

1899.

VICTORIA.

---

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND  
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

R E P O R T

OF THE

SECRETARY AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1 8 9 8.

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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, 4th May, 1899.

SIR,

I have the honour, in accordance with the provisions of Acts 1121 and 1079, to submit for your consideration the Annual Reports of this Department for the past year, together with the usual Returns, Statements of Accounts, &c., for the year ending 31st December, 1898.

The transactions of the year are set forth in the following table :—

STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES, ETC., FOR THE YEAR 1898.

	Neglected Children.	Reformatory Children.	Total.
<b>ADMISSIONS, ETC.</b>			
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1897 ... ..	3,771	412	4,183
New committals ... ..	1,020	42	1,062
Transfers from Gaol ... ..	...	19	19
"    "    Neglected Children's Department ... ..	...	68	68
"    "    Reformatory " ... ..	4	...	4
Returned absconders, &c. ... ..	11	19	30
	4,806	560	5,366
<b>DISCHARGES, ETC.</b>			
From Institutions, Service and Foster-homes, &c., as follows :—			
By Order of the Governor in Council ... ..	221	12	233
"    Death ... ..	75	1	77
"    Effluxion of time ... ..	206	113	319
"    Re-transfer to Gaol ... ..	...	1	1
"    Transfer to Asylums ... ..	8	1	9
"    "    Neglected Children's Department ... ..	...	4	4
"    "    Reformatory " ... ..	68	...	68
"    Absconders during 1898 not returned ... ..	31	36	67
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1898 ... ..	4,196	392	4,588*
	4,806	560	5,366

\* The location of the 4,588 children is shown hereunder :—

†	{	2,791 Neglected Children were being maintained in foster-homes.
		113 " " " " institutions.
		204 Reformatory " " " reformatory schools.
		671 Neglected Children were maintaining themselves at service.
		128 Reformatory " " " "
		613 Neglected Children were with relatives, &c., without cost.
		60 Reformatory " " " "
		8 Neglected Children were in Hospitals.

† In addition to these, 22 who are free from legal control are still being maintained by the State, as they are incapacitated.

The numbers of wards of the Neglected Children's and Reformatory Departments respectively who were a charge on the 31st December, 1897, and 31st December, 1898, are as under :—

	<i>Neglected.</i>	1897.	1898.
Boarded out ... ..	...	2,379	2,791
In Schools ... ..	...	107	113
Total ... ..	...	2,486	2,904
<i>Reformatory.</i>			
In Schools ... ..	...	186	204

*Committals.*—It will be seen with regret that while there has been a still further decrease in the Reformatory Committals—42 as against 57 in the previous year—there has been a very large increase in the number of neglected children committed during the same period, 1,020 as against 770 in 1897, 551 in 1896, 485 in 1895, 490 in 1894, and 437 in 1893. As I have had occasion to say in previous reports, it is most difficult to advance any very reliable or adequate explanation as to the reason of such wholesale committals, amounting in the year under review to fully 32 per cent. over the year 1897, leaving out of consideration those taken during the same period under the care of the orphanages and the numerous societies working under Part VIII. of the Neglected Children's Act, particulars of whose operations are given further on in this Report. No doubt the long years of depression through which our colony has passed will account in a measure for the increased number of children received during the last few years, many parents having been compelled to leave for the country and the neighbouring colonies in search of employment, leaving their children unprovided for. It is, however, to be feared that the privilege granted, in some instances, to respectable widows and deserted wives, whose children had been committed, of leaving them with their mothers, and paying them for a portion of them, has had much to do with the abnormal increase.

This privilege had been approved of from time to time by Ministerial authority in a few very special and isolated cases for many years and without any very serious ill results. In later years, however, when we were overtaken by the depression to which reference has already been made, it formed a precedent for extending the humane, but what I venture to say is a very questionable practice under the Neglected Children's Act. There can, I submit, be little doubt that it has tended to considerably weaken local and individual effort in adversity, with it is feared the objectionable result that many parents and relations, and others philanthropically interested in them, have come to look upon the fact of children being committed as neglected under the Act, as being little or no degradation, so long as they are left with their relatives and paid for by the State. Consequently, a practice which, as has been said, was formerly confined to a few special cases and districts, has now become almost general throughout the colony; and so much so, indeed, that out of a total of 2,791 children boarded out and paid for at the close of 1898, no fewer than 611 were with their own mothers.

*Mortality.*—Seventy-seven (77) deaths occurred during the year, or 1·6 per cent. of the total number of children under the control of the Department. It will be observed, with regret, that this is a considerable increase in the mortality rate of former years, and is attributable in a great measure to the inability of the children—many of whom were received in a weak and emaciated state—to withstand the unusually severe summer of last year.

Two of the infants who succumbed were being suckled by their own mothers in carefully selected foster-homes under the special authority to which I have referred with pleasure in my former reports, and which I am glad to be able to say can be equally satisfactorily indorsed after another year's experience of the working of the system. When we know that the death of infants from neglect and other preventable causes is almost of daily occurrence, one cannot help wishing that in some way this sheltering care of the Department, which is at present, through the committal of their infants, thrown around comparatively few, were extended to the many young mothers who are forced by necessity into placing their offspring with women, some of whom are of doubtful character, and at such low rates of payment that, speaking generally, the death of the poor children at an early date is the only thing to look forward to, and indeed, under some circumstances, to be hoped for, with a view to the early ending of their sufferings.

*Children sent to Service.*—I am glad to say there has, upon the whole, been a brisker demand for our service boys and girls, and consequently a distinctly better wage is being obtained for most of those now going out, and those sent out during the past few years at very low rates in consequence of the depressed times are as far as possible having their rate of wages revised in their interest.

