

1949
NEW ZEALAND

EDUCATION:

**CHILD WELFARE, STATE CARE OF CHILDREN, SPECIAL
SCHOOLS, AND INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION**

[In continuation of E-4, 1948]

Presented to Both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency

SIR,—

24th June, 1949.

In presenting my report on the work of the Child Welfare Division for the year ended 31st March, 1949, I refer those interested to E—4, 1946, for fuller information about the functions of the Division.

A development during the year, leading to an extension of the work of the Division, was the passing of the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1948, which primarily made legislative provision for the Superintendent of Child Welfare to assume the guardianship of the immigrant children who are being brought to this country under two official schemes. The first concerns children from the United Kingdom, whose settlement in New Zealand is the subject of arrangements between the Government of New Zealand and the parents or guardians of the children. These children will be placed by the Superintendent in the care of suitable persons to whom the guardianship may, in certain circumstances, be transferred after six months. The second scheme relates to refugee children ("displaced persons"), who are coming to New Zealand pursuant to an arrangement between the Government of New Zealand and the International Refugee Organization. These children will be available for adoption.

Now that the schemes have been started, it is anticipated that substantial numbers of British children will be coming to this country in small parties spaced at fairly regular intervals, but indications are that only a very small number of refugee children are available for settlement here.

Some hundreds of people have submitted applications to take immigrant children into their homes. The applicants are being interviewed and their homes inspected as a necessary safeguard for satisfactory placements.

Following negotiations with the Prime Minister's Department, the Army Department, and the Polish authorities, arrangements were completed for the Child Welfare Division to assume administrative responsibility, as from 1st April, 1949, for the Polish children who came to New Zealand during the war and who were formerly accommodated in the Polish Camp at Pahiataua. Extra specialist staff have been attached to the Head Office of the Division to cope with this work.

When statutory authority was provided for the guardianship of immigrant children the opportunity was taken to incorporate certain miscellaneous minor amendments, mainly of a machinery nature, to the original Child Welfare Act. One of these changed the name of the Child Welfare Branch to that of Child Welfare Division. None of the amendments calls for special comment.

In last year's report I referred to the proposal to establish a School of Social Work at Victoria University College, which would provide Child Welfare Officers and prospective appointees to this Division with opportunities to undertake courses of study specifically designed to meet the needs of social-service workers in various fields. The proposal has been taken a stage further by an appointment from overseas to the professorial chair. It is anticipated that the course will begin at the start of the next academic year.

HONORARY CHILD WELFARE OFFICERS

At the 31st March, 1949, there were 230 honorary officers holding office in various parts of the Dominion under authority given them by the Minister. The Division is fortunate in being able to call on the services of these men and women, whose voluntary assistance with the supervision of children, with the selection of foster-homes, and with other miscellaneous duties, particularly in outlying districts, constitutes a valuable community work.

CHILD WELFARE INSTITUTIONS

In common with other Departments and organizations, the Division has experienced difficulty in maintaining the staffing of its institutions at full strength, but, nevertheless, as I reported last year, it has been possible to meet all demands on those institutions for the accommodation of children. The reports from all institutions have revealed satisfactory work and development.

Extracts from the reports of the Manager, Boys' Training Centre, Levin, and the Principal, Girls' Training Centre, Burwood, are as follows:—

(a) *Levin* :—

The building of a modern trade training section was completed early in the year. The actual construction of the building was very largely the work of the boys themselves, and this presented a great and unique opportunity for those lads who participated in the work. The fact that it was built by the boys gives to the unit a value far greater than could ever come as the result of erecting a building by outside contract.

With the coming to hand of machine tools, the scope of the carpentry and cabinetmaking sections has been increased and the boys associated with the section are gaining a valuable grounding and training which will undoubtedly stand them in good stead when they are returned to society and placed upon a competitive market.

The Centre, while designed for older boys, also caters for the needs of those boys of primary-school age whose records make it undesirable that they should mix with the younger boys at the School Section at Hoki Beach. These lads, together with a few of secondary-school standard, comprise the normal school group, and are given full-time schooling. For this we utilize the Department's Correspondence School facilities, and the work is supervised by a member of the staff.

The system of satisfying, as far as possible, each lad's preference for the type of work he would like to undertake while in residence here continues to work out very satisfactorily, and while providing for all those boys who wish to be given carpentry instruction, it leaves sufficient labour available for the operation of the farm. As the farm is a small mixed one, admirable opportunities exist for the training of boys in a wide range of farming activities, and on a rotational scheme each boy, reckoning on an average of six months' work on the farm, gains experience and fairly intensive training in most farming operations.

