

3. *Wellington District*.—It will be observed that there is an increase of 133 boys over the previous year of boys coming before the Court—328 as against 195. The prolonged closing of the schools owing to the epidemic is probably one of the principal reasons for the increase. Regarding the 25 second offenders, “an examination of the major factors show that in 23 cases indifferent and divided home control was the chief cause of the repetition of the offences.”

4. *Christchurch District*.—It will be noted that there is an increase (138) in the total number of boys for all causes before the Courts. Breaches of by-laws accounted for 59, but there were substantial increases in mischief, theft, &c. It is not always easy to state different reasons for such increases, but lack of good home control is usually the primary factor.

5. *Dunedin District*.—A perusal of the figures reveals that there has been a marked decrease in the number compared with last year—150 as against 200.

General.—The total number of children appearing for all causes for the year ended 31st March, 1937, was 2,584, as against 2,273 for the previous year and 2,245 for 1934–35.

In the matter of supervision most of the parents have co-operated with the officers in the endeavour to successfully adjust the juvenile offender towards society. In this connection the thanks of the Department and the appreciation of the parents should be extended towards the members of the Big Brother Movement operating in many centres under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. and the authorities of the Catholic Church. New Zealand was not alone in her experience that during the depression years there was a decrease in the numbers appearing before the Courts.

PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS.

A list showing the institutions registered under the provisions of the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1927, is appended to this report. These, in conjunction with other private organizations, continue their beneficent work among orphans and dependent children.

COSTLEY TRUST.

Under the will of Edward Costley (deceased), of Auckland, a sum of money was set aside to assist State wards with apprenticeship. Later this was varied legally to include any child recommended by the Auckland Child Welfare Officers for assistance with their education or training in employment. This has been the means of securing for a large number of children in Auckland District the opportunity for study and advancement not otherwise obtainable. It is a most beneficent trust in being made available as it is to such a large number of children. Some are helped for short periods, some longer, according to the needs of the case, but the benefits are spread and not confined to a few. The number of children who received assistance last year was 59, including 16 State wards at the Boys' Hostel, and for the previous year 48, including 15 State wards at the Boys' Hostel. During the last ten years over 500 children have been enabled either to enter a profession, learn a trade, or receive assistance towards secondary or technical education.

LEGISLATION DURING YEAR.

An amendment to the legislation was made last session in that it was enacted that corporal punishment was not to be ordered in any proceedings in a Children's Court.

CASES APPEARING BEFORE THE CHILDREN'S COURTS.

The number of children dealt with by the Children's Court during the year was 2,584, and of these 667 were placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, and 10 had their supervision extended. Of the children placed under supervision, 18 were subsequently committed to the care of the Superintendent. The number committed to the care of the Superintendent and admitted to institutions, such as receiving-homes, special schools, training-farms, &c., was 432, but all of these with the exception of 136 (81 boys and 55 girls), who required further training, were suitably provided for in the community before the close of the year. The other children (1,475) appearing before the Courts were dealt with in a manner not calling for supervision by a Child Welfare Officer (see details below).

At the 31st March, 1937, there was a total number of 863 children under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers by order of the Courts. Of the number (667) placed under supervision this year, 88 had previously been dealt with by the Courts and placed under supervision. The Magistrate ordered 4 children to spend a period in an institution.

The following statement indicates the number appearing before all such Courts and the action taken: Committals, 432; supervision, 636; admonished and discharged, 600; admonished and ordered to make restitution, 278; adjourned, 56; dismissed, 52; supervision extended, 37; Borstal, 30; convicted and fined, 29; returned to care of Superintendent, 22; adjourned *sine die*, 19; admonished and costs, 16; withdrawn, 10; admonished and fined, 9; convicted and ordered to come up for sentence, 8; supervision, with residence, 4; probation, 4; admonished and driving license cancelled, 4; convicted and discharged, 3; discharged, 3; convicted and costs, 3; referred to Magistrate's Court, 2; convicted and driving license cancelled, 1; convicted and fined and driving license cancelled, 1; convicted and discharged and ordered to make restitution, 1; driving license endorsed, 1; acquitted, 1; admonished and discharged and driving license cancelled, 1; informal supervision, 1; convicted and fined, with costs, 1; prohibited from obtaining driving license for a period, 1; dismissed with costs, 1.

By-law Cases: Admonished and discharged, 147; convicted, with fine and/or costs, 130; dismissed, 18; admonished and costs, 11; convicted and discharged, 5; admonished and fined, 4; withdrawn, 1; supervision, 1: total, by-law cases, 317.