The conduct and health of the children at service have, with comparatively few exceptions, been good, the reports to hand from time to time showing that a very large proportion of them is giving satisfaction to their employers; the more serious cases of misconduct have been transferred, under your authority, to one or other of the private reformatories, while some of those of a less serious nature have been transferred to one of the training schools for a few months' discipline and further training.

*Children placed with Relatives and Others on Probation under section 30, sub-section 5, Act 1121, and section 340, sub-section 6, Act 1079.*—It is gratifying to be able to report that the Department is still being relieved of the cost of maintaining many of its wards by placing them with relatives or friends who may be willing to receive them under these sub-sections, and with satisfactory results as regards the welfare of the children and the monetary saving to the country, there being 673 wards so placed at no cost to the Department—613 from the Neglected Children's Department, and 60 from the various Reformatories. Only in a very few cases had any of these children to be withdrawn, through their misconduct, or that of the relatives with whom they had been placed.

*Transfers from Gaol, section 333, Act 1079.*—There were 19 transfers from Gaol to the Reformatories (15 boys and 4 girls) as against nine (9) the previous year. Those transferred are doing fairly well, and in only one instance had one (a girl) to be re-transferred under section 334 to Gaol, to complete her sentence, on account of her gross misconduct in the Reformatory.

It is most gratifying to know that nearly all of those who have gone to situations or friends are doing well, some exceptionally so; their conduct and letters showing unmistakably their gratitude for having been rescued under this beneficial section from what would very probably have been a criminal life.

I would like to take this opportunity of cordially thanking Mr. Groom, Captain Bray of the Salvation Army, and other Gaol visitors for their kind visitation of, and reporting on, these Gaol cases, and for their continued co-operation generally.

*Suspension of Sentences by Courts and Release of Prisoners on Probation under sections 333 and 354, Act 1079.*—It is gratifying to find that the various courts are still making use of the first of these sections, by allowing first offenders under 21 years of age to serve their sentences on probation—68 males and 11 females having been so dealt with during the year under review, and, it is hoped, with good results; but it would be certainly more satisfactory if each of these probationary cases were kept under supervision, and reported upon, as is the case under the New Zealand First Offenders Act, and to which I have in previous reports drawn attention.

Section 354 has been again inoperative.

*Receiving Depôts, Royal Park.*—The usual routine work of receiving and distributing the large number of children committed during the year, in addition to the various transfers, has been carried out satisfactorily. Apart from what may be almost called an epidemic, which carried off several of the infants during the hot weather, and to which reference has already been made, the general health of the inmates has been good, and their conduct satisfactory. The appointment to these Depôts of a thoroughly competent trained nurse, experienced in dealing with children, particularly infants, having been sanctioned by you, the services of Miss Catto, late of the Inglewood Hospital, were obtained in the latter part of the year. I need hardly say her duties are very important, in view of the class of children constantly passing through these Receiving Depôts. The new building for isolation and recreation purposes has been completed, and is found to be a great boon, particularly during the extremely hot weather. Our cordial thanks are due to the various kind friends of the children for their periodical gifts to them of valuable and useful presents, and to the members of the Visiting Committee; and to the Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen and their workers for their systematic visitation to and kindly interest in the inmates.

*The Protestant Training Schools for Girls.*—This school is still under the care and able management of Miss L. N. Watson, the Acting Matron, Mrs. Banner's health not having sufficiently improved to enable her to return to duty. There has been a greater demand for the girls during the year, consequently nearly the whole of those eligible for service have been provided with situations. I am glad to say that, in addition to the ordinary supervision, Miss Watson makes a point of herself visiting the girls as often as she can, in order that she may personally know how they are progressing. The general health and conduct of the inmates have, with few exceptions, been good. It will be seen from the Acting Matron's report that several necessary additions in the way of furniture, &c., have been made, and have greatly assisted in giving the institution a brighter and more home-like appearance. Altogether a very satisfactory year's work has been accomplished at this school, and I have every anticipation of its usefulness being still more apparent in the future.

*The Salvation Army Albion Home.*—A somewhat similar school to the above, and situated between Brunswick and Coburg, having been suitably fitted up was, with

your approval, opened by Mrs. Booth for the reception and training of Protestant girls for service who are either too young or whose previous history does not warrant their being sent to a reformatory, but whose conduct, nevertheless, had been such as would cause me to hesitate before placing them in either a service or ordinary foster-home, until they had gone through some such disciplinary training as this Salvation Army home offers. I have already availed myself of this much-needed opening, and sent there several suitable cases for training, and while the "Home" has been too recently started to be able to show as yet any very great results, I feel confident that it will prove to be an unqualified success, for the reason, among others, that Mrs. Booth—whose report will be read with interest—has from the very first taken it under her personal care, visiting and coming in contact with the girls frequently, and placing them under the training and care of women like minded with herself. I am glad to be able to add that I have received an equally favorable offer from the Salvation Army authorities to open a similar school for boys of the same class on a farm of 300 acres, beautifully situated in the country. I am having the place and its surroundings inspected, and hope shortly to be able to submit the complete scheme for your favorable consideration.

*Roman Catholic Industrial School, Abbotsford.*—The report to hand bears testimony to the excellent work still being carried on in this school. The great experience of the ladies in charge, combined with the necessary kindness and firmness, has enabled them, as in past years, to frequently obtain satisfactory results from very unpromising children, and I have again to thank the reverend mother for so readily taking such cases off my hands, that would otherwise in all probability have to be sent to a reformatory.

