

Offence, &c.	Summoned or apprehended.		Admonished and discharged.		Convicted and discharged.		Fined.		Whipping.		Sent to Industrial School.		Dismissed.		Withdrawn.		Order.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Abscinding from industrial school	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Breaking and entering and theft	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dwelling with prostitutes or drunkards	8	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	10	..	..	..	..	..	..
Frequenting streets	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Having possession of firearms	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Having no means of subsistence	13	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	13	..	..	..	..	..	..
Having no place of abode	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indigent children	4	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	7	..	..	..	..	..	..
Obscene language	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Receiving stolen money	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sleeping in open air	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Smoking	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Theft	40	1	2	..	14	1	..	..	23	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wilful damage	13	..	1	..	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Uncontrollable children	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	95	31	3	..	31	1	..	..	26	..	36	30	..	..	..	..	..	..

CHRISTCHURCH.

SIR,—

Magistrate's Office, Christchurch, 21st March, 1910.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Memorandum No. 595, of the 25th February, 1910, in which you ask me to furnish a report upon the working of the Juvenile Courts during the year ended the 31st December, 1909.

Early in the year 1905, as the result of much thought and consideration, I decided to establish in this district a system of Children's Courts, having in view mainly the object of keeping the young people as far as possible from the contamination of the ordinary Police Courts and all that pertains thereto. I could only, of course, carry this on in a somewhat irregular way, and to obtain the necessary privacy I used to sit at unusual hours and places. My practice met with considerable success, and soon attracted attention throughout the Dominion. As the result the then Minister of Justice called upon me for a full report on the practice I was adopting. This I furnished, and the almost immediate outcome of it was the placing upon the statute-book of the Juvenile Offenders Act, 1906. This Act was framed on the exact lines of my practice, but gave it the full effect of law, and placed a most valuable and important power in the hands of the Magistrate by enabling him, where he thought it expedient, to order the parents of the offender to pay any costs or damages incurred by or through the offence, and making them enforceable under the Justices of the Peace Act. The value of this provision can scarcely be overestimated, for, looking to the fact that the great majority of children in this country who go astray do so through lack of parental control, a Magistrate is enabled to bring before the parents in a forceable and unmistakable way that the law holds them in a measure responsible for the shortcomings of their offspring.

The more I have to do with these Courts the more I become convinced that nothing but good results from them, and that their operation throughout the Dominion must have been of great benefit to the community. The good results can scarcely be summed up in concrete form, but that they are there cannot be denied. As a leading English newspaper said recently in connection with the recently established Children's Courts in London, "The object of these Courts is to preserve young children from the environment of ill-doing and from contamination by the criminal classes. And at Bow Street, presided over by Sir Albert De Rutzen, the Senior Police Magistrate of London, the chief thought inspired in the minds of those present was one of surprise that the reform had not been adopted before."

I do not make my Courts very formal. I try to get into as close touch with the children and their parents as the position will allow. In the semi-privacy of the Juvenile Court I am much better able to adapt myself to the circumstances than I could possibly be under the old and formal régime. I am able to speak to all concerned with much greater freedom and to so sheet home with greater force the lessons I wish to inculcate. Long experience assists me very materially in this respect. To the parents who fail to recognise their responsibilities and who are always ready to excuse in every way their children's shortcomings it is necessary at times to speak with no uncertain voice.

Although the cases when before the Court are reported in the daily Press, in no instance have I known the names of the juvenile offenders to be published. This has been a cordial recognition by the Press of the unique nature of the work and the necessity for carrying beyond the closed door of the Court the seal of practical privacy.

Some time ago an association was formed in Christchurch named the "Presbyterian Social Service Association," and when the promoters did me the honour to consult me as to certain proposed work in connection with the Juvenile Courts, I suggested that their agent should make a speciality of this work, and I pointed out that the system of Juvenile Courts was not doing all that it might do, for lack of the opportunity of getting into touch with the alleged offenders and their parents and their home environment before the cases came before me, and in following them up afterwards and as far as possible encouraging the resolution to abstain from evil. My sug-