

(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 458 cases, as against 454 for the previous year and 517 for the year 1944-45. This represents an increase of approximately 1 per cent. in comparison with the figure for 1945-46 and a decrease of approximately 11 per cent. compared with the year 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 three years are as follows : 1944-45, 2,012 ; 1945-46, 1,786 ; and 1946-47, 1,568. These numbers show reductions of 11 per cent. and 12 per cent. respectively, or a total reduction over the two years of 22 per cent.

The decrease is reflected generally in the figures for all types of offences, but the most marked decrease is found in the figures for theft, which, from 993 in the year 1944-45, dropped to 847 for 1945-46 and to 703 for last year. The total appearances for breaches of special Acts, traffic regulations, and by-laws amounted to 210, as against 237 and 281 for the 1945-46 and 1944-45 periods respectively. This is a reduction of approximately 11 per cent. on the figure for 1945-46 and a total reduction over the two years of 25 per cent.

(3) *Repeaters.*—The number of children who, on appearing before the Courts last year, were making a second or subsequent appearance for offences was 365. The corresponding numbers for the three previous years were : 1944, 368 ; 1945, 302 ; and 1946, 339. In determining these cases a very wide interpretation is 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 last year's report an indication of trend was given by comparing the annual figures and the rates per 10,000 of the juvenile population (aged seven to seventeen) over the last nine years for (a) total Court appearances, (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. The following is a repetition of these tables brought up to date by the inclusion of the figures for 1947 :—

	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.
(a) TOTAL COURT APPEARANCES										
Total ..	2,447	2,248	2,464	2,424	2,421	2,446	2,493	2,012	1,786	1,568
Rate ..	85	79	87	87	88	90	93	75	66	58
(b) APPEARANCES UNDER THE HEADING " THEFT "										
Total ..	957	818	1,049	1,121	1,037	1,127	1,132	993	847	703
Rate ..	33	29	37	40	37	41	42	37	31	26
(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
Rate ..	46	44	53	51	53	59	60	52	46	40

The above indicates the trend over the last ten years. The effect of the abnormal general conditions obtaining throughout the war years is revealed in a gradual upward trend in the figures to the peak year in 1944. With the return to more normal conditions the figures took a sharp downward trend to a point now below the pre-war rate. This information should serve to dispel fears still current in the community that in New Zealand we are experiencing an increase in the incidence of juvenile delinquency.