*Boys' Private Reformatories.*—The system we have adopted in Victoria of placing our reformatory boys in and under the control of private reformatories has long since passed the experimental stage, and every additional year's experience of its operations emphasizes the wisdom of its adoption by the Government. The various superintendents' reports will be found of such interest, as showing the internal working and methods of each school, that it is unnecessary for me to go over the same grounds; but I will ask those interested in this highly important part of our work to read their reports, and when possible visit the various schools, and thus be in a position to see and judge for themselves as to the great and permanent reformation work that is being carried on in them.

*Girls' Private Reformatories.*—As the above remarks in regard to the boys' reformatories will apply with equal force, and in every respect to the girls' reformatories, I have thought it well, and to avoid the appearance of repetition, to deal under one head with all the girls' reformatories, of which there are six, including sub-schools—five Protestant and one Roman Catholic. A perusal of the matrons' reports will show that the usual routine work of another year has been successfully carried out, and that the health and conduct of the girls upon the whole have been good. Great regret will be experienced when it is known that in consequence of the very serious breakdown of her health and other causes, Mrs. Rowe, of the Brookside Reformatory, contemplates at an early date asking to be relieved in a great measure of the responsibility she has borne for over eleven years of founding and conducting in an honorary capacity, and with unqualified success, this first Private Reformatory for Protestant Girls ever established in Victoria. During her management no fewer than 236 girls have passed through her hands, and, with very few exceptions, are believed to be doing well, 33 having married more or less satisfactorily.

*Children Boarded out.*—This part of the departmental work, which comprises the great bulk of the neglected children in its care, has been carried out successfully during another year by the various Boarding-out Committees throughout the colony. In some few instances children have had to be removed from unsuitable homes, others have been sent to one or other of the training homes for disciplinary treatment, while a few for serious misconduct have under necessary authority been transferred to one of the private reformatories. Upon the whole, however, the general health and conduct of the children have been good. There is no apparent abatement in the interest the ladies take in their work of supervision of the homes and the children. They very rightly seem to fully realize that the continued success of the boarding-out system depends almost entirely upon their unvarying vigilance in this respect, and I very gladly take advantage of this Annual Report to cordially thank them, and particularly the lady correspondents for their loyal assistance and co-operation during another year.

*Maintenance Collections.*—The amount recovered from the parents of the children was nearly the same as the previous year, being £1,063 2s., as against £1,087 13s. 6d. in 1897.

*Societies Dealing with Neglected Children under Part VIII. of Act 1121.*—I have in previous reports referred at length to the work and operation of these Societies and the satisfactory results in greatly reducing the number of waifs and strays in our streets. Large as has been the total number of committals to the care of this Department during the year, there can be no question that it would have been considerably increased but for the work of these Societies, as can be readily seen from the following table :—

WORK OF SOCIETIES UNDER PART VIII. NEGLECTED CHILDREN'S ACT, NO. 1121,  
FOR THE YEAR 1898.

Name of Society.	Under Supervision on 31.12.97.	Admissions during 1898.			Under Supervision on 31.12.98.
		Court Committals.	Transfer of Guardianship.	Voluntary Admissions.	
Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society	337	6	24	79	416
"Clifden" Society, Wedderburn ...	56	4	3	2	64
Gordon Institute ... ..	140	20	10	146	149
Try Excelsior Class, Hawksburn ...	134	2	...	104	111
Wesleyan Church Neglected Children's Aid Society ... ..	138	5	3	...	146
Burwood Boys' Home ... ..	28	1	14	4	43
Church of England Deaconesses' Home ...	35	3	...	13	42
Presbyterian and Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society ... ..	404	10	19	5	391
Try Society, St. Kilda ... ..	120	...	...	47	110
Fitzroy Streets Mission ... ..	5	1	1	2	9
Geelong "Try" Boys Brigade... ..	252	...	...	79	203
Latrobe-street Ragged School Mission ...	153	...	4	200	357
St. Joseph's Home, Surrey Hills ...	192	...	2	54	167
Total ...	1,994	52	80	735	2,208

I gladly, therefore, again tender them the thanks of the Department for their assistance.

In conclusion, I have to thank the officers in charge of the several schools, and the officers of the Department generally, for their efficient and cordial co-operation.

To the honorary lady workers and their invaluable services reference has already been made.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THOS. M. MILLAR,

Secretary and Inspector.