Worthy of mention as a major activity of the Centre is the community service performed by boys in their spare time. The outstanding effort during the past twelve months was the construction of a bowling-green for the Levin Returned Services Association. The Play Centre looks to us for many of their needs. We have renovated their building, tidied their grounds, made toys and furniture, and at the time of writing this report they are about to take delivery of a "jungle-gym." Other bodies who in the last twelve months have received extensive help in widely differing directions include the Amateur Athletic and Cycling Association, the A. and P. Association, the dairy factory, the district school, the Horticultural Society, and the Churches.

In sport and recreation a development during the 1948-49 season was that of permitting representative boys to travel to athletic meetings and ball games as far afield as Wanganui and Palmerston North to the north and Wellington to the south.

Several lads from the Centre are affiliated with the Amateur Athletic and Cycling Club and have travelled with other members to district meetings, as indicated above.

Three softball teams were fielded, resulting (as in 1944) in the B team carrying off the Homer Shield and the A team reaching the semi-finals before being eliminated for the Centre Shield. Interest in cricket has been stimulated by several visits to the Centre from members of the Palmerston North and Levin Chambers of Commerce. The interest taken by these bodies in the Centre is most gratifying and, indeed, has been most helpful to us.

Initiated in 1946, the practice of permitting boys to attend Divine services in the Churches of their choice, and there to mix freely with the congregation, has fully justified expectations, and there is a growing sincerity about Church attendance. Moreover, as stressed in last year's report, these unsupervised contacts with members of the community undoubtedly have a beneficial effect.

The health of the boys has been excellent. That the Centre has escaped the ravages of poliomyelitis speaks well for the standard of personal and general hygiene.

A very happy atmosphere prevails among the residents of the School Section at Hokio Beach. Some considerable attention has been given during the year to renovating and painting, particularly the interior of the building, and it is hoped that shortly electric power will be available to add considerably to the comfort and convenience of the residents.

The table below shows the admissions and discharges for the period under review :—

Roll at 31st March, 1948	..	..	..	..	..	52
Admissions during year	..	..	..	..	..	34
Discharges during year	..	..	..	..	..	34
Roll at 31st March, 1949	..	..	..	..	..	52

Average length of residence at Senior Section : 14 months.

Average length of residence at Hokio Beach Section : 14.6 months.

Causes for admission were :—

Offences against property	..	..	..	..	..	21
Not under proper control	..	..	..	..	..	8
Sex offences	..	..	..	..	..	3
Persistent absconding from other institutions	..	..	..	..	..	2

Truancy was noted in 11 cases.

(b) *Burwood* :—

Important developments in recent years have been directed towards the provision of improved vocational, educational, and leisure-time facilities and a better assessment of children's abilities and aptitudes, and of the underlying emotional causes of their problems. To-day it can be said that we give the girls at the Centre individual attention and strive to meet each girl's needs.

During the year a consultative group was formed which met regularly to discuss cases. The group is composed of our honorary psychologist, our medical adviser, a practising psychiatrist, a Medical Officer of the Mental Hygiene Division of the Health Department, and the Principal, Vice-Principal, nurse, and the two housemistresses from the Centre. At each meeting the cases of two girls were studied, the doctors receiving full case histories and interviewing the girls concerned.

Each week the Matrons of the four cottages met to discuss problems and progress of the girls.

General staff meetings, lectures, and informal discussions were held regularly.

The honorary psychologist continued to visit monthly and assist the staff with the more difficult cases.

The Girls' Council, commenced in 1947, has now become an integral part of the life of the Centre. It has given the girls more confidence, has helped to build a more positive and co-operative spirit, and has enabled them to gain experience in democratic procedure. The Council has been responsible for the planning of many leisure-time activities, including concerts and parties, the running of a canteen, and the establishment of a newspaper.

Leisure-time activities have comprised drama, including the reading of plays, production of plays and tableaux, and assisting in making scenery and costumes; poetry reading; first aid and home nursing; singing and music, including the formation of a harmonica band; films and library; handwork, including weaving, crocheting, embroidery, and the making and dressing of toys and dolls; babyraft, a new activity through which the girls learn the correct procedure of bathing, feeding, and handling babies; free painting; publication of the *Centre News*, a monthly newspaper which has proved very popular and which features items of interest, activities of the Centre, health and fashion hints, library reviews, and a personal-problem section; a comprehensive sports and physical education programme.

The sports and physical education programme has expanded with the increased interest of the girls. The inter-house competition for the Justices of the Peace Cup has continued with enthusiasm, in the winter the competition covering indoor sports, and in the summer swimming and athletic sports alternately. Thirty girls earned swimming certificates during the year. Keep-fit classes, previously taken by an outside instructor, have been continued under one of the housemistresses attached to the Centre. The girls' basket-ball teams competed in the local competitions. Interest has been retained in hikes and picnics.

The general training scheme has been planned carefully to give each girl a thorough knowledge of the domestic arts so that she will be able to care for her own home one day. The programme covers training in housework and gardening, cooking, including preparation of meals, baking, preserving and jam making, and sewing. In the sewing classes the girls are taught cutting and fitting and they make dresses, suits, and overcoats.

