

cessful results. One hundred and seventy-two children attended the classes last year. Provision has also been made in these centres and in Christchurch for night classes for the instruction of the adult deaf, eighty-two persons afflicted in this manner attending the classes for the year ended 31st March, 1929.

The education of blind children is provided for at the Jubilee Institute for the Blind, Auckland, which is a private institution recognized as a "separate institution" under the Hospitals and Charitable Aid Institutions Act. Provision is made in this Act for the appointment of nine Trustees—five by the contributors and four by the Governor-General.

The Trustees are required by law to admit and maintain any blind children between the ages of six and twenty-one years that the Minister directs to be sent to the institution. For the maintenance and education of such children the Department pays at the rate of £25 a year each. At present there are 20 children so paid for (16 boys and 4 girls), but this does not represent the total number of children receiving instruction. The Trustees are at liberty to admit any suitable case when the parents are able to pay the full fee.

In addition to special classes for backward children, special classes for hard-of-hearing children and speech-defectives have been established in the four large centres. These classes are staffed by teachers trained at the Sumner School for the Deaf, and it is now decided that the classes will in future be attached to public schools under the control of the Education Boards, and that sufficient teachers will be appointed to carry out the work efficiently.

No. 2.—STATEMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CHILD-WELFARE BRANCH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1929.

WORK IN SOCIAL FIELD.

Preventive Work.

Of the many functions carried out by the Child Welfare Branch in connection with the social work of the community perhaps the most important is that known as preventive work—that is, the adjustment of conditions in connection with homes and with families that, if allowed to develop, would lead to destitution, delinquency, juvenile crime, vice, and to anti-social conduct generally.

By applying constructive preventive measures in the early stages it will be possible to reduce considerably the need later on for charitable aid and to lessen the amount of delinquency and crime. To accomplish this, perhaps the most pressing need at present is the matter of co-ordinating the services and the standardization of methods of all social service organizations, both Government and private. There is need also for provision for training persons who desire to take up social work as a vocation. At present great difficulty is experienced in obtaining men and women of the right type with any experience for our work.

With regard to the activities of the Child Welfare Branch during last year, no fewer than 203 families, representing 509 children, were brought under notice, when, by means of visits paid by field officers and by the adjustment of conditions in the home, or correction of anti-social tendencies on the part of the children, the need for further action, involving probably the committal of families to the care of the State, has been obviated.

Investigation and Supervision of Cases appearing before Children's Courts.

The Child Welfare Act provides that in every case where a child under seventeen years of age appears before a Children's Court investigation must be made by a Child Welfare Officer before the case can be dealt with by the Court.

The following statement indicates the numbers appearing before all such Courts, and the method of disposal: Admonished and discharged, 424; withdrawn, 4; returned to institution, 35; dismissed, 63; adjourned, 34; committed to Supreme Court for sentence, 1; committed to Borstal, 33; committed and discharged, 9; committed and birched, 2; committed and fined, 42; committed and probation, 5. By-law cases—Withdrawn, 1; dismissed, 5; committed and fined, 80; committed and discharged, 2; admonished and discharged, 100. Total, 840.