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

Items.	Industrial Schools.						Reformatory Schools.										Total.				
	Head Office.	Boys' and Girls' Receiving Depots.	Abbotsford	Servants' Training School.	Service Children.	Boarded-out Children.	Total.	Pakenham.	Oakleigh.	Brookside.	Days-water.	Excel-sior.	Wandin Yallock.	Kings-bury.	Straight View Farm.	Bukawart		Mount Paradise.	Service Children.	Telephone Service.	Total.
Average strength	...	81	53	21	...	2,591	...	46	30	44	23	17	18	5	5	3	14	...	...	...	
Provisions	£ 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.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Clothing and Bedding	...	451 15 0	...	...	...	451 15 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fuel, Light, and Water	...	39 16 0	...	...	342 19 3	1,062 11 7	1,445 6 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	366 7 5	...	...	366 7 5
Stores, Stock, &c.	20 5 6	277 5 0	...	...	...	...	297 10 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Medical Attendance, &c.	81 1 6	223 10 3	...	...	...	304 11 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Incidentals, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	1,927 8 2	...	...	44 0 11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	44 0 11
Transport and Travelling Expenses	205 12 3	171 0 7	...	...	...	376 12 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Telephone Services	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Salaries and Wages	6 0 0	7 10 6	...	...	...	21 10 6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maintenance	3,485 19 6	1,199 13 4	...	...	...	4,685 12 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	704 7 4	276 10 7	...	35,160 9 0	36,141 6 11	1,200 12 11	790 0 0	1,447 15 11	589 6 9	435 10 3	475 4 1	142 7 3	123 9 11	12 7 352 8 6	...	...	...	5,330 8 2	
	3,798 18 9	2,370 10 8	704 7 4	276 10 7	1,597 10 2	38,733 2 0	47,480 19 6	1,200 12 11	790 0 0	1,191 16 10	589 6 9	435 10 3	475 4 1	142 7 3	123 9 11	12 7 352 8 6	1,149 7 10	131 6 8	...	6,655 3 7	
Deduct—Maintenance recovered from Parents All other Receipts	...	...	...	...	...	...	946 4 7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	116 17 5
Net cost	3,798 18 9	2,370 10 8	704 7 4	276 10 7	1,597 10 2	38,733 2 0	46,534 14 11	1,200 12 11	790 0 0	1,191 16 10	589 6 9	435 10 3	475 4 1	142 7 3	123 9 11	12 7 352 8 6	1,126 0 9	131 6 8	...	6,514 19 1	

\* Under Part VIII. of Act.

† The value of labour performed by the inmates of this school in the manufacture of outfits, &c., is £194 10s. 8d.



AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN SENT TO THE CARE OF  
THE DEPARTMENT IN 1898.

## AGES.

	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.	Total.
Neglected ... Reformatory	150 ...	89 ...	77 ...	74 ...	88 ...	79 ...	86 ...	66 ...	80 1	59 ...	48 2	45 2	31 4	21 6	14 11	6 11	7 24	1,020 61
Total ...	150	89	77	74	88	79	86	66	81	59	50	47	35	27	25	17	31	1,081

## RELIGIONS AND BIRTHPLACES.

	Number admitted.	Religions.			Birthplaces.						
		Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Hebrew.	Australian Colonies.	Scotland.	England.	Ireland.	Germany.	South Africa.	Unknown.
Neglected Reformatory	1,020 61	741 42	278 19	1 ...	1,003 58	2 1	6 1	1 ...	...	2 ...	6
Total	1,081	783	297	1	1,061	3	7	1	1	2	6

## PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN SENT TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1898.

Particulars supplied with Order of Committal.						Neglected.	Reformatory.	Total.
Parents dead	...	...	...	...	...	24	7	31
" unknown	...	...	...	...	...	17	1	18
" deserted	...	...	...	...	...	8	1	9
" in gaol	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	7
" drunkards	...	...	...	...	...	28	2	30
" poor but of good character	...	...	...	...	...	50	17	67
" " " bad	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Father dead; Mother poor, but of good character	...	...	...	...	...	387	14	401
" " immoral	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	6
" " of doubtful character	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
" " in gaol	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	10
" " a drunkard	...	...	...	...	...	5	1	6
" " deserted	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	4
" " unknown	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
" " an imbecile	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	3
Father deserted; Mother poor, but of good character	...	...	...	...	...	192	...	192
" " dead	...	...	...	...	...	16	3	19
" " in gaol	...	...	...	...	...	11	...	11
" " in lunatic asylum	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	6
" " immoral	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	7
" " a drunkard	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	7
" " a cripple	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
" " in hospital	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
" " unknown	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Father in gaol; Mother poor, but of good character	...	...	...	...	...	24	...	24
" " dead	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Father unknown; Mother poor, but of good character	...	...	...	...	...	12	...	12
" " deserted	...	...	...	...	...	16	...	16
" " an imbecile	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
" " in gaol	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	4
" " immoral	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	5
" " a drunkard	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
" " in lunatic asylum	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
" " dead	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	6
" " in hospital	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	3

PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN SENT TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1898—*continued.*

Particulars supplied with Order of Committal.	Neglected.	Reformatory.	Total.
Father a drunkard; Mother poor, but of good character ...	8	6	14
"          "      in gaol ... ..	1	...	1
"          "      a cripple ... ..	...	1	1
"          "      deserted ... ..	10	...	10
"          "      of doubtful character ... ..	2	...	2
"          "      in lunatic asylum ... ..	...	1	1
"          "      dead ... ..	12	...	12
Father in lunatic asylum; Mother poor, but of good character	41	...	41
"          "      "      dead ... ..	2	...	2
Father poor; Mother dead ... ..	25	6	31
"          "      a drunkard ... ..	6	...	6
"          "      in gaol ... ..	3	...	3
"          "      deserted ... ..	8	...	8
"          "      in lunatic asylum ... ..	1	...	1
"          "      unknown ... ..	1	...	1
"          "      of doubtful character ... ..	12	...	12
"          "      in hospital ... ..	3	...	3
"          "      an imbecile ... ..	4	...	4
Father an invalid; Mother poor ... ..	2	...	2
"          "      in hospital ... ..	5	...	5
"          "      of bad character; Mother poor ... ..	1	...	1
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>1,081</b>

## REPORTS ON SCHOOLS.

### RECEIVING DEPÔTS, ROYAL PARK.

I have the honour to furnish for your information a report on the operations at the depôts for the year 1898.

The health of the children was fairly good, but we had an outbreak of measles during the summer months, and several deaths occurred through pneumonia and other troubles supervening. We also lost one of our older girls; she died of heart disease, from which she had long suffered. The deaths from measles were eight; from heart disease, one; of young children brought in suffering from marasmus and the various forms of disease brought on by artificial feeding, seven; total, sixteen.

