

1895.

VICTORIA.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

FOR THE YEAR

1894.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT PURSUANT TO ACTS 54 VICT. No. 1121, Sec. 10,
AND No. 1079, Sec. 320.

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R E P O R T.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools,
Melbourne, 19th June, 1895.

SIR,

I have the honour to forward, in accordance with the Act, the Annual Report of the Department for the year ending 31st December last, together with the usual Return, Statement of Accounts, &c.

The transactions for the year, as compared with those of 1893, are shown on the following Table :—

	1893.	1894.
Committed to Neglected Children's Department during year	437	490
Sent to service from Neglected Children's Department during year	329	347
Children from Neglected Children's Department in service at end of year ...	708	669
" " " " placed on probation during year ...	114	148
" " " " on probation at end of year ...	561	576
" " " " boarded out during year ...	435	362
" " " " " at end of year ...	1,825	1,905
" " " " finally discharged during year ...	61	48
Committed to Reformatories during year	72	58
Transfers to Reformatories from gaol during year	16	5
Sent to service from Reformatories during year	174	156
Children from Reformatories in service at end of year	207	144
" " placed on probation during year	30	43
" " on probation at end of year	41	27
" " finally discharged during year	17	21
Number of Children received under one year old during the year 1893, 119; 1894, 128; or nearly 26 per cent. of the neglected children received.		
Death rate 1 per cent. of the whole under supervision.		

The following will show the number of Neglected Children and Reformatory Wards who were a cost to the State on 31st December, 1893, and 31st December, 1894, respectively :—

	<i>Neglected.</i>				1893.	1894.
Boarded out at beginning of the year	1,741	1,825
In Government Depôts and Assisted Schools	130	128
Committed during year and boarded out, &c.	437	490
					<hr/> 2,308	<hr/> 2,443
Discharged, transferred, sent to service, &c.	483	538
Remaining on 31st December a charge to the State	<hr/> 1,825	<hr/> 1,905
					<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
	<i>Reformatory.</i>				1893.	1894.
In Government Depôts and Assisted Schools at the beginning of the year	152	143
Committed during year	88	63
					<hr/> 240	<hr/> 206
Discharged, transferred, sent to service, &c.	97	56
Remaining on 31st December a charge to the State	<hr/> 143	<hr/> 150
					<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Committals.—It will be seen that while there have been fewer children committed to the Reformatories, there has been a large increase in the number of neglected children sent to the care of the Department. This is mainly accounted for by the continued depression in this colony, and the migration of large numbers of the bread-winners to the Western Australian Gold-fields, leaving their families unprovided for.

Serious as the increase is, as adding to the already large outlay on behalf of this class of children, it is due to the many agencies now at work in the colony for the rescue of children to point out that but for their continued efforts the numbers received by the Department would have been much greater.

Mortality.—During the year 36 children died, being only 1 per cent. of the whole under supervision. This is of course very small when it is remembered that 26 per cent. of the children were under one year old, and in many instances in a very delicate state of health when received. This very low rate speaks in the highest degree as to the care of the wards by their foster-parents, the supervision of the ladies, and the advantages of the boarding-out system generally.

Children sent to Service and their Conduct.—Finding that the falling-off in the demand for service children, referred to in the last year's report, was still continuing, it was deemed necessary to lower the rate of wages for the present very considerably all round, and in many instances even to accept little more than board, clothing, and pocket-money. This has resulted in our being able to send an equal number to service as was done the previous year. Care, of course, will be taken to review these cases where low rates have been accepted when the improved position of the farmers and other employers warrant our doing so.

Children placed with Relatives and Others on Probation under section 30 sub-section 5, of Act 1121.—There has been an increase in the number of children placed out under this section; 191 having been sent to the care of their friends and others during the period, which, allowing for those whose terms of control had expired, &c., makes the number still on probation, without any cost to the State, at the close of the year 603. A few of these children have had to be taken back, but upon the whole their general conduct has been good, and they are doing well.

Transfers from Gaol, section 333 of Act 1079.—Five were transferred from gaol as against sixteen the previous year, and with few exceptions these transfers are doing well.

