

Dunedin District.—The total number appearing before the Courts was 200, as against 157 last year. Of the total number of boys appearing before the Court, 28 were unemployed at the time of their appearance, and all of these have been placed in suitable situations. In all cases placed under our supervision we have had the co-operation of the parents.

Invercargill District.—There was, unfortunately, a big increase in the number of cases dealt with this year (166), as compared with last year (108). This increase is due not only to extra by-law cases, but also to cases of mischief, breaking, entering, and theft. We find the control of children and parental discipline lamentably slack.

CASES APPEARING BEFORE THE CHILDREN'S COURTS.

It will be seen from Table 4 that there is a slight decrease in the total number of children appearing in the Courts as compared with the number for the previous year (2,801, as against 2,982).

It will be noted that there is an increase in the number of charges of theft for last year, but a decrease in the number of charges of delinquency. The two charges, however, should be considered together, as in many instances a boy who commits theft may have been getting into mischief and generally shown anti-social conduct, so that he is charged as delinquent instead of with theft.

The number of children dealt with by the Children's Courts during the year was 2,801, and of these, 744 were placed under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers, while 10 had their supervision period extended. Of the children placed under supervision, 40 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 501, but all these, with the exception of 186 (119 boys and 67 girls), who required further training, were suitably placed out in the community before the close of the year. The remainder (1,556) 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, 1939, there was a total number of 973 children under the supervision of Child Welfare Officers by order of the Courts. Of the number (744) placed under supervision this year, 79 had previously been dealt with by the Courts and placed under supervision. The Courts ordered 15 children to spend a period in an institution.

The following is a comparative statement of the number of children that appeared before the Children's Courts, and the action taken:

TABLE 3.

	1937- 38.	1938- 39.		1937- 38.	1938- 39.
Committed to the care of the Superintendent	503	501	Admonished and discharged and restitution made	24	..
Placed under supervision	674	718	Fined	48	54
Admonished and discharged	761	618	Agreement enforced (section 13 (3), Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1927)	1	..
Admonished and ordered to make restitution	268	265	Admonished and returned to parents	1	..
Adjourned	45	59	Remanded to Supreme Court	1	..
Dismissed	68	81	Ordered to pay costs	..	2
Supervision extended	26	19	Case struck out	..	2
Committed to Borstal	17	20	Fined and driving license cancelled	..	1
Convicted and fined	4	10	Fined and prohibited from obtaining a license	..	1
Returned to the care of the Superintendent	40	44	Admonished and license suspended	..	1
Adjourned <i>sine die</i>	23	10	Convicted and license suspended	..	1
Admonished with costs	9	21	Convicted and costs and license endorsed	..	2
Withdrawn	21	13	Borstal term extended	..	2
Admonished and fined	18	7	Convicted	..	1
Convicted and ordered to come up for sentence	6	..	By-law cases	..	..
Ordered to come up for sentence	14	12	Admonished and discharged	169	141
Supervision with residence	9	15	Convicted and fined and/or costs	16	13
Probation	3	10	Fined and/or costs	135	91
Admonished and driving license cancelled ..	1	..	Dismissed	4	3
Convicted and discharged	4	3	Admonished and costs	22	13
Discharged	6	..	Convicted and discharged	2	1
Convicted and costs	5	5	Admonished and fined	10	24
Ordered to pay costs	2	..	Withdrawn	1	..
Referred to Magistrates' Court	1	3	Discharged	1	1
Convicted and fined and driving license cancelled	1	..	Referred to Magistrates' Court	1	..
Convicted and discharged and ordered to make restitution	2	..	Adjourned	..	1
Convicted and ordered to be returned to training-farm	1	..	Admonished and discharged and ordered to make restitution	..	5
Informal supervision	4	2	Ordered to pay costs	..	4
Convicted and discharged and driving license endorsed	1	..			
Admonished and discharged and stolen property returned	9	..	Totals	2,982	2,801

NOTE.—Convictions mostly comprise cases that came before the Courts for offences arising out of breaches of Traffic Regulations, by-laws, &c.