

This form of probation will be better understood if it is explained that the granting of parole is not merely a shortening unconditionally of the offender's term by way of clemency or leniency granted to well-behaved prisoners. It is part of a system which first involves the consideration of the offender's record and character and his prospect of ultimately making good, and, secondly, provides the machinery for the shepherding of the parolee during the transition period from the more or less abnormal life of the institution to the normal life in the community. Probation during this period of readjustment is designed to protect the public and at the same time help the parolee during the most difficult period in his career.

Conclusion.—I desire to place on record the Department's appreciation of the valuable assistance given in the probation work by a large body of public-spirited citizens working with Probation Officers, both individually and through the Voluntary Probation Committees, the Borstal Associations, the Prisoners' Aid Societies, the Salvation Army, and other social-service organizations. There are some four hundred people, including officials, engaged in this important social service. I particularly desire to place on record the Department's gratitude to the Women's Borstal Association for its unflagging interest in the care of the young women released from the Point Halswell Borstal Institution.

I also wish to record my thanks to my own staff for their loyal co-operation; also to the Salvation Army officers, Police officers, and others who act as Probation Officers.

B. L. DALLARD,
Chief Probation Officer.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. J. ANDERSON, District Probation Officer, Auckland.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the probation work at this centre for the period from 1st January, 1937, to 31st December, 1937.

At the beginning of the period under review there were 170 probationers on the register, 160 were admitted to probation from the Auckland Courts, and 41 were received on transfer, making a total of 371 dealt with. Of that number, 74 completed the probationary period, 82 were transferred to other districts, 4 were discharged from probation by the Prisons Board, 4 left the Dominion by permission, 5 were brought before the Court and sentenced on the original charge, while 7 came before the Court for other offences committed while on probation. The foregoing figures total 176, which, deducted from the total number dealt with, left 195 probationers on the register at the termination of the period under review.

To the number of defaulters shown above there has to be added 8 others who came before the Court for other offences and later reverted to probationary conditions. A total defaulters' list of 20 is, therefore, shown for the year, that number being not quite 6 per cent. of the total number dealt with, a result which may be considered very satisfactory indeed.

The sum of £695 3s. 5d. was paid in as restitution, and £82 4s. as costs of prosecution, a total of £777 7s. 5d. for the year. That total is £236 over that shown for the previous year, reflecting in some degree the improved conditions in relation to employment and earnings.

Apart from the number of defaulters shown, the majority of the probationers who reported during the period were very well behaved, thus showing an appreciation of the opportunity given by the Courts in granting probation. There are always those, however, who at some time during the probationary period show in a greater or lesser degree that lack of sense of responsibility necessary to the full compliance with the conditions imposed. One has therefore to act somewhat in the role of a schoolmaster of a large class—warning, advising, admonishing, and, as a last resource in the case of those who again transgress, punishing through the Courts.

Experience from year to year convinces that the measure of wisdom and understanding is largely the measure of success in dealing with those probation units that go to make the whole.

There is much in this probation work that cannot be expressed in figures. The figures given, however, go to show the success, the value, and the wisdom of the system of probation. It should never be forgotten that where probation is extended those offenders so dealt with are kept from prison, with all that such a sentence implies and entails.

A decided improvement in the conditions relating to employment was apparent throughout the period.

The members of the Probation Committee did all that was possible to assist in that respect, and my thanks are due to them for their kindly efforts and assistance in a number of cases.

Probationers on Release from Prison and Borstal Institutions.—At the beginning of the year there were 72 probationers in this class on the register, and 142 were received on probation from the various institutions or on transfer from other districts, showing a total of 214 dealt with. Of these, 82 completed the term of probation, 26 were transferred to other districts, 3 were discharged by the Prisons Board, 4 left the Dominion by permission, 1 was drowned, and 21 were sentenced to terms of imprisonment for offences committed while on probation, leaving 77 probationers on the register at 31st December, 1937.

Three of the number who committed further offences were habitual criminals whose licenses were cancelled. Two probationers had failed to report, and had not been traced up to the end of the year. The number of defaulters shown in this class is approximately 10 per cent. of the total of the 214 dealt with.