Three pupils in the primary section gained their Primary School Certificates. Ten girls took correspondence courses to secondary-school standard. Several of them received commercial training as a preparation for office positions.

The girls attended their own Churches regularly throughout the year, and also were visited by local ministers of their own denomination. The Maori girls received fortnightly visits from the Maori deaconess. The girls have continued to join Bible classes in their own Churches and to attend their rallies and socials.

As has been done previously, parcels of food and baby clothes have been made up and sent regularly to Britain and Europe.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Schools for Backward Children. At the Special School for Boys, Otekaikie, which provides for mentally retarded children who cannot for one reason or another be taught at an ordinary school or in a special class, there were 116 boys in residence at 31st March, 1949. Of these, 93 were in the day-school section and 23 in the industrial section. In addition, 1 boy was on holiday and 2 were in hospital. During the year 38 new pupils were admitted and 31 left. Of those who left, 27 returned to active life in the community and 4 were found to be unsuitable for special-school training. Three of the 4 were transferred to a custodial home and 1 to the Boy's Training Centre, Levin.

At the Special School for Girls, Richmond, which is similar in function to Otekaikie, there were 55 girls in residence at 31st March, 1949. During the year there were 22 new admissions, 13 girls were placed out in the community in other districts, and 5 were returned to relatives or transferred to other appropriate institutions.

Extracts of interest from the Principal's report are as follows:

Carefully graded work within the capacity of the individual gives the backward girl, who in a class of normal children has experienced only frustration and failure, a feeling of success which acts as a stimulus in other directions also. Every possible avenue for the girls to express themselves adequately is exploited.

Early in the year the District Commissioner of Guides enrolled 24 of the girls at a very pleasant ceremony when they formed the first company of Extension Guides in New Zealand. Afterwards over 50 visiting Guiders and Guides were entertained to supper prepared and served by our girls. Some of the girls have already gained several passes for their second-class certificate.

In addition to the school girls' basketball teams which performed successfully in inter-school fixtures, a team from the House Girls' Section was entered in the Nelson "B" Grade competition. The captain and the vice-captain elected by the girls were responsible for a neatly turned out, well-conducted team taking the field each Saturday afternoon in Nelson. They enjoyed the games immensely and made many friends among opposing teams. Officials and opponents were impressed by their sportsmanship and good conduct.

Many of our girls learned to swim during the season and three competed in the Nelson Schools' Swimming Sports. In the athletic sports, too, we gained several places. Groups of girls attend the Sunday School or Bible class and Church services of their own Churches as well as participating in choirs, Sunday teas, hikes, socials, concerts, and picnics in connection with their Churches.

Increased interest has been shown in cookery, dressmaking, needlework, and other handwork. An interesting and instructive course in gardening has been introduced under a trained horticulturist who illustrates practical lessons with lantern-slides. With the erection of an up-to-date poultry-run we are able to train the girls in the care of poultry with the assistance of the District Poultry Instructor. Flowers and vegetables were grown by the girls and marketed by them. Entries of cooking, needlework, flowers, and decorative work received prizes and commendation at both Richmond and Nelson Flower Shows. The girls have cooked and prepared suppers for all social gatherings at the school. A dancing class is held every week and a ballet group is being entered in the Nelson Competitions. Friends of the girls and staff and young people from organizations in Nelson participated in social

at the school, the highlight being a dance at which over one hundred visitors were present. In December a garden party was held, when buildings and grounds were open to the public, who were guided and hostessed by the girls. Folk and ballet dancing, physical and singing items, were given on the lawn while the girls' dressmaking, knitted articles, and needlework were on display.

The majority of the girls returned to their homes or were boarded with friends for the Christmas holidays. Girls leaving the school were placed at domestic work, hospitals, dressmaking, home-made cake baking, and bookbinding.

Schools for the Deaf.—At Summer there were 159 pupils (92 boys and 67 girls) on the roll at 31st March, 1949. There were 27 new admissions during the year and 22 children left. Of the 27 admissions, 1 had previous training in a school for the deaf, 20 were congenitally deaf or became deaf before reaching school age, 5 were hard of hearing, and 1 was a case of acquired deafness.

Further progress has been made during the year to improve facilities and to provide additional amenities for the pupils and staff. The work done includes the completion of the swimming-bath (which also serves as a static water-supply for fire-fighting), the erection of fire-escapes, the complete reorganization of the kitchen, the laying of the new playing-field, the resurfacing of the tennis-court, the construction of new paths, the installation of a "talk-back" system, and the provision of additional furnishings for the staff quarters.

At Titirangi there were 119 pupils (64 boys and 55 girls) on the roll at 31st March, 1949. There were 36 new admissions during the year and 14 children left.

REGISTERED CHILDREN'S HOMES

Seventy-five children's homes are conducted by private organizations registered under the provisions of the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1927. These homes are subject to inspection by officers of the Division. At the end of last year there were, according to returns received, a total of 2,520 children in residence, as against 2,418 the previous year.

