

confidential reports every quarter from the headmasters or class-teachers of the schools which the children attend. Wherever possible, arrangements are also made for local honorary Lady Visitors to visit the foster-homes monthly, or oftener if necessary, and generally keep a friendly eye on the children concerned.

For certain types of dependent children there is no question that the boarding-out system is superior to all other systems of dealing with them. The fact that under the boarding-out system children have the opportunity of growing up as ordinary members of the community under decent conditions is in itself sufficient to commend the system apart from any other consideration in its favour.

Associated with boarding out, it is essential that there should be cottage homes where a preliminary training in correct habits and discipline may be carried out. This is provided for in the receiving-homes for children and older girls, and in probation homes for boys. As these homes are of limited capacity, the period for which any one child is kept in residence is necessarily limited, but further provision is made at the Boys' Training-farm, Weraroa, and at the Caversham Industrial School for the accommodation for periods up to twelve months (or longer if necessary) of boys and girls respectively who after a trial at board fail to do well.

JUVENILE PROBATION SYSTEM.

The results obtained during the past six years have proved beyond doubt the efficacy of probation under proper supervision as a means of reforming the large number of boys and youths who, on account of the lack of proper home conditions, would, but for the intervention of the Department, drift into a career of crime and general lawlessness. To be successful as a Probation Officer a man must have exceptional qualifications: he must possess initiative, be sympathetic though firm, and must at all times be prepared to devote the whole of his time to his work. For the man who carries out his duty properly there can be no fixed hours—he must be prepared to respond at all times to any call for assistance or advice. Probably the most important part of a Probation Officer's work lies in home-visiting, and in many cases he is called upon to insist on reforms on the part of the parents and in the home conditions as a necessary aid in the reformation of the boy.

The numbers dealt with by the Juvenile Probation Officers in the main centres during last year totalled 1,080, and were dealt with as shown in the following table:—

District.		Committed.	Committed and on Probation.	Temporary Probation.	Convicted and discharged.	Admonished and discharged.	Returned to Institution.	Convicted and fined.	Sent to a Reformatory.	Dismissed.	Temporary Probation and sentence in a Probation Home.	Withdrawn.	Sent to a Salvation Army Home.	Convicted and birched.	Adjourned sine die.	Convicted and ordered to come up for Sentence.	Committed to Supreme Court.	Sent to a Mental Hospital.	Total.
North Auckland	..	12	..	3	..	8	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	31
Auckland	..	51	..	50	..	72	6	3	2	2	4	..	..	5	..	4	..	..	199
South Auckland	..	22	..	16	4	24	1	4	..	1	1	..	..	2	..	1	1	..	76
Wanganui	..	7	..	7	..	12	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	29
Hawke's Bay	..	46	..	17	5	4	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	4	..	5	85
Palmerston North	..	19	..	8	..	4	4	3	3	4	..	..	..	6	1	..	3	..	55
Wellington	..	50	..	24	5	47	7	5	1	7	6	..	..	3	..	6	..	..	161
Nelson	..	5	..	1	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	11
West Coast	..	4	1	8	..	24	..	11	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	51
North Canterbury	..	44	..	44	3	23	1	10	..	4	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	133
South Canterbury	..	25	..	9	1	8	..	1	3	3	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	51
Otago	..	32	..	50	1	29	7	7	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	133
Southland	..	20	..	27	..	12	2	..	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	65
Totals	..	337	1	264	19	269	34	50	9	23	13	5	1	21	1	21	5	7	1,080

ASSISTED SERVICE, HIGHER SERVICE, AND EMPLOYMENT OF STATE CHILDREN OVER SCHOOL AGE.

An important part of the work carried out by Managers of Institutions, Boarding-out Officers, and Juvenile Probation Officers is the placing of State children in suitable avenues of employment. On the care and discrimination exercised by these officers in this work depends the future of the children, and also the question whether, when they reach the adult stage, these young charges will become assets or liabilities to the State. The Department is fully alive to the importance of this particular phase of the work, and, as a matter of fact, reviews the action taken in each individual case. As a general rule these young people are encouraged to take up rural occupations, as experience has shown that for the majority of lads who are taken from the crowded city areas life in the country offers the best chance of permanent reformation. There is a considerable number, of course, who are eminently suitable for trades and similar occupations, and for these the Department finds suitable openings. In the case of the latter considerable difficulty is experienced in boarding them in suitable homes; probably this difficulty could be got over to a certain extent by utilizing part of the accommodation at each receiving-home and probation home for the purpose of housing these young people in the early stages of apprenticeship at least.

At the end of 1922 there were 36 inmates at service receiving assistance (assisted service in most cases refers to apprenticeship). There were 30 children receiving higher education—25 secondary and 5 technical. In addition, there were 48 children over the age of fourteen years still attending the public schools and being maintained by the Department.