The conduct of the boys and girls was very satisfactory, with one exception, and that was a girl transferred from the gaol to the Reformatory Depôt. She succeeded in absconding once, was returned, and tried to abscond the second time but failed, and in consequence became so violent that she was transferred back to the gaol.

The discipline at the Boys' Depôts has been well maintained, and the garden and grounds show a great improvement.

There have been changes in the staff during the year. Mr. Biddle has taken the place of Mr. Haigh at the Boys' Depôt; and I regret to say that one of our oldest officers, Miss Barnes, had to retire owing to ill-health; she was very painstaking and conscientious, and was much missed. It was deemed desirable to fill her place with a trained nurse, and Miss Catto, who has been trained in one of the London hospitals, was selected.

I wish to tender my sincere thanks to the Rev. M. Langley, of St. George's Church, Royal Park, to Mr. Watson, and the young ladies of the Presbyterian Church, Brunswick, for the kindly interest they take in giving religious instruction to the Protestant inmates; and to the ladies of the other churches who take the girls on Sunday afternoons; to the Rev. Father English and the Sisters from St. Joseph's on behalf of the Roman Catholics.

The visiting committee paid their regular visits, and gave the children their annual treat at the end of the year, and the children enjoyed themselves very much on both occasions.

The Public Works Department has commenced the building of the new play-room, which will be a great convenience and a comfortable shelter for the children, and it will be so constructed that it can be used when necessary to isolate infectious cases.

JANE WILSON, Matron.

### REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE, ROYAL PARK DEPÔTS, 1899.

Your visiting committee of the schools at Royal Park has pleasure in reporting that all the branches have been regularly visited by members of the committee during the past year, and generally the state of health of the children has been satisfactory.

The order and cleanliness of the Girls' Depôt have been most marked, and under the able management of Miss Wilson all the arrangements of the institution have worked smoothly.

Your committee has noticed with much satisfaction the alterations and improvements in the buildings and surroundings of the Boys' Depôt. It has also given pleasure to the committee to see that considerable work has been done from time to time in the grounds.

The question of school drill exercises as part of the daily training has been considered, and in the interest of the discipline, as well as of the physical health of the children, your committee would bring this matter under your notice in the hope that it will be adopted.

The annual treat to the children gave great satisfaction and brought a cheery and happy day to all who took part therein.

The committee feel indebted to Miss Wilson for her kindness in providing tea for your committee and the friends who accepted the invitation to be present on the occasion.

It is with much regret that Mr. W. J. S. Gordon has resigned his connexion with the schools. His warm interest in all that concerns their welfare was much appreciated, and his inability to attend the meetings of the committee as regularly as he wished should not, in the opinion of the committee, have led to his resignation.

In conclusion, the committee has pleasure in stating that every facility has at all times been afforded to its members giving full opportunities for thorough examination, and the utmost civility and decorum from those in charge has been experienced.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

M. L. HUTCHINSON, Hon. Secretary.

### INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, ABBOTSFORD.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1898.

With but few exceptions the general health of the girls was good. Two deaths occurred, the cause of one being consumption, the other convulsions.

Their conduct in most cases was satisfactory.

Mr. Inspector Summons examined the classes in July last, and gave a favorable report.

In conclusion, I beg to offer my most sincere thanks to all who have shown a kindly interest in the welfare of the girls.

MARY V. KENNEDY, Provincial Superioress.

## GIRLS' TRAINING INSTITUTE.

In Mrs. Banner's absence I have the honour of submitting the report for the year 1898.

In consequence of ill-health, the committee of this institution decided in March last to give Mrs. Banner six months leave of absence (which was afterwards extended to a year), in order that she might take a trip to England. She left on the 26th April. The change seems to have done wonders for her, and she is expected back in a month or two.

Before leaving for England, Mrs. Banner took the girls to Beaumaris for a month's change, which they greatly enjoyed, and the sea air did them good.

The health of the children on the whole has been excellent—there have been a few cases of influenza, but no serious illness.

Dr. Jeffreys Wood and Dr. Percy Webster are still the honorary doctors, and Mr. Baker is honorary dentist. One feels the girls are indeed fortunate in having so much attention.

In the institution the conduct of the girls has been very good considering the number coming and going. I have been greatly struck with their honesty in money matters—the mistresses tell me the same thing, however there have been two exceptions, and they had to be sent away as an example to the others.

I have had a great many applications for servants, 50 situations have been filled during the last ten months, though several girls have had more than one situation.

Most of the service girls are behaving well, several who were giving trouble have greatly improved in conduct.

The daughters of the late Mr. William Peterson have kindly sent presents this Christmas in memory of their father, who for so many years sent each inmate a beautiful gift.

I have received subscriptions and donations from several kind friends, which has enabled me to give the girls a very happy Christmas.

Through the kindness of several public singers and kind friends I was enabled to organize a concert and collect enough money to buy the girls spring mattresses and have their tickings refilled. I cannot in words express my gratitude to all who helped, for it has made such a difference in the institution. The total amount collected was £24 10s. 9d.

LILIAN M. WATSON.

## ALBION TRAINING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

Gladly I respond to your request for a brief report of the Albion Training School for Girls.

The home was opened in August, 1898, and up to the end of the year we received 24 children.

Each ordinary day's work is full of variety; for the inmates, according to their strength and capacity, are instructed in every branch of practical housework, including also plain sewing—this especially in the cutting and making of their own clothing.