It was reported that in the cases of 104 children both parents were deceased, in 216 cases the fathers were deceased, and in 372 cases the mothers were deceased. It is understood that in many other cases the parents were separated or were missing.

PLACEMENT IN FOSTER-HOMES

In previous reports I referred to the difficulty experienced in securing and keeping available a sufficiency of suitable foster-homes. It is pleasing to report that the situation has eased during the year, particularly outside the main centres. This is probably due to a number of factors, the principal ones of which may be: (1) The gradual decline in the number of children to be placed out, (2) the sustained efforts of the field staff, (3) the publicity given to the desirability for people to make their homes and themselves available for this valuable social service work, and (4) the increases in the boarding-out rates in recent years. The boarding-out system is one of the essential features of child welfare work in this country and it is desirable that we should always be in a position to select from a reserve of foster-homes one specifically suited to the needs of the individual child to be placed. Endeavours to achieve this end will be continued.

At the 31st March, 1949, there were 1,737 children placed in foster-homes.

EDUCATION

With very few exceptions, State wards attend the ordinary schools in the community. Where justified, they are encouraged to continue with post-primary schooling, and when further education appears warranted the Department assists them to attend the University colleges.

At the 31st March, 1949, 264 of the children placed in foster-homes were receiving post-primary education and 15 Maori children were residential pupils at Maori colleges.

PLACEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT

The 786 State wards in employment on 31st March, 1949 (excluding those living with their relatives or friends), were engaged in the following occupations :—

Boys				Girls			
Farm hands	..	..	268	Domestics	..	..	102
Factory hands	..	..	33	Factory hands	..	..	71
Shop-assistants	..	..	13	Shop-assistants	..	..	19
Labourers	..	..	15	Clerical workers	..	..	29
Other	..	..	109	Nurses	..	..	19
				Other	..	..	27

In addition, 70 boys and 11 girls were apprenticed to various trades.

Where possible, the services of the Department's Vocational Guidance Officers are used in an endeavour to ensure that State wards requiring to be placed in employment go to suitable and congenial positions.

Of the 352 children living with relatives or friends on 31st March, 157 were attending school and 149 were in employment, the balance being under school age or kept at home for various reasons.

COMMITTALS AND ADMISSIONS

The number of committals by Courts was 440, as against 434 for the previous year. Private admissions by arrangement with parents were 134, as against 115.

DISCHARGES FROM CONTROL

During the year, 638 children were discharged from control. The average age on discharge was sixteen years and eleven months. The Department relinquishes control of State wards at the earliest age consistent either with their ability to exercise independent management of their own affairs or with the provision by parents or other persons of adequate alternative measures for their care and protection.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS

Confidential inquiries were made by Child Welfare Officers in all cases of illegitimate births notified to them by Registrars. In most instances it was found that the mother or other relatives had been able to make satisfactory arrangements for the care of the child and that no further action by this Division was required.

During the year ended 31st March, 1949, 1,655 illegitimate births were notified to Child Welfare Officers. Of these infants, 808 were residing with their mothers and 47 with other relatives, 32 were committed to the care of the State, 378 were in registered foster-homes or nursing-homes, and 302 were adopted. In a number of cases inquiries have not been completed or the child died.

The number of illegitimate births, as recorded by the Registrar-General, over the period 1st January to the 31st December, 1948, was 1,686, compared with 1,727 the previous year. The difference between our total, 1,655, and that supplied by the Registrar-General, 1,686, is no doubt due in part to the different periods represented and also perhaps to the time-lag between recording and notification.

INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION

The number of persons licensed under Part V of the Infants Act, 1908, at the 31st December, 1948, was 779, and the number of children placed in their homes was 832. The foster-homes were visited regularly by Child Welfare Officers to ensure that the health and general welfare of the infants were safeguarded.

ADOPTIONS

The number of adoptions completed in the year ending 31st December, 1948, was 1,254. Although this is 31 fewer than the number for the previous year, it is still very high, and it should not be concluded that there has been any decrease in the general demand for children for adoption.

The figures for the previous eleven years are as follows: 406, 516, 518, 604, 605, 685, 854, 1,065, 1,151, 1,383, and 1,285.

Most of the applications for adoption are received from (a) couples who have no children of their own, (b) parents who wish to have a companion for their only child, and (c) mothers of illegitimate children who wish to adopt their own children upon subsequent marriage.

Children may be legally adopted up to the age of twenty-one years, but the great majority of those adopted were in the group from infants up to five years of age. Although there is provision in the Act for premiums to pass at adoption, this rarely takes place. There were only four such cases last year. Applications to adopt infant girls usually predominate, but the orders actually made reflect the number and sex of the children available. Last year the normal position was reversed in that the number of boys adopted exceeded the number of girls. The figures were 647 boys and 607 girls. Of the 1,254 children adopted, 923 (479 boys and 444 girls) were illegitimate. Three adoption orders made earlier were cancelled during the year.