Suspension of Sentences by Courts and Release of Prisoners on Probation under sections 353 and 354, Act 1079.—Forty males and six females were dealt with under section 353 during the year, but none under section 354 of the Crimes Act.

Receiving Depôts, Royal Park.—The usual receiving and discharging work of this institution has been carried out satisfactorily, and the health and conduct of the children have been good. The large and varied assortment of presents kindly forwarded by Mr. Peterson and others to this and the other schools for some years past were much valued by the children, and I am glad of this annual opportunity of thanking this gentleman and the other friends who take a kindly interest in them.

Protestant Training School for Girls.—The Matron gives a good account of the health and conduct of her inmates, but experiences a difficulty in finding suitable situations for them.

Roman Catholic Industrial Schools.—The Superioresses in charge of these schools report that the general health and conduct of their inmates as being good.

Boys' Private Reformatories.—The various reports herewith of the officers in charge of these schools will well repay perusal, as showing their several methods of dealing with those under their care, and the general results as being satisfactory.

I dealt very fully with each of these schools separately in my report for 1893, that being the first year of their opening, it will perhaps be sufficient, therefore, for me merely to add that the good results generally which we anticipated would follow the opening of these private reformatories for boys, from an economic and reformatory point of view, have been so far fully realized. The following table will be found interesting as showing the average length of time the Reformatory inmates sent to service from the schools during the year had been detained:—

BOYS.			GIRLS.		
Excelsior	...	6½ months	Albion	...	5 months
Heidelberg	...	7¼ "	Brookside	...	5 "
Kingsbury	...	4½ "	Oakleigh	...	2 yrs. 11⅔ "
Wandin Yallock	...	10½ "			

Brookside.—Mrs. Rowe's report of her year's transactions will be found of the usual interest, and as showing upon the whole equally satisfactory results with previous years.

The Salvation Army Reformatories.—The matron reports the health and conduct of her girls, both at service and in the school, as very satisfactory. The girls are taught, in addition to the usual domestic work, as at the other schools, the use of the knitting machine, from which they turn out most serviceable garments for sale to the general public.

Roman Catholic Reformatory.—The Mother Prioress reports most favorably as regards the conduct and health of her wards, and that in all cases employers seemed pleased with the girls' knowledge of the different branches of domestic work, which must be very gratifying to those in charge of the school. I feel constrained, however, to draw special attention to the length of time the inmates of this school are detained—a cost to the State—before being placed out either in service or on probation. I can quite understand the hesitancy with which Reformatory girls are replaced in the care of their friends, as experience has shown that very few indeed do well, more especially if in or near their old surroundings; but it is unfair to the girls themselves, and certainly to the State, to retain them, unless physically or mentally unfit, as long as is the practice at this school without having been given at least a trial at service. On reference to the above table it will be seen that while 52 girls were sent to service during the year from the "Brookside" and 27 from the "Albion" Reformatories after an average detention of five months, only nine girls went from Oakleigh after being detained for nearly three years.

I have hesitated drawing your attention to this before, being in hopes things would improve, and, of course, feeling most reluctant to have to question the management in this matter of the experienced and excellent ladies in charge of this school, and who doubtless have at this, as at the other Reformatories, most unpromising material to work upon.

Children boarded out.—The work of placing out and transferring the children from home to home during the year has been carried out by the various Boarding-out Committees with their usual care and forethought, and it is gratifying to know that there are so many kindly ladies still willing to afford so much of their time ungrudgingly to this all-important work.

Maintenance Collections.—I regret having to report a further falling-off in the maintenance receipts, £856 12s. 1d. being received as compared with £1,139 10s. 7d. the previous year.

To the numerous honorary workers, especially the various lady correspondents, the hearty thanks of the Department is due and cordially tendered.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THOS. M. MILLAR,
Secretary.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN.—INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY.

