Prisons Board for the year 1929.

As you are aware, Sir, for the greater part of the period covered by this report I was absent on leave abroad. During this period—that is, from the 19th February, 1929, until the end of the year—the Honourable Sir Alexander Herdman, Kt., was Acting-President of the Board.

The Board desires to place upon record its profound sense of loss in the deaths of the Right Honourable Sir Robert Stout, P.C., K.C.M.G., Sir George Fenwick, and William Reece, Esq. Each of these gentlemen had been an original foundation member of the Board, and for many years rendered valuable voluntary public service in this connection.

Since the last annual report vacancies on the Board have been filled by the appointments of Dr. T. G. Gray, Director-General of Mental Hospitals, and Mrs. C. A. Fraer, of Christchurch.

Reviewing the operations of the Board briefly, the results may be regarded on the whole as satisfactory. There has been a slight increase in the number granted a remission of their sentences on probation as compared with the previous year. The percentage of lapses subsequent to release, with the exception of habitual criminals, has been small, only 16 per cent. of those ordered Borstal detention by the Courts under the Prevention of Crime Act, 1924, having again appeared before the Courts after release. In this class, if the percentage of failures is calculated on the total number who have passed through the Borstal Institutions by transfer or otherwise since their inception, the statistics show that just over 10 per cent. only have relapsed into crime subsequent to their release. The number released after serving sentences of reformatory detention or imprisonment involving hard labour, who were reconvicted or failed to comply with the conditions of their release, was just over 26 per cent. Not so satisfactory have been the results in regard to habitual criminals—57 per cent. of those who had been declared habitual criminals and released in terms of the Crimes Amendment Act since the constitution of the Prisons Board in 1911 have been returned to prison for non-compliance with the conditions of their probation or for further offences.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Justice.

J. R. REED, President.