CHILDREN'S COURTS

Over recent years there has been increased interest in the information available about children appearing before the Children's Courts. With the proposed establishment of the School of Social Work at Victoria University College and the possible establishment of a research agency, this increased demand for factual information may be expected to be sustained and extended. In order to meet it, some changes are being made in the methods of obtaining and tabulating information. These changes inevitably will cause some difficulty in effecting comparisons between figures previously published and those to be published in future. The differences, however, will not be so great as to make comparisons impossible, and, moreover, the long-range advantages of the changes outweigh the temporary disadvantage.

The nature and extent of the changes are explained in an Appendix to this report. The figures for the year under review are set out in the old form in the tables immediately following the report and in the new form in the Appendix which follows those tables.

It is hoped to publish in subsequent reports additional information on a variety of matters concerning juvenile delinquency—*e.g.*, the age, sex, and racial groupings of juvenile offenders, and the incidence of recidivism among different groups of offenders.

Comments on the figures for Court appearances are as follows:—

(1) *Total Appearances*.—Table 2 shows that the figure for all children appearing before the Children's Court, either on complaints under the Child Welfare Act or charged with offences, is 149 lower than that for last year. Since 1943–44, which was the peak year for Children's Court appearances, there has been a general decline in total appearances. The figure for the peak year was 3,076; for the past year it was 1,883. This represents a decrease of 38·8 per cent. Such a decrease in itself is most satisfactory but it appears even more gratifying when the figures for the past twelve years are studied. This range of years has been chosen with a view to covering pre-war, war, and post-war years and so affording a fair comparison of the general position. They show that the figure for the peak year was not very much higher than those for the preceding years and that the downward trend since has been a fairly steep one. This would counter any tendency to regard the choice of the highest and lowest figures for purposes of comparison as too arbitrary and as leading to a more favourable conclusion than a survey of a number of typical and representative years would warrant. The figures are: 1938, 2,982; 1939, 2,801; 1940, 2,953; 1941, 2,934; 1942, 2,936; 1943, 3,071; 1944, 3,076; 1945, 2,529; 1946, 2,240; 1947, 2,026; 1948, 2,032; 1949, 1,883.

(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.

The figures showing the rate of delinquency are probably of more interest than the actual totals. They reveal that last year a New Zealand child had only 1 chance in 212 (47 in 10,000) of appearing before a Children's Court for an offence, minor or serious, or, put in another way, that approximately 995 in every 1,000 children were unlikely to make acquaintance with the Court. Similarly, a child had only 1 chance in 294 (34 in 10,000) of being charged with a serious offence. Considering the fallibility of human nature and the usual presence in our community of some subnormal children defective in social or moral sense, we cannot reasonably hope that all juvenile delinquency will be entirely eradicated, and the present rates by that standard and by comparison with the rates for earlier years cannot be regarded as in any way excessive or alarming.

Recent public statements on the incidence of "crime" amongst the Maori people will no doubt lead those interested in problems of Maori welfare to look for some indication in this report of the extent of Maori juvenile delinquency. Separate statistics have not been kept in the past for Court appearances by Maori and European children. However, some information can be obtained from the annual reports which all District Child Welfare Officers furnish to their local Magistrate on the work of the Children's Courts in their districts. Occasionally officers in predominantly Maori districts have had cause to comment on a high proportion of Maori offenders, but there have been no such comments in recent years. What comments there have been on Maori offenders in recent reports have referred to a proportionate decline. It may be, of course, that some proportionate increases have occurred, but, if they have, they have not been serious enough to excite comment. Apart from the proportionate aspect, it would be safe to say that the total numbers of Maori children appearing before the Courts have dropped substantially. For instance, in North Auckland (where there is one of the greatest concentrations of Maori people) the peak year of the period 1938-49 was 1943-44, when there was a total of 206 Court appearances. Of this number, 146 or (70.8 per cent.) concerned Maori children, and the senior officer in that district made special comment on the high proportion of Maori to pakeha offenders that year. The latest figure shows a total of 83 appearances, both of Maori and of pakeha, in North Auckland, and there is no comment about the proportion of Maori offenders. On the East Coast the total figures similarly were respectively 192 and 96. In the Waikato district an exact comparison is not easy to make because of the creation of a sub-district at Rotorua in 1944 and because of altered boundaries, but for all practical purposes it can be assumed that the area now covered by the Waikato district and the Rotorua sub-district (excluding Taupo) coincides with the former Waikato district. This includes the Bay of Plenty, the Coromandel Peninsula, and a good part of the King-country. The figures are 229 in 1943-44 and 144 last year. In the Auckland district there was a decline from 593 in the peak year, 1942-43 (558 in 1943-44), to 339 last year. It will be seen that the decreases in total Children's Court appearances in those districts containing a preponderance of the Maori population are much greater comparatively than the over-all decrease for the whole Dominion. This factor coupled with the fact that the Maori juvenile population (seven to seventeen) increased by over 25 per cent. in the ten years up to 31st December, 1947 (the last date up to which official population figures are available), while the European population in the same age group decreased in the same period, does not support any suggestion that there has been any increase at all in delinquency amongst Maori children under seventeen years of age.