Items.	Head Office.	Industrial Schools.							Total.	Reformatory Schools.							Total.		
		Boys' and Girls' Receiving Depots.	Abbotsford	St. Joseph's, Geelong.	Servants' Training School.	Boarded-out Children.	Licensed Children.	Albion.		Okkeleigh.	Brookside.	Heidelberg.	Excelsior.	Wandin Yallock.	Kingsbury.	Straight View Farm.†		Bukawert†	Licensed Children.	Telephone Service.
Average strength	...	84	59	2	12	1,865	...	...	16	40	39	15	14	16	5	4	3	...	...
Provisions	£ s. d.	348 18 11	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Clothing and Bedding	...	120 0 8	...	...	...	...	...	348 18 11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fuel, Light, and Water	29 1 2	238 13 10	...	...	...	...	...	267 15 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Stores Stock	96 13 5	162 19 9	...	...	...	...	...	259 13 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Medical Attendance, Medicines, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	1,326 1 9	...	1,326 1 9	...	...	39 1 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Incidentals, &c.	427 4 1	137 17 7	...	...	...	...	...	565 1 8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Transport and Travelling Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	561 8 3	...	1,387 15 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Telephone Service	15 7 6	15 7 6	...	...	4 13 4	...	...	35 8 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Salaries and Wages	3,108 4 6	926 7 8	...	...	...	...	...	4,034 12 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maintenance	...	...	756 18 4	22 15 0	156 10 6	26,142 13 6	...	27,078 17 4	422 4 0	1,033 18 8	1,017 8 3	394 8 4	371 3 9	426 13 10	132 18 9	29 5 9	19 1 2	...	...
	3,676 10 8	1,950 5 11	756 18 4	22 15 0	156 10 6	29,029 15 5	1,198 3 9	36,790 19 7	422 4 0	1,033 18 8	1,056 9 5	394 8 4	371 3 9	426 13 10	132 18 9	29 5 9	19 1 2	833 19 6	120 2 6
Deduct—Value of Labour performed by School Maintenance	...	139 6 7	...	...	...	...	...	139 6 7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

	...	29 1 0	20 8 8	0 13 10	3 16 1	645 9 5	...	699 9 0	6 4 8	15 11 8	15 3 11	34 13 1	32 6 11	36 19 4	1 11 1	0 2 13 3	1 19 3	...	...
	...	168 7 7	20 8 8	0 13 10	3 16 1	645 9 5	...	838 15 7	6 4 8	15 11 8	15 3 11	34 13 1	32 6 11	36 19 4	1 11 1	0 2 13 3	1 19 3	...	...
Net Cost	3,676 10 8	1,781 18 4	736 9 8	22 1 2	152 14 5	28,384 6 0	1,198 3 9	35,952 4 0	4 15 19 1	1,018 7 0	1,041 5 6	359 15 3	338 16 10	389 14 6	121 7 9	26 12 6	17 1 11	833 19 6	120 2 6

* Under Part VIII, of Act. —† For four months only.

ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE RETURN OF NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY CHILDREN.

Particulars.	ASSISTED SCHOOLS.										Total.				
	GOVERNMENT DEPÔTS.					REFORMATORY.									
	Neglected.		Reformatory.		On Probation.	Neglected.		Reformatory.							
	Boys' Depôt.	Girls' Depôt.	Boys' Probationary.	Boys', Royal Park.	Girls', Royal Park.	Girls' (Roman Catholic), Abbotsford.	Girls' (Protestant), Yarra Park.	Girls' (Protestant), Albin.	Girls' (Protestant), Brookside.	Boys' (Protestant), Bukawert.	Boys' (Protestant), Heidelberg.	Boys' (Protestant), Kingsbury.	Girls' (Roman Catholic), Oakleigh.	Boys' (Roman Catholic), Stralight View.	Boys' (Protestant), Wandin Yallock.
Admissions, &c.															
New Admissions	159	331	...	42	9	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	4	...	...
Transfers from Gaol	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Re-admissions	109	41	...	18	14	...	...	43	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Transfers from Neglected Children's Department	...	...	...	...	...	6	13	13	...	2	3	1	4	4	...
Transfers from Reformatories	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	9	...	...	...
Add increase during year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Admissions	268	374	20	60	25	38	17	61	4	32	31	11	16	16	1,098
Under supervision 1st January, 1894	14	33	9	5	...	62	8	43	...	12	14	4	41	...	3,613
Total	282	407	29	65	25	100	25	104	4	44	45	15	57	27	4,711
Discharges, &c.															
To Foster Homes	111	239	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	362
" Service	101	56	6	7	1	45	10	55	...	15	18	9	9	...	367 ^a
" Relatives and others on probation	22	19	2	6	1	1	...	6	...	15	5	2	4	...	89 ^b
" Relatives and others finally	3	6	...	3	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	33 ^c
" Lunatic Asylums and other institutions	4	3	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Died	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 ^d
Absconded	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
Transferred to Reformatory Schools	14	32	2	42	14	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	111
Transferred to other schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Add decrease during year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	102
Total Discharges	261	375	24	58	24	49	10	71	1	34	31	11	19	11	1,115
Under Supervision on 31st December, 1894	21	32	5	7	1	51	15	33	3	10	14	4	38	16	3,596
Total	282	407	29	65	25	100	25	104	4	44	45	15	57	27	4,711