Schooling is systematically carried on in reading, writing, arithmetic, &c. To these things we have added a course of systematic and useful drill—by a little muscular christianity—hoping to fit them the better to take a fair stand in life. During one hour's recreation or more there is lively interest evinced every day in croquet, swinging, rounders, &c.

The health of the children on the whole has been very good. Dr. Hamilton has been ever prompt and kindly in his attendance in every moment of need.

Three little cripple girls amongst the rest seem to influence the stronger ones to gentleness and compassion by the presence of their weakness. Everything that can be done to increase their happiness is added to the necessary treatment for their improvement.

By word and by action the children, almost without exception, have set their young wills to work to do the tasks set to them, and to overcome the individual weakness that each character is subject to.

Their simple prayers and child-like faith are very charming.

Everything in the Albion Home is bidding fair for future blessing as well as present safety and comfort.

CORNELIE BOOTH.

## REPORT OF THE GEELONG BOARDING-OUT COMMITTEE.

I have much pleasure in forwarding a brief report from the members of the Geelong Boarding-out Committee of their work during the year just closed. There is nothing very special to report, and everything appears to be going on pleasantly.

We have many superior homes, and the children are well fed and clothed. The lady visitors take a great interest in the children under their care, and visit the homes regularly; and the reports sent in to the end of the year have been nearly all highly satisfactory. We have had two or three troublesome cases, and in one the police kindly came to our assistance.

The children are as a rule very healthy. There have been, of course, cases of sickness; but at all times the medical officers promptly attend.

Two of the boys have unfortunately broken their arms through falling; but they are nearly well again.

The demand for these children seems to be on the increase, and we have received several applications which could not be entertained on account of the distance from a visiting committee.

In the case of the children boarded out to their own mothers, we beg to thank the Honorable the Chief Secretary for the kind consideration shown to them.

Three or four of the girls who have ceased to be under the control of the Department have married; they appear to have good husbands and comfortable homes.

One poor girl was not so fortunate. She withdrew her savings, stating her intention of going to her sister in New South Wales; instead, she married a labourer, and on the birth of her first child was found to be wanting the common necessaries of life, and without even a bed to lie upon. As soon as her case was made known, willing helpers came forward, and she was soon placed in a more comfortable position, and helps to earn her living by going out washing.

Another girl, whose great longing was to see her mother once more, saved sufficient money to pay her passage home in the *Cuzco*. Her mother received her with reproaches, told her she wondered at her impertinence, and the sooner she went back the better she would be pleased. The poor girl was broken-hearted, but met with kind friends and was enabled to return in the same vessel, and is now in a comfortable situation and leading a Christian life.

The inspection of the homes by the visiting officer was very satisfactory, and we have to thank him for many valuable suggestions.

During the year twenty of the boarded-out children have left their foster-homes for service, and are nearly all doing well. Some are very troublesome, and require much patience in dealing with them.

Nineteen have been discharged, and have received their savings. We hope they will make a good use of them; unfortunately they do not always do so.

Seven have been discharged to relations, and one poor girl died of consumption.

I again take the opportunity of thanking my committee for their continued kindness and energetic and untiring assistance, thereby lightening my duties considerably.

The Department has kindly removed some very troublesome children, for which we are very grateful, and in every little misunderstanding (we have had one or two) we have received kindly help from the Secretary. To him and all the officers of the Department our hearty thanks are due for their long-continued kindness and courtesy.

FRANCES DAVISON, Correspondent.

#### BROOKSIDE REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

The chief item to report for this year is the virtual closing of No. 1, and the distribution of the remaining inmates between No. 2 and Miss Faris, at St. Ann's. This, involving as it does severing the connexion with Mrs. Downing, puts the school in a different position, and it remains to be seen if it will do as well.

That the workers and the work will miss Mrs. Downing it is unnecessary to say; and all wish her well wherever her future lot may be cast.

We received during the year twenty, of whom six were new committals and fourteen transfers from the Neglected Children's Department, including one from the Servants' Training Institute.

We placed four out on probation, of whom two have been already returned as unmanageable by relations.

We sent sixteen to service for the first time, and refitted and placed again thirty-three.

We were, as usual, wonderfully free from illness in the three homes; the service girls too had no serious illness. Dr. Raymond Fox has, as before, been most kind and attentive to any who were brought under his notice.

The service girls have been, on the whole, satisfactory during the year.

There have been occasional attempts at absconding from the homes, but all have been recovered almost immediately. On the whole, though occasionally troublesome, the conduct of those in residence has been quite up to the average.

Some of those we are accustomed to consider intellectually weak are not improving; one, especially, has developed a destructive mania, and though carefully watched has been continually cutting up her clothes. As a rule, we do not find such cases at all hopeful, and their future is a subject of great moment to us all.

The year 1899 will probably see Brookside put on a completely new footing, when I hope it will continue to do good work for the reformatory cause.

ELIZABETH ROWE, Superintendent.

#### GIRLS' REFORMATORY, PAKENHAM.

It affords me true pleasure to be able to place before you an excellent report of the Pakenham School during the year that has passed.

Of the present standing of the home, as well as of its recent progress, I have nothing but good to write.

With the exception of a few trivial breaches of order, such as one could scarcely expect to dissociate from the class we shelter, the general conduct has been all we could wish, and the moral and spiritual tone high.

Almost without break or exception the girls have continued in capital health and in the highest of spirits. This no doubt may be attributed to the vitalizing breezes of the country locality on the Dandenong Ranges.

If one may judge from the many letters written by the inmates to me, both whilst in the home and after leaving it, the privileges put before them are fully appreciated, and never have there been fewer attempts to run away.

