

AN EPITOME OF REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

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

Offenders Probation Act : Total dealt with, 308 ; total restitution and costs collected, £792 4s. 3d.
Crimes Amendment Act : Number dealt with, 119.

The number of defaulters was 10, but to these there must be added 4 who came before the Court for breach of probation, were sentenced, and later reverted to probationary conditions, and 2 who absconded and had not been traced before the end of the period, making a total defaulters' list of 16. This number is approximately 5 per cent. of the total dealt with for the year, being 3 per cent. less failures than that reported during the previous five years.

This result may be considered very satisfactory, especially in view of the conditions prevailing during the year. In a time when unemployment is so prevalent, when probationers, by reason of their transgression, find it doubly hard to obtain employment, the result of the year's working reflects greatly to the credit of the probationers dealt with.

Crimes Amendment Act Probationers.—The average number under this heading who reported during the period was 58. In this class 41 completed the probationary term satisfactorily, with the exception of 3 whose conduct was subject to censure. The failure to obtain employment had a considerable bearing on the conduct of those who failed.

Mr. T. P. MILLS, District Probation Officer, Wellington.

Offenders Probation Act : Total dealt with, 225 ; total restitution and costs collected, £401 2s. 6d.
Crimes Amendment Act : Number dealt with, 141.

The most difficult problem was that of finding employment. At the present time several probationers are out of permanent employment, but fortunately have had their share of relief work. In spite of the mental strain which has been placed on probationers, and the tendency that fitful employment has in providing opportunities for wrong doing, it is gratifying to state that the lapses are not at all excessive, only 7 per cent. of the total dealt with committing subsequent offences.

Although the number granted probation in the Wellington Court slightly exceeds that of last year's low figures, the increase being 12, the old offender has been much more in evidence. It speaks well for the district generally, and it is to be hoped that the diminution in the numbers of the first offenders will be permanent.

The moneys collected during the year show a marked decrease.

On the whole, the conduct of the Crimes Amendment Act probationers has been most encouraging.

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

Offenders Probation Act : Total dealt with, 176 ; total restitution and costs collected, £479 13s. 10d.
Crimes Amendment Act : Number dealt with, 80.

Undoubtedly the past year has been a hard one for everybody concerned, and had it not been for the efforts made by local bodies to provide work for the unemployed it is not difficult to realize what would have been the plight of very many. Notwithstanding the serious economic position, most probationers who have restitution to make have made a wonderful effort to fulfil their obligations.

Unfortunately it was found necessary to refer several probationers back to the Court on account of their conduct, failure to report, and other causes. So far as the majority of probationers are concerned, it is very gratifying to be able to say that they are making splendid progress. Up till the end of the year no young fellow who could do farm-work and would go into the country was out of a job, and, what is more, they are still there and doing well.

The carrying-out of this work would be impossible single-handed, and so to all who have been co-workers my heartfelt thanks are tendered. I can say sincerely that to all whom I have appealed for assistance, a very ready response has been the result.

Mr. J. GARBUTT, Probation Officer, Dunedin.

Offenders Probation Act : Total dealt with, 110 ; total restitution and costs collected, £120 10s. 1d.
Crimes Amendment Act : Number dealt with, 55.

As might be expected under present conditions, restitutional figures have fallen considerably, but not out of reasonable proportion to the difficulties encountered by probationers in meeting their obligations and the moral benefits derived from so doing.

Taken on the whole, behaviour and response to control has been well maintained, the only exceptions being the usual small number of defaulters whose lapse has in each case been adequately dealt with by the Courts. Their behaviour on the whole has been satisfactory, and, despite unusually difficult times, they have shown a desire to meet their disadvantages in a manly spirit in an effort to make good.

The Patients and Prisoners' Aid Society continues to render useful service on behalf of prisoners on discharge and their dependants, both before and after release, and, being associated with the society in accommodation and work, I can speak with full appreciation of their efforts in that behalf.

Adjutant V. D. WOOD, S.A., Female Probation Officer, Dunedin.

Offenders Probation Act : Total dealt with, 12 ; total restitution and costs collected, £12 8s. 6d.
Crimes Amendment Act : Number dealt with, 2.

The probationers under my care have given me very little trouble. When they find we are really out to help them, with few exceptions they immediately respond.