^a One hundred and thirty-two were, in addition, placed at service from foster homes and three from probation.
^b Eighty-five were, in addition, discharged on probation from foster homes and 17 from service.
^c Thirty-six were, in addition, discharged from foster and service homes.
^d Thirty-four other children died—viz., in boarded-out, licensed and probation homes, also in hospitals.

AGES, RELIGIONS, BIRTHPLACES, AND PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN SENT TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT AND TO REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

	Number admitted.	Ages													Religions.						Birthplaces.						Parentage.																										
		Ages													Religions.			Birthplaces.						Both Parents Alive.			One Parent Alive.																										
		Under 1 year.	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 6	6 to 7	7 to 8	8 to 9	9 to 10	10 to 11	11 to 12	12 to 13	13 to 14	14 to 15	15 to 16	16 and over.	Protestant.	Jew.	Roman Catholic.	Australian Colonies.	England.	Scotland.	Germany.	India.	Mauritius.	Unknown.	Both in Colony.	Both Deserted.	Father.	Mother.	Both Deserted.	Father.	Mother.	Unknown.	Father.	Mother.	Both Dead.	Both Unknown.													
Neglected children ...	490	128	27	31	27	28	29	21	25	27	25	19	25	15	24	13	18	8	341	1	148	473	6	2	1	1	...	7	100	33	138	13	18	...	42	91	11	1	6	...	18	19											
Albion Reformatory										
Brookside Reformatory ...	3								
Bukawert Reformatory							
Excelsior Reformatory ...	3						
Heidelberg Reformatory						
Kingsbury Reformatory						
Oakleigh Reformatory ...	4						
Royal Park Reformatory (Boys)	42					
Royal Park Reformatory (Girls)	11						
Straight View Reformatory					
Wandin Yallock Reformatory						
Total Reformatories ...	63				
Total ...	553	128	27	31	27	28	29	21	25	27	25	19	25	15	24	13	18	8	391	1	161	531	6	2	1	1	...	11	127	35	141	13	18	...	51	110	11	2	6

REPORTS ON SCHOOLS.

GIRLS AND BOYS' DEPÔT, RECEIVING HOUSE.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit, for your information, my report for the year 1894.

In the Girls' Division of the Neglected Children's Department the health of the inmates has been very good, and their behaviour all that could be desired. Only two deaths (one of a child on remand) occurred during the year; both were infants suffering from marasmus when received.

In the Girls' Reformatory Division good discipline has been maintained, and work satisfactory; one girl absconded, but was soon returned.

In the Boys' Division of the Neglected Children's Department and the Probationary School, the health has been good. A favorable report can be given of the boys' work and conduct.

In the Boys' Reformatory Division we had two cases of serious illness from lung disease. I am pleased to say both lads recovered.

The boys have worked well at gardening, milking, and general out-door work.

Discipline and conduct on the whole favorable.

I have again to thank the ladies and gentlemen of the Visiting Committee for their annual treat and magic lantern entertainment; to the ladies of St. George's Church, Royal Park, for a very pleasant entertainment to the children of both Depôts; and to Mr. Peterson for his usual kind gift of toys.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JANE WILSON, Matron, &c.

REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE, ROYAL PARK RECEIVING DEPÔTS.

The Visiting Committee for Receiving Depôt, Royal Park, report that the management of each portion of the institution has been satisfactorily carried out throughout the year ending 31st December, 1894.

The Committee have carried out the system of three visits per month, and on no occasion have they had cause to complain of any neglect or lack of cleanliness, either in the buildings or amongst the children.

They are thankful to be able to state that during the year there has been very little sickness. Two boys, in the winter, were dangerously ill for a time, but soon recovered; other ailments were those incidental to children. The deaths which occurred were those of infants dying when admitted.

When the surroundings and neglect in which the greater number of these children have been reared is considered, and the condition in which they are too frequently received, the immunity from sickness is remarkable, and is doubtless due to the care and attention bestowed upon them in the institution.

The Committee gave their annual Christmas treat to the children, and secured the kind services of Mr. Whinfield to give them a magic lantern entertainment in the evening, the subject, "A Tour round the World," which was much appreciated.

The Committee hoped that ere this some steps would have been taken by the Department to give the boys the advantage of drill exercise or gymnastics, which would be healthful and beneficial to them.

They regret that the absconders have been numerous in the earlier part of the year. Twenty-three from Boys' Depôt, and two from Girls' Reformatory; most of these were quickly discovered and brought back to Depôts.

The Committee have again to acknowledge the courtesy of all officers of the institution.

(Signed) JAMES LOUDON, Chairman.
LISA BARDIN, Hon. Secretary Visiting Committee.

ABBOTSFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

SIR,

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ending 31st December, 1894.

If we except a few cases of scarlatina, of which, however, none proved fatal, the general health was good, and the children bright and cheerful, as was clearly shown on the occasions during the year in which they celebrated with enjoyment the school feasts customary in this institution, and also at the time of Christmas, the joys of which were enhanced by the welcome gifts to the children from their kind friend Mr. Peterson, and other benefactors.

Lord and Lady Gormanton, accompanied by His Grace the Most Reverend Dr. Carr, paid a visit to the schools, and were greatly pleased with the children and their work. Many other kind friends visited, and showed their interest, by promising treats of magic lantern, concert, &c.

It is with great satisfaction we have to report that some of the girls whose terms have expired have been well and comfortably provided for, and bear excellent recommendations for good conduct, while those doing well at service constantly visit. For the latter class of girls a circulating library has been opened, with a view to encourage the girls to keep up regular communication with the school, and at the same time provide them with moral and useful literature.

With sincere thanks to all who have shown a kindly interest in the work of the school,

I have the honour to remain, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) MARY V. KENNEDY, Provincial Superioress.

ALBION REFORMATORY SCHOOL FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS.

SIR,

I am pleased to be able to report satisfactorily with regard to the general conduct of the girls of this Reformatory during the year ending 31st December. It has been very good indeed, and the tone denotes an all-round improvement.

Of the total number of girls received since its inception the terms of ten have expired through the effluxion of time during the past year, two of whom were almost immediately married.

The general health of the girls has been good, and they have almost without exception enjoyed good health. Several are constitutionally weak; and two have suffered from disease.

The girls receive a training in domestic work, and show improvement in this direction.

Knitting and sewing are also taught in the institution throughout the year.

(Signed)

ANNIE HUTCHINSON, Matron.

OAKLEIGH REFORMATORY SCHOOL,

SIR,

I have the honour to submit for your information a report of the working of the school for the year ending 31st December, 1894.

The health of the children during the year has been excellent, except in case of some new committals, whose health for a time required medical treatment.

Their conduct has been in general good, they are very submissive, and at all times show a readiness to obey the orders of the Sisters charged with them in the different employments. It is highly gratifying to perceive the spirit of emulation that prevails amongst them, each one trying to perfect herself, and as it were excel her companions in the different duties assigned her.

Those placed at service are reported as doing well; in all cases employers seem pleased with their knowledge of the different branches of domestic work—baking, cooking, laundry work, &c.

During the year several children whose terms of control had already expired returned voluntarily, placing themselves under the protection of the nuns pending good respectable situations being provided for them.

I beg to tender most grateful thanks to Dr. Grant for his generous and prompt attention on all occasions to the wants of the children, also to many other kind friends for their valuable and useful presents towards the fitting up of a Christmas tree, which caused intense pleasure and delight amongst them, and indeed great anxiety as to who would be the winner of some of the pretty gifts with which the tree was profusely decorated, there being not less than two or three articles for each child.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours respectfully,

MARY A. O'SHEA.

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE.

On the occasion of our visit, we have much pleasure to observe that the children present the same happy and healthy appearance which we noted on our previous visit.

The institution is to our judgment a model of order and cleanliness; in addition, we have to record a marked improvement in the singing of the children.

(Signed)

JAMES L. HEGARTY.
NICHOLAS FITZGERALD.
EDMUND O'DONNELL.
JAMES HOGAN.
HORATIO O'CALLAGHAN.
MICHAEL MORNANE.

BROOKSIDE REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

We consider that the new committals for the year, though young, represent the worst type of cases we receive. We received nothing we could possibly call a light case.

Passed from under our control one girl, a new committal, received in the middle of the year, was sent a few days ago to a situation. Early in November she was married to a very respectable man. She has a good home, and writes often to us.

During all our experience, we find that sending them among old surroundings is a serious mistake. Out of a considerable number so treated, we have only had two who really behaved well in every way.

Our service girls did very fairly well, five only out of the number behaved very badly while out, though several others gave us early cause for anxiety.

We continually hear of or from the young women whose term has expired, and are now "looking after themselves" as they say. Six of them have married fairly well since they left the home. Eighteen are doing very well in situations. The remaining ten are not satisfactory, or have not been heard of for a time.

We are reaping the fruit of being too anxious to send the girls out in several ways. First, the training they received has not been as complete; and, secondly, we have placed out some we should not have sent on a longer acquaintance.

The health of the girls has been almost perfect. There was one severe case of scarlet fever in service; the girl made a good recovery.

The staff remains at about the same number, Mrs. Downing being still virtual head. The five ladies who work with her have their hands full, and as there is nowhere to spend an afternoon, they have a very quiet life, or, perhaps, they would have if the girls would let them.

I should state that we had a very serious disturbance in September. I applied for the transfer of four of the girls concerned in it, and we dealt with the other four at Brookside.

I do not think I need trespass any more on your time.

I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

(Signed) ELIZABETH ROWE.

EXCELSIOR HOME FOR BOYS' REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

The conduct of the boys has been even better than last year, though some of them have wanted continual watching and extreme care.

The boys attending school have done very well, and this year have been successful in obtaining prizes at both the State and Roman Catholic schools.

The lads who are too big for school can readily obtain employment round the neighbourhood; the money they thus earn being placed to their credit in the bank.

I wish to thank most sincerely our many friends in this district for helping the boys in this way.

The Reverend Father Carey and the Committee have been very attentive to the boys belonging to their faith.

Divine service has also been held regularly at the "Home," and have been well attended by the boys, who have also paid a great deal of attention. Mr. Chambers has been most kind in devoting so much of his time to these services.

Our "camp" this year has been a greater success than last, as we enjoyed splendid weather, and the farmers of the district have been most kind; they placed confidence in the boys, and I am happy to say their confidence was not misplaced.

Dr. Simons, of Brighton, has again been very kind in attending any of the lads who have been sick, but I am happy to state that the health of the boys generally has been very good.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) W. GROOM.

HEIDELBERG HOME FOR BOYS' REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

The past year's operations have been of a successful character in this Reformatory.

The general health of the lads has been good. In the beginning of the year one boy died in the Melbourne Hospital; he had always been of a weak constitution.

The conduct of the boys has been good.

The terms of four of the boys expired during the year, and they are now in situations.

The boys are being trained to lives of industry, together with a systematic course of education. They have improved very much in these points; the experience in general farm work being very beneficial to them when situations are provided.

(Signed) WILLIAM PEART,

For Superintendent.