With girlish warmth of heart they express, without stint, their gratitude, affection, and resolution for the future.

As usual, some new cases have been received from the Department, and some have been transferred to situations. With most of these we are in constant correspondence, and almost without exception they appear to be giving the satisfaction one might look for.

More than ever this year I have striven to introduce amidst the toil and discipline and training as much as possible of the element of innocent enjoyment in the daily routine, for with every succeeding year of experience I grow more and more convinced that happiness is a most important factor in the education of such untutored minds as we have to deal with.

Instead of incapacitating them for the necessary trudging that must fall to their lot, simple pleasure strengthens the character, purifying the memory and crowding out the morbid tendency to evil thoughts. In a bright spiritual atmosphere of sunshine and song the light and laughter-loving girl-nature thrives well.

By steadfastly holding the weaker mind and will away from past dangerous knowledge the habit of nobler thought becomes more fixed, forming a moral safeguard for them in the future, stronger than all possible exterior force.

For many tokens of deep-rooted prosperity at Pakenham I thank God, and I thank you, sir, for the privilege permitted to me of thus bringing blessing to the State, not only by visible good accomplished, but by unknown evil prevented.

CORNELIE BOOTH.

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#### REFORMATORY SCHOOL, OAKLEIGH.

I have the honor to submit my report for the year 1898.

The health of the girls has been excellent, with the exception of some new committals who were ill when they came.

The conduct of the inmates has been good, and the work done in the different employments most satisfactory.

Those at service have in most cases given satisfaction.

Very gratifying reports indeed have been received of the girls on probation, with the exception of two who have been returned to the schools; and it is most pleasing to state that during the year five have married respectably.

I beg in conclusion to offer thanks to all the children's kind benefactors who at different times have afforded them pleasure.

MARY F. CORBETT.

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#### *The following is a Report of the Visiting Committee:—*

It is very satisfactory to us, on this our official visit, to report that the management of the reformatory continues to reflect much credit on the pious ladies who have charge of it.

We are pleased to see the inmates looking so healthy and contented, and to know that during the last twelve months there has been no case of sickness.

We note with satisfaction that the court-yard leading to the reformatory has been pitched with stone since our last visit.

N. FITZGERALD.  
E. O'DONNELL.  
J. HOGAN.  
REVD. H. O'CALLAGHAN.

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#### BOYS' REFORMATORY, BAYSWATER.

I have the honour to report that the past year has been a very happy one, and much useful work has been done.

We find that the boys are developing a far more manly and contented spirit, and are settling themselves to learn all they can in the various branches of agriculture that is afforded them at this institution.

It has been exceedingly gratifying to us to hear from a number of boys whose terms have expired, and to learn that the instruction received has been of incalculable benefit to them.

The whole of the boys at service and on probation have given every satisfaction. Certainly we have not sent out a very great number, but the system of only sending those thoroughly reformed will have its effect, and the result will be lasting and genuine.

The spiritual welfare of the boys has received careful consideration, Commandant and Mrs. Booth having taken great interest in their welfare, and several very special services having been held. We have also had good times with the lads with their physical drill, viz., dumb-bells, &c., of which they gave a display in the Melbourne Exhibition, the *Argus* and *Age* reporters affirming that the same would have been a credit to any training college. Cricket, football, and various games in season have been creditably played on Saturday afternoons.

Their work has been various in character, viz., cleaning, weeding, hoeing, spading, draining, milking, churning, separating, potato planting and digging, pea and bean picking, ploughing, harrowing, scarifying, pruning, fruit-picking, hay-making, and poultry and pig raising.

This combination of spiritual and physical culture, enjoyable games, and hard work has resulted in a splendid standard of health, and has also proved of such benefit to the boys morally that it cannot be over-estimated, as I am confident that a great deal of the vice that many of these lads are addicted to at the time of their reception is due to idleness and unhealthy moral surroundings.

I must also say that the natural surroundings of Bayswater Farm have had a marked effect on the boys' conduct; the beautiful air, the lovely hills and streams, and the luxuriant growth that follows the labours of their head and hands have encouraged and helped them. The place is also a standing memorial to the fact and intense interest shown towards this class of boys by Commandant Booth. He has been pleased to call it The Boys' Industrial Institute (The Eden), Bayswater.

JAMES H. BRAY, Superintendent.

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#### EXCELSIOR HOME FOR REFORMATORY BOYS, BRIGHTON.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ending 31st December, 1898.

The gaol transfers sent to me during the year have again been most successful. No part of the work gives me more pleasure than to see boys who have been transferred from gaol to the Reformatory turn out well; they cause more anxiety and are tiresome at times, but when it is known that many of them have been saved from a life of crime, and that the country must have benefited by the efforts on their behalf, the extra trouble is as nothing in comparison.

I am very thankful that Mr. Cody, the Governor of the Melbourne Gaol, takes the same interest as did Captain Burrowes in the past in watching cases named with a view to transfer to these reformatories.

The reports from those who have charge of the boys at service and on probation are very satisfactory.

The general conduct right through has been even better than last year.

The boys attending the Roman Catholic, State, and Sunday Schools have done very well. Please find herewith reports from each of the head teachers.

The demand for boys at 1s. per day in the locality is far greater than can be supplied, which speaks well for their conduct.

The Boys' Farm has been very successful in the way of classification.

The Camp was held as usual, and though it is a time of great anxiety, everything passed off very well, no boy even attempting to abscond.

During the year there has been very little sickness among the boys, although we had five down with measles; and but for the great care of Dr. Praagst, many of the other boys would have been sick. To show the appreciation of his kindness, the boys who go out to work at 1s. per day made him a presentation.

