

The sentences meted out to these young people vary somewhat from those given to offenders over 24 years of age. Usually a higher proportion of them are given suspended sentences, put on probation or sent to reformatories and a lower proportion fined or given gaol sentences.

14.—Disposition of Sentences for Indictable Offences, by Sex, 1956 and 1957

Disposition of Sentences	1956				1957			
	16-24 Years		25 Years or Over		16-24 Years		25 Years or Over	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Suspended sentence.....	1,485	135	1,293	205	2,065	150	1,313	206
Probation.....	2,387	169	854	117	3,062	187	1,096	151
Fine.....	2,482	104	5,108	304	3,003	143	5,413	408
Gaol.....	3,492	137	5,112	290	4,136	156	5,745	247
Reformatory.....	1,131	52	490	23	1,383	37	494	27
Penitentiary.....	777	12	1,216	28	859	10	1,426	40
Death.....	2	—	8	—	4	—	4	—

Through the system of suspended sentence and probation supervising, many young offenders receive another chance to make good, and reformatory training gives others an opportunity to better their employment possibilities. It is interesting to note that 24.2 p.c. of the young male offenders in 1957 were recorded as labourers, indicating that they had no particular skill by which to earn a living; the proportion of male offenders 25 years or over recorded as labourers was 17.4 p.c. Those recorded as students made up 7.9 p.c. of the youths and 9.6 p.c. were reported as unemployed as compared with 2.9 p.c. of the older men. Approximately three of every four lived in urban centres.

Subsection 3.—Convictions for Summary Conviction Offences

Offences punishable on summary conviction—those not expressly made indictable—include all offences against the Criminal Code, provincial statutes and municipal by-laws. Summary conviction offences are triable by magistrate or justice of the peace under Part XXIV of the Criminal Code or under the provincial summary convictions Acts.

It is debatable how far summary conviction offences are of a criminal nature and whether their increase indicates an increase in crime. Many are breaches of municipal by-laws and contrary to public safety, health and comfort as, for example, parking violations or practising trades without licence, but they do not involve violence, cruelty or serious dishonesty. On the other hand, offences as serious as cruelty to animals and contributing to juvenile delinquency are included under this classification and such indictable offences as common assault and driving with ability impaired may be tried on summary conviction.

Summary convictions increased by 2.7 p.c. to 2,466,762 in 1957 from 2,401,730 in 1956. Decreases were shown in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario.