

instance, boys, for the time being uncontrollable, are frequently admitted to the home by private arrangement between the Probation Officer and the parents. In addition the Magistrates, in dealing with boys found guilty of petty offences, invariably prefer to see them admitted for short periods to the probation home for purposes of training and discipline, rather than register a conviction followed by commitment to an industrial school. Generally speaking, a boy who comes under the notice of the police and the Court for the first time is allowed to return to his parents or relatives under the supervision of the Probation Officer. For a second offence a probation boy is usually admitted to the probation home for a few weeks, then placed either with relatives or in a suitable foster-home if he is of school age. Boys over school age are placed either at service on farms or are apprenticed to trades. For boys guilty of a series of offences against the law, or for boys who by their conduct have proved themselves unfit to associate with normal children at a public school, the probation home does not provide. Such boys are provided for at the Boys' Training-farm, Weraroa, where special provision has been made for boys of school age. Such cases are, however, very much in the minority. Generally speaking, few young lads are unfit to attend a public school. At Weraroa at present there are some twelve schoolboys, drawn from all parts of the Dominion, but in the majority of these cases the boys after a period of discipline and training, will be quite fit for placing out either with relatives or in selected country homes.

The idea of giving a boy a chance in fresh environment and under the kindly supervision of experienced probation officers has had a marked effect on the total number committed to industrial schools. Fully 85 per cent. of the juvenile cases are now dealt with under the probation system, and of these less than 3 per cent. fail to "make good." Apart from the financial saving to the State, the probation system has proved a decided deterrent on juvenile delinquency, and has been the means of stimulating the sense of responsibility in the parents.

The numbers dealt with by the Probation Officers in each of the four centres during the last year are shown in the following table :—

Children dealt with by the Courts in the Four Chief Centres from 1st January, to 31st December, 1919.

REASON FOR COMING BEFORE COURTS.

	Theft.	Uncontrollable.	Mischief.	Not under proper Control.	Absconding.	Obscene Language.	Indigent.	False Pretences.	Willful Damage.	Breach of By-law.	Possessing Firearms.	Common Assault.	Receiving Stolen Goods.	Smoking.	Breach of Probation.	Indecent Assault.	Forgery.	Selling Firearms.	Possessing Ammunition.	Charged under Section 18.	Epidemic Orphans.	Stone-throwing.	Living with Habitual Drunkard.	Indecency.	False Fire-alarm.	Carnal Knowledge.	Totals.
Auckland	129	1	31	86	7	2	13	..	22	44	4	4	6	..	1	1	1	2	1	2	44	..	..	..	..	..	401
Wellington	74	1	7	4	..	..	12	..	17	6	3	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	127	
Canterbury	76	1	20	35	1	1	33	2	8	10	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	1	..	196	
Otago ..	65	1	15	3	..	2	..	..	2	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	94	
Totals..	344	4	73	128	8	5	58	2	49	60	13	4	7	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	44	1	3	4	1	1	818

HOW DEALT WITH BY COURTS.

	Committed to Industrial Schools.	Committed and on Probation.	Temporary Probation.	Admonished and discharged.	Dismissed.	Convicted.	Probation cancelled.	Returned to Schools.	Ordered to come up for Sentence.	Sent to Reformatory.	Charge withdrawn.	Convicted and fined.	Convicted and ordered to pay Costs.	Imprisoned.	Convicted and discharged.	Committed to Supreme Court.	Adjourned.	Salvation Army Home.	Totals.
Auckland	155*	4	83	96	0	..	1	17	3	2	2	3	20	2	2	1	..	..	401
Wellington	22	1	71	16	7	2	1	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	127
Canterbury	66	2	43	19	2	36	2	9	..	..	13	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	196
Otago	10	..	27	35	9	..	..	1	9	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	94
Totals	253	7	224	166	28	38	4	34	12	2	15	3	20	2	5	1	3	1	818

* Includes 44 epidemic cases.

THE BOARDING-OUT SYSTEM.

It is admitted by all experienced social workers that the boarding-out system is the ideal method of providing for normal orphan children, or for children whose parents are unfit to have the care of them. The Special Schools Branch has endeavoured to go further than this by placing out all normal dependent children in selected country foster-homes, and the results have been highly successful. To carry out the system effectively it is essential that the services of experienced Boarding-out Officers should be available not only for the selection of the home suited to the peculiar needs of each child, but also for the purpose of regularly visiting each home and keeping in direct touch with the children while they are of school age, and on through the difficult period of adolescence until the child in question develops into a responsible citizen. The lady Boarding-out Officer must take a keen interest in the life of each child, and when the school period is finished it is her duty to ensure that the child is placed in employment to the best advantage.