I must thank most sincerely Mr. Johnston, who takes a very deep interest in the boys' future welfare.

In conclusion I feel it my duty to convey to you my high appreciation of the manner in which Mr. Evans handles the boys in my absence. I wish every superintendent had the same help from the next in charge as I have from him.

W. GROOM, Superintendent.

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St. James' School, Elsternwick,  
3rd February, 1899.

The conduct of the boys sent by Mr. Groom to this school is excellent.

S. M. BENEDICT, Head Teacher.

Memo. for Mr. Groom.

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Elsternwick State School, No. 2870,  
7th February, 1899.

I have much pleasure in stating that the conduct of your boys has been most exemplary. I have not had occasion to punish one of them for any serious fault.

WILLIAM P. LE PAGE, Head Master.

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#### WANDIN YALLOCK REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to report that the work in this Reformatory (including its two branches, "Olinda" and "Hillside") has gone on very satisfactorily for the past year; the general conduct of the boys has been good, with the exception of two or three habitual absconders who will not stay anywhere.

The health of the boys has been good, and their attention to their lessons and conduct in school has been satisfactory.

Each school had its camp-out on the River Yarra, where the boys appear to thoroughly enjoy themselves swimming, fishing, rabbit hunting, &c.; we had also the use of a flat-bottomed boat, which was a source of great amusement for them.

In addition to the yearly holiday they have also a monthly pic-nic day in our own paddocks, where they manage and distribute their own provisions, make their "billy-tea," and have a general go-as-you-please. Of course they are put on their honour and instructed in the way they should behave themselves on each occasion, and I am pleased to state that they have never disgraced this privilege by any misconduct.

M. McASKELL, Superintendent.

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#### KINGSBURY FARM REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1898.

The general health of the boys both at service and at home has been good, with the exception of a few slight mishaps which one must expect.

I sincerely thank Dr. Eccles, of Newstead, for his services up to the present.

There were six boys in the Home on the 1st January, five new ones were admitted during the year, four were placed at service and one on probation ; all of whom are now doing well, and there remained six in the Home at the close of the year. The terms of four boys expired during 1898.

The greatest trouble and anxiety for the year has been caused by the restless spirits of two or three boys who are very hard to wean from town life, hence there are absconders at times, three of whom are still at large. Except the above trouble, the conduct of the whole has been satisfactory, and the demand for service boys is increasing.

Several of the older boys are now fit to take their place in any orchard or vineyard, having learnt to prune, spray, disbud, &c., while others do not take so kindly to that class of work, but are more at home with an axe or driving a horse and dray ; while we all can and do enjoy an hour or two now and again with football, bat, rod, quoits, &c.

There were several of the old boys whose terms have expired (many of whom are employed in the district), back with us at Christmas time, which made a very pleasant wind-up for the old year.

A. BREBNER, Superintendent.

#### STRAIGHT VIEW FARM REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to submit for your information my report for the year ending 31st December, 1898.

The health of the boys has been very good, with the exception of one boy who caught cold, which resulted in an abscess on his face, but after being kindly treated by Dr. Hill at the hospital he soon recovered.

The conduct of the boys in the Home has been very good. There was not one absconder during the year, although one or two made bold attempts.

The majority of the boys at service is doing well and show a marked improvement.

P. McMAHON, Superintendent.

#### BUKAWERT REFORMATORY, 1898.

I have to report that through the effects of bush fires the school has had to be removed to another site, which has been approved by the inspecting officers.

We have three boys at present in the school, all doing well ; there are five boys at service, who appear to be happy and contented in their places.

I have nothing but good reports from employers and visitors.

There are also two boys on probation.

I have much pleasure in recording the valuable help given by our boys in saving cattle and beating out the bush fires during that awful time in February last year.

We have enjoyed the annual visit of our secretary, Mr. Millar, also one from Mr. Regan, *re* change of site.

His Excellency Lord Brassey has kindly sent to the Institution two volumes of Lady Brassey's books, which are very much appreciated.

Our boys had a very pleasant Christmas, sharing the gifts from a Christmas tree, and being visited by Santa Claus ; they also went to two pic-nics, and attended sports at Toora and Foster.

During the year they made great progress in jumping, football, cricket, and swimming.

H. B. SADLEIR, Superintendent.

#### MOUNT PARADISE FARM REFORMATORY.

I beg to report that the last year's work was very satisfactory.

The boys placed out at service are doing very well.

The health of the lads in the Home is perfect.

The lads are instructed in the real routine of farming and fruit-growing, and some of them are the makings of really good farmers. Each lad has his own particular work to do—some are ploughing and harrowing ; some draining and fencing ; others picking, packing, and grading fruit for the market ; while others attend to the cows, pigs, calves, &c.

They are a happy lot of lads, and get on very well together. Saturday afternoon is set apart for amusements.

Last New Year all the lads were driven to the Bunyip River—16 miles—and camped there for four days, and had a real jolly time fishing, shooting, hunting, swimming, &c., and supplying their own cooks.

The lads drive to Mass on a Sunday, and are instructed and prepared for Holy Communion by Father Carroll and Father Lee, of Dandenong.

They have Catechism with their lessons from half-past seven to half-past eight three nights a week.

In conclusion, I may say that it is a godsend to these lads to have such a good Government to help them in their young days to mend their ways, and if a great many more lads that are running about the streets at present were treated likewise there would be no need to use the lash, as is suggested, to rid the city of the larrikin pest.

J. J. MILLANE, Superintendent.