

remembered that as time goes on more courts are established and the additional returns may exaggerate an apparent increase in delinquency or may under-estimate a decrease.

Thirdly, although the figures refer to offenders rather than offences, they do not represent the number of delinquent juveniles because some children may be brought to court more than once within a year, and in the tables of the Report such children are recorded as separate individuals each time they appear on a new complaint.

Lastly, the number of delinquency cases reported by the courts is affected, to a considerable extent, by variations in the policies of the courts in the disposition of cases. Some courts handle certain cases unofficially, that is, in these cases legal papers are not prepared and the case is adjusted by the judge or other officer of the court without a formal court hearing. Although some of the courts report the cases as adjourned *sine die*, others consider the interview as an 'occurrence', meaning that the case is not recorded as a charge.

Reports of juvenile offences were received in 1947 from 136 judicial districts out of a total of 150 districts.* Fourteen districts reported no offences. The reporting area for 1947, as for earlier years, is particularly representative of cities and towns, and includes 105 urban centres in Canada with populations of 4,000 or over.

Subsection 1.—Total Juvenile Offences

The terms 'indictable' and 'non-indictable' are applied only to offences of adults. Similar offences committed by juveniles are termed 'major' offences and 'minor' offences, respectively.

Delinquents Brought Before the Courts.—The statistics for 1947 show that the decline in the number of court cases of juvenile delinquency, first noted in 1943, is continuing. Children brought before Canadian courts during 1947 numbered 8,265 as compared with 8,707 in 1946, a decrease of 5.1 p.c. The number of delinquents charged with major offences decreased from 5,409 in the previous year to 5,152 in 1947, or 4.8 p.c. The number of juveniles charged with minor offences that were disposed of by the courts was 3,113 during 1947 as against 3,298 in the preceding year, a falling-off of 5.6 p.c.

Table 1 shows the number of cases brought before the courts, by provinces, from 1943 to 1947. In 1947 a decrease was apparent in each of the provinces, except Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, as compared with the previous year. Yukon and the Northwest Territories reported cases for the first time since 1940.

* In Quebec, the Judicial Districts of Rouyn-Noranda and Témiscamingue have been added. The 18 counties in Nova Scotia are combined in 7 judicial districts.