

- (b) Although children may legally be adopted up to the age of twenty-one years, the large majority adopted are under six years of age.
- (c) Premiums at the time of adoption, although provided for in the Act, rarely pass ; in the year under review there were none.
- (d) The majority of the children adopted are of illegitimate birth, the numbers in this year's total being 495 boys and 415 girls.
- (e) Applications to adopt come from three main groups of persons, namely—
 - (i) Couples who have no children of their own.
 - (ii) Parents who wish to have a companion for their only child.
 - (iii) Mothers of illegitimate children who wish to adopt their own children upon subsequent marriage.
- (f) The numbers of children adopted in each of the past twelve years were : 406, 516, 518, 604, 605, 685, 854, 1,065, 1,151, 1,383, 1,285, 1,254.

CHILDREN'S COURTS

As indicated in last year's report, some changes have been made in the methods of obtaining and tabulating information concerning children appearing before the Children's Courts. While this will inevitably limit the making of comparisons between the figures published from now onward with those of previous years, it is hoped that they will be more useful in meeting the demand for more factual information. In any case, the differences are not so great as to make comparisons impossible, and the long-range advantages outweigh the disadvantages. The nature and extent of the changes are explained in an Appendix to this report. It is hoped to present in subsequent reports additional information of interest to those concerned with the subject of juvenile delinquency.

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

(1) *Total Appearances*.—Since 1943-44, which was the peak year with a total of 3,706, the number of appearances has shown a substantial decline, this year's total, calculated on the changed basis mentioned above, being 1,848. (NOTE.—On the former basis, on which certain undecided cases were included, the totals were slightly higher than they would have been on the new basis)—e.g., the figure for 1948-49 published in last year's report was 1,883, but it would have been 1,823 on the new basis. 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 ; 1950, 1,848 (new basis).

(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 470 (including 63 delinquent) cases, as against 414 for the previous year, 443 for 1947-48, 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 : 1945-46, 1,786 ; 1946-47, 1,568 ; 1947-48, 1,589 ; 1948-49, 1,469 ; and 1949-50, 1,378.