There are special problems attaching to the vocational placement and home life of Maori children. Child Welfare Officers in those districts where there is a substantial Maori population are devoting much time and thought to these problems. They are using the services of Maori honorary Child Welfare Officers and co-operating with Maori Welfare Officers, tribal committees, and other persons and organizations in an endeavour to ensure that children likely to drift into delinquency or actually offending are provided with opportunities of developing as useful citizens.

PREVENTIVE WORK

The observations in previous reports on the steps being taken to extend and intensify the preventive work of the Division still apply. Effective preventive work is of first-rate importance, and I am convinced, firstly, that success has attended the specific measures taken in recent years to assist materially those families whose living conditions could lead to lowered behaviour standards in their children, and, secondly, that such success has been reflected in other aspects of the work.

EDWARD COSTLEY TRUST, AUCKLAND

During the year the trustees assisted 50 children in the Auckland district engaged in educational courses, apprenticeships, &c. This assistance took the form of grants for books, school uniforms, fees, travelling-expenses, and clothing, and was granted upon favourable recommendations being received from the District Child Welfare Officer, who made careful inquiry into each application. The majority of the children helped were fatherless or their parents were not in a position at the time to provide the necessary help. Among the children assisted, one completed his B.Sc. degree, one has obtained six units towards a B.A. degree and has obtained a Teacher's B Certificate, one obtained four subjects towards a B.Sc. degree, a fourth passed his First Professional Examination for Bachelor of Dentistry, a fifth passed the University National Scholarship Examination with credit, and four others obtained their School Certificates, one with an average mark of 81 per cent.

The assistance given was highly appreciated by the parents and children themselves. The work of the Trust is looked upon by this Department as a most valuable adjunct to child welfare services in the community.

C. E. PEEK,
Superintendent.

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TABLE 1—NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER CONTROL AND SUPERVISION OF THE CHILD WELFARE DIVISION AT 31ST MARCH

	1947.	1948.	1949.
<i>* State Wards—</i>			
In foster-homes	1,858	1,747	1,737
With relatives or friends	464	455	352
In employment (excluding those with relatives or friends), (including 15 absent on 31st March, 1947; 9, 1948; and 4, 1949)	922	862	786
In Government receiving-homes	137	135	138
In Government hostels	26	14	21
In Government residential training institutions	143	141	107
In private children's homes registered under the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1927	95	63	78
In Roman Catholic institutions recognized under the Child Welfare Act	74	52	28
In special schools for mentally backward or deaf children (see also under "Other than State Wards")	127	116	129
In hospitals, convalescent homes, &c.	70	49	36
In residential colleges	18	20	38
In mental hospitals	162	170	166
	4,096	3,824	3,616
<i>Other Than State Wards—</i>			
Young persons supervised by Child Welfare Officers in their own homes pursuant to orders of Courts	915	879	854
Infants supervised in private foster-homes licensed under the Infants Act, 1908	788	772	832
Pupils at the Schools for the Deaf, Sumner and Titirangi (excluding State wards)	250	251	272
Pupils at special schools for mentally backward children (Otekaike and Richmond), (excluding State wards)	45	44	49
Children supervised by Child Welfare Officers in their own homes without Court order ("preventive" cases)	1,569	1,645	1,460
Pupils of the New Zealand Institute for the Blind, for whom the Division makes payments	24	22	16
	3,591	3,613	3,483
	7,687	7,437	7,099

* Including children who had not formally been committed to the care of the State but over whom the Division exercised legal control—i.e., children under control under section 12 of the Child Welfare Act, or legal warrant, or under supervision and resident in a Child Welfare institution. On 31st March, 1949, there were 64 such children.

TABLE 2—NUMBER OF CHILDREN APPEARING BEFORE CHILDREN'S COURTS
(Classified according to complaints or charges laid)