KINGSBURY REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

On the whole the boys behave and work well, and we try to give each an insight into the various kinds of farm and garden work, so that they may be able to take a place when an opportunity offers.

Owing to the depression situations are hard to get.

The health of the lads has been good, and I would like to mention the kindness of Dr. Eccles, who is always ready and willing to give his services when required.

The boys have lessons five nights a week, and some of them sadly need them, their education having been very much neglected.

We had a deal of trouble some months ago owing to two very troublesome boys in the "Home," who caused three cases of absconding within a few weeks; but we are now connected with the police station by telephone, and can therefore call up the constable, who has been of great assistance to us in cases of this sort, which we must expect in the work.

I am pleased to say that since we have been getting on well, and I trust these boys may yet grow up to be useful members of society. Most of them have a bank book, for I try to save as much as possible of their rewards and earnings, depositing the same in the Post-office Savings Bank.

I wish to mention the kindness of Lieutenant J. B. Field and Private Pegler, of Castlemaine, in sending the parcel of suitable reading matter, also in assisting the prize fund.

Mr. Brett, inspector; Mr. Barber, of the Gordon Institute; and Mr. Forster, of the Try Society, Toorak, visited us during the year, and we all enjoyed the kindly advice given to the boys.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) A. BREBNER.

MR. ALBERT WISEMAN'S FARM REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

I beg to report that our work at Wandin Yallock Reformatory has been fairly satisfactory during the past twelve months. The boys continued to learn general farm work at the "Home," as well as school matters. The latter is most tedious and difficult for them, as they belong to that class who are more muscular than intellectual, hence a day's hard work on the farm is much easier than an hour's schooling.

Some of the boys received were rough, untaught, and morally neglected to a degree hard to credit in a country where free education is in existence.

We have made mistakes in trying to save expense to the Government by sending boys to service before they were fit, and they are failures; we regret that when we hoped they were to be trusted, and sent them to service, some lapsed into lazy ways again, natural to themselves, but disgusting to those with whom they lived.

The employers often express pleasure at the appearance and behaviour of the boys, and then in a few weeks say they are disappointed, and return the lad.

The year's work further confirmed our conviction that it is useless and costly to send a boy to service with old habits still strong in his nature; it takes time to give up old vices and sympathies for crime, and learn better ideas, &c. Till good habits and thoughts are as strong, or stronger than their old ones, it is useless to trust that the newly-formed ideas will stand the strain and force of those longer established.

Those at service give us a great deal of anxiety, as they constantly move about, but while we know where they are, and they do not try and evade us, we allow them to some extent to choose their own employers. Some have absconded, and the police believe they have got over the border to New South Wales, so are lost to us for the present. There are others who give every promise of becoming useful and honest men.

It should be remembered that nearly all who have gone to service were old Ballarat boys, and had been placed from that institution at service before, and they think if they are disobedient, and make themselves disagreeable, they will be sent back to the Reformatory, and they try this game with us. As these grow up and cease to be connected with us, we expect much better results from those more recently sent into the Reformatory.

I beg to remain,

Yours obediently,

(Signed)

CHARLES D. BARBER,

For Superintendent.

BUKAWERT REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

This Reformatory was opened for the admission of boys on 27th August, 1894.

The boys work well and willingly at bush, farm, and garden work, and behave on the whole very well; they also assist in the housework in turns.

We have Sunday school and church services on Sundays, which visitors to the house also attend.

For amusement, they have football, fishing, swimming, and trapping.

This Reformatory being in existence for such a short period, it is hardly possible to judge of the result of the boys' detention here.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

H. B. SADLEIR, Superintendent.

STRAIGHT VIEW FARM REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

SIR,

I have the honour to report that our house was opened on 14th August last.

The boys' conduct has been satisfactory; they are very obedient, and do their work willingly. They are employed at various kinds of work; they have to milk mornings and evenings, work in the garden, cut scrub, and help to shear the sheep. They have a half-holiday on Saturdays, and amuse themselves at cricket, football, rope quoits, hunting, &c.

We have private service every Sunday morning, and all attend.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

P. McMAHON, Superintendent.