

(2) *Analysis of Total Appearances.*—(a) Complaints under the Child Welfare Act : Children appearing under this section were indigent, not under proper control, living in a detrimental environment, or neglected. There were 414 cases, as against 443 for the previous year, 458 for 1946-47, 454 for 1945-46, and 517 for 1944-45.

(b) Offences : The total number of appearances before the Courts for all offences, including breaches of special Acts, regulations, and by-laws, over the past five years are as follows : 1944-45, 2,012 ; 1945-46, 1,786 ; 1946-47, 1,568 ; 1947-48, 1,589 ; and 1948-49, 1,469.

(3) *Repeaters.*—The number of children who, on appearing before the Courts last year, were making a second or subsequent appearance for offences was 314. The corresponding numbers for the five previous years were : 1944, 368 ; 1945, 302 ; 1946, 339 ; 1947, 365 ; and 1948, 340. In determining these cases a very wide interpretation has been given to the term " repeater." No time-limit is set between the child's first and his second or subsequent Court appearance for offences, nor is the degree of seriousness of an offence taken into account. The total includes, therefore, many cases of offences of a minor nature, and frequently a considerable period has expired before an appearance at Court is repeated.

(4) *Trend over Recent Years.*—In the reports during recent years an indication of trend has been given by comparing the annual figures and the rates per 10,000 of the juvenile population (aged seven to seventeen) since the year 1938 for (a) total Court appearances for offences, (b) appearances under the heading " theft," and (c) appearances for the more serious cases, taking in those under the first six headings in Table 2.

It has now been found that the population figures on which the rates were based were those for Europeans only, which had the effect of making the rates appear higher than they were in fact. The tables have been revised on the basis of the corrected population figures and they have been brought up to date by the inclusion of the figures for 1949. They are as follows :—

—	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.
(a) TOTAL COURT APPEARANCES FOR OFFENCES												
Total ..	2,447	2,248	2,464	2,424	2,421	2,446	2,493	2,012	1,786	1,568	1,589	1,469
Rate ..	77	72	79	79	79	81	84	68	60	52	51	47*
(b) APPEARANCES UNDER THE HEADING " THEFT "												
Total ..	957	818	1,049	1,121	1,037	1,127	1,132	993	847	703	782	752
Rate ..	30	26	34	36	34	37	38	33	28	23	25	24*
(c) MORE SERIOUS OFFENCES												
Total ..	1,313	1,245	1,507	1,437	1,469	1,593	1,614	1,402	1,243	1,086	1,174	1,060
Rate ..	42	40	48	47	48	53	54	47	42	36	38	34*

\* The rates for the appearances in 1948-49 have been based on the estimated population as at 31st December, 1947, as have those for 1947-48.

It will be seen that these tables do not support the statements still occasionally reported to have been made by some public speakers to the effect that juvenile delinquency in this country is increasing and has become a very grave problem. Further, the tables do not reflect the post-war increases in juvenile delinquency said to have been experienced overseas. The position revealed by them is a comparatively satisfactory one, but, of course, it would be quite wrong for any one concerned with problems of child welfare (and that really means the whole community) to accept the remarkable improvement in the position as a justification for slackening up on the work of dealing with the delinquency that remains. To attempt to account for the decreases in Court appearances would be largely a matter of conjecture. I would hope, however, that the expansion in the preventive work of the Division in recent years has had some effect on the position.