—							1946-47.	1947-48.	1948-49.
Complaints under Child Welfare Act—									
Indigent	..	..	..	..	..	..	144	99	90
Neglected	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	68	37
Detrimental environment	..	..	..	..	..	..	94	79	86
Not under proper control	..	..	..	..	..	..	182	197	201
							458	443	414
Offences—									
(1) Against morality	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	9	14
(2) Against the person	..	..	..	..	..	..	55	56	89
(3) Theft	..	..	..	..	..	..	703	782	752
(4) Conversion of motor-vehicles	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	50	45
(5) Other conversions	..	..	..	..	..	..	51	46	44
(6) Delinquent	..	..	..	..	..	..	233	231	116
(7) Miscellaneous (chiefly mischief)	..	..	..	..	..	..	263	181	172
(8) Breaches of Court supervision order	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	9	12
(9) Breaches of special Acts and regulations—									
(a) Railways	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	1	4
(b) Fire brigade	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	11	5
(c) Acclimatization	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	17	15
(d) Licensing	..	..	..	..	..	..	17	11	25
(e) Arms	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	40	27
(f) Post and Telegraph	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	20	30
(g) Shipping	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	5	2
(10) Breaches of Traffic Regulations and by-laws—									
(a) Cycles	..	..	..	..	..	..	80	81	60
(b) Motor-vehicles	..	..	..	..	..	..	18	8	14
(c) Other	..	..	..	..	..	..	27	31	43
							1,568	1,589	1,469
							2,026	2,032	1,883

TABLE 3—CHILDREN'S COURT APPEARANCES
(Classified according to decision of Court)

	1946-47.	1947-48.	1948-49.
Committed to the care of the Superintendent	440	431	425
Placed under supervision	607	660	619
Supervision extended	51	24	33
Supervision and residence	13	11	15
Admonished and discharged	442	465	363
Admonished and ordered to make restitution	137	134	130
Admonished and ordered to pay costs	12	4	11
Admonished and fined	59	71	61
Adjourned	68	45	42
Adjourned <i>sine die</i>	37	11	16
Dismissed	18	32	48
Committed to Borstal	21	20	14
Convicted and fined	3	4	3
Convicted and discharged	1	..	1
Returned to the care of the Superintendent	71	87	73
Withdrawn	24	16	15
Ordered to come up for sentence .. .. .	..	..	2
Adult probation	12	14	12
Referred to Magistrate's Court	4	..	..
Restitution order cancelled	2	..	..
Committed to Supreme Court for sentence	2	2	..
Committed to mental hospital .. .. .	..	1	..
Admitted to Salvation Army Home	1	..	..
Licence cancelled	1	..	..
	2,026	2,032	1,883

TABLE 4—CHILDREN PLACED UNDER SUPERVISION OF CHILD WELFARE OFFICERS
DURING YEARS ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1948 AND 1949
(Classified according to reasons for appearance)

	Boys.		Girls.		Totals.	
	1947-48.	1948-49.	1947-48.	1948-49.	1947-48.	1948-49.
Charged with an offence	411	399	41	42	452	441
Delinquent	139	134	10	19	149	153
Not under proper control	35	32	19	27	54	59
In detrimental environment	7	9	12	8	19	17
Indigent	2	2	1	4	3	6
Neglected	7	3	7	3	14	6
Breach of supervision order .. .. .	..	1	..	..	..	1
	601	580	90	103	691	683

NOTE.—The total of 683 for 1948-49 represents 660 children, as 23 children (all boys) who were placed under supervision during the year appeared before the Courts again during the same year and their period of supervision was extended. In addition, 24 children (17 boys and 7 girls) placed under supervision during the year were subsequently committed to the care of the State.

TABLE 5—REASONS FOR COMMITTALS AND ADMISSIONS

	Boys.		Girls.		Totals.	
	1947-48.	1948-49.	1947-48.	1948-49.	1947-48.	1948-49.
COMMITTED TO THE CARE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT						
(a) Complaints under the Child Welfare Act—						
Indigent	44	42	50	46	94	88
Neglected	20	7	21	20	41	27
Living in a detrimental environment	22	29	31	28	53	57
Not under proper control ..	70	84	40	64	110	144
Delinquent	37	21	16	8	53	29
Failing to comply with the terms of a supervision order	1	6	1	3	2	9
(b) Charged with an offence	68	67	13	15	81	82
	262	256	172	184	434	440
OTHER THAN COMMITTED						
Control assumed by arrangement with parents or guardians (section 12, Child Welfare Act, 1925)	9	10	3	4	12	14
Control assumed under legal warrant (section 13, Child Welfare Act) and subsequently returned to parents or guardians	37	24	25	17	62	41
Placed under supervision of a Child Welfare Officer and ordered to spend a period in residence in an institution	8	8	3	4	11	12
Admitted to special schools for deaf or backward children as resident or day pupils (section 127, Education Act, 1914)	25	48	16	31	41	79
Temporarily admitted to Child Welfare institutions in emergency	4	17	7	6	11	23
	83	107	54	62	137	169
	345	363	226	246	571	609

NOTE.— Of the 440 children committed to the care of the Superintendent during 1948-49, 91, or 20.6 per cent., were known to be illegitimate.

APPENDIX

NOTE ON EXTENT AND NATURE OF CHANGES IN TABULATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING CHILDREN APPEARING BEFORE CHILDREN'S COURTS

The following changes will be made in the preparation of Children's Court figures from the next report onwards:—

(1) Appearances will not be counted until decisions have been reached by the Courts. This will eliminate the item "adjourned" from Table 3. The effect on the total figures should not be important, as the number of cases adjourned from one statistical year to the next is relatively constant.

