

## POST-PRIMARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

State boys and girls have the same opportunity as other children of receiving secondary or technical education. Usually these young people continue to remain in their foster-homes and attend the nearest educational institution. There is also in Auckland a hostel to accommodate 15 boys which functions with assistance from the Costley Trustees and Y.M.C.A. Pupils who show special aptitude are helped by the Department to the University.

## REPORTS TO CHILDREN'S COURTS.

At the end of each year the Child Welfare Officers submit to the Courts and to the Department a report on the cases dealt with during the year—the cause of each appearance, the number under supervision and the general results of supervision, the number of second offenders, and generally the position so far as the Court work in each district is concerned. It is hoped that these reports will become increasingly valuable as a measure of the success or otherwise of the methods adopted in dealing with certain types of offences and with cases of anti-social conduct particularly where children are placed legally under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers.

It need hardly be stressed that the Department regards "preventive" work—i.e., the social adjustment of children in their own homes without their appearance at Court at all—as of paramount importance. When, however, a child is placed under legal supervision for an offence or is not under proper control it is desirable, in accordance with the general policy of adjusting children in their own homes or at least in the locality in which they live, to adopt the best methods likely to bring about their return as early as practicable to the life of the normal child.

The second offender, too, is a case for close study. Even in these cases a boy is often left in his home under supervision, and committal to the care of the State and consequent removal is only resorted to when all other methods have failed. Tables showing the numbers dealt with by the Children's Courts are included in this report, and extracts from the reports furnished by the larger centres are attached:—

1. *Auckland District*.—Of the total (374) appearing before the Courts, 165 were admonished and discharged, 91 were placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 61 were committed to the care of the Department.

"The number of children who appeared within the last twelve months for a further offence was 13 of the total number appearing. This very small number of repeating cases is very gratifying, and would seem to show that the methods of social adjustment are on the right lines."

2. *Hamilton District*.—The number of children appearing before the Courts was 191, compared with 206 the previous year. One hundred and three were admonished and discharged, 45 placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 39 committed to the care of the Department.

"It is noteworthy that nearly 25 per cent. of those appearing before the Courts were of Maori parentage. It is pleasing to point out that sexual offences fell from 13 last year to 6 this year."

3. *Wellington District*.—During the year a total number of 467 cases appeared before the Children's Courts, representing 378 boys over eight years of age and 89 girls and young children—an increase of 57 cases over last year's total. Of the total number appearing, 220 were admonished and discharged, 100 placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 109 committed to the care of the Department.

"The year just ended has been productive of the largest number of cases to come before the Children's Courts in this district, and in part it is a serious indictment of the laxity of parental control to-day."

4. *Christchurch District*.—The total number of children who appeared before the Children's Courts for the year was 527. Of these, 136 were admonished and discharged, 92 were placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 84 were committed to the care of the Department. The cases coming under the notice of the Boys' Welfare Officers show an increase of 42 over the figures for the previous twelve months.

"It is difficult to account for the increases over the past two years, but the lack of good home control is an important factor."

5. *Dunedin District*.—Of the cases (157) appearing before the Children's Courts, 45 were admonished and discharged, 67 placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 32 committed to the care of the Department, an increase of 7 over the figures for last year.

"During the year we have had no cases that presented outstanding difficulties."

*General*.—The total number of children appearing before the Courts for all causes for the year ended 31st March, 1938, was 2,982, as against 2,584 for the previous year and 2,273 for 1935-36.

In the matter of supervision most parents have co-operated with the Child Welfare Officers in their endeavours to adjust successfully the juvenile offender in society. In this connection the thanks of the Department and the appreciation of the parents are due to the members of the Big Brother Movement operating under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. and of the authorities of the Catholic Church.