(2) Appearances will not be counted unless the Court finds the charge proved or upholds the complaint. Thus cases which are "dismissed" or "withdrawn" will be ignored, and these items eliminated from Table 3. The effect of this change will be to reduce the total figures somewhat. In 1948-49 the number of such cases was 63.

(3) The classification of offences and complaints will be amended with a view to giving a clearer indication of the nature of offences committed, and reducing the size of the item "Miscellaneous."

(4) As part of this reclassification it is intended to classify appearances according to the offences which caused them, and not necessarily according to the complaint or charge before the Court. Thus, if a child commits theft, but for some reason is brought before the Court on a complaint that he is "a delinquent child" or is "not under proper control," the appearance will be counted under the item "theft" and not under the legal complaint. The effect of this change will be to reduce considerably the number of children listed as "delinquent" or "not under proper control" and increase the number of those included under specific offences. In general it may be assumed that those children counted under "not under proper control" have not committed any specific offence against the law, while those classed as "delinquent" may be assumed to be guilty of a series of minor offences no one of which is sufficiently important or serious to justify a specific charge.

Figures for Court appearances during 1948-49, drawn up in accordance with the changes listed above, are given below to enable comparisons to be made between figures published in future years and those for this year.

Table 2 (New Form)—Children's Court Appearances, 1948-49

(Classified according to offences committed, or complaints laid)

Complaints under the Child Welfare Act and Amendments—

Indigent	92
Neglected	33
Living in a detrimental environment	84
Not under proper control	183
Delinquent	26
Failing to comply with the terms of a supervision order	12
Sub-total	430

Offences against property—

Theft	671
Breaking, entering, and theft	133
Other similar offences (receiving, shoplifting, &c.)	18
Conversion of motor-vehicles	40
Other conversions	43
Arson	3
Mischief	58
Wilful damage	49
Stonethrowing (<i>e.g.</i> , at insulators)	29
Other offences against property (<i>e.g.</i> , unlawfully on premises)	9
Sub-total	1,053

Offences involving fraud (*e.g.*, forgery, false pretences)

28

Offences against persons—

Sex offences—

Indecent assault on a female	40
Indecent assault on a male	3
Other	19

Other than sex offences (*e.g.*, assault, abusive language)

26

Sub-total	91
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Offences against decency (*e.g.*, indecent exposure)

14

Disorderly conduct (*e.g.*, drunkenness, idle and disorderly)

13

Offences against special Acts, regulations, and by-laws—

Traffic—

More serious offences (<i>e.g.</i> , reckless driving, failing to stop after accident) ..	9
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Minor offences—

(a) Cycle	59
(b) Other	49

Railway, fire-brigade, and Post and Telegraph (<i>e.g.</i> failing to pay fare, false alarm of fire, interfering with telegraph lines)	9
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Licensing (<i>e.g.</i> , in possession of liquor in vicinity of dance-hall, aiding supply of liquor to a minor)	22
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Acclimatization (<i>e.g.</i> , shooting out of season, taking protected birds, &c.)	10
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Arms and explosives (<i>e.g.</i> , unlawful possession of firearm, setting off explosives, &c.) ..	27
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Sub-total	185
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Other offences	9
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Total	1,823
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NOTES.—(1) The discrepancies between the individual figures above and corresponding figures in Table 2 of this report, which covers the same period, are accounted for by the adjustments described above.

(2) This table, like all others published, counts appearances only, not individual children. Some children appear more than once in each year. When this report was prepared the number of such cases in the year under review was not available.

(3) Multiple charges—*i.e.*, cases in which children are charged with more than one offence—present considerable difficulty in tabulation. In accordance with previous practice, such cases are counted under the offence which, in the particular circumstances of each case, appears to be the most serious. This selection is necessarily arbitrary, but there appears to be no alternative if the table is not to be inordinately lengthy and correspondingly more difficult to follow. In the year under review there were 148 cases of multiple charges.

Table 3 (New Form)—Children's Court Appearances, 1948-49

(Classified according to decision of Court)

Committed to the care of the Superintendent	440
Placed under supervision of a Child Welfare Officer	417
Placed under supervision and ordered to make restitution	217
Period of supervision extended	34
Placed under supervision and ordered to spend a period in an institution	15
Committed to Borstal	14
Placed under adult probation	12
Convicted and fined	3
Convicted and discharged	1
Admonished and returned to the care of the Superintendent (<i>i.e.</i> , State wards appearing on charges)	73
Admonished and discharged	377
Admonished, discharged, and ordered to make restitution	130
Admonished and fined	61
Admonished and ordered to pay costs	11
Adjourned <i>sine die</i>	16
Ordered to come up for sentence	2
	1,823

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