

1901.
VICTORIA.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

R E P O R T

OF THE

SECRETARY AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1900.

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

By Authority:

ROBT. S. BRAIN, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

R E P O R T.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools,
Melbourne, 30th June, 1901.

SIR,

I have the honour, in compliance with sections 10 of Act 1121 and 320 of Act 1079, to submit for your consideration the Annual Reports of this Department for the year ending 31st December, 1900, together with the necessary Returns, Statements of Accounts, &c.

The transactions of the year, as compared with those of 1899, are set forth in the following table :—

TABLE A.
STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FOR THE YEAR 1900.

| | Neglected Children. | Reformatory Children. | Total. |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| ADMISSIONS. | | | |
| Number under supervision on 31st December, 1899 | 4,596 | 369 | 4,965 |
| New committals | 874 | 61 | 935 |
| Transfers from Gaol | ... | 18 | 18 |
| " " Neglected Children's Department | ... | 52 | 52 |
| " " Reformatory | 16 | ... | 16 |
| Returned absconders | 15 | 16 | 31 |
| | 5,501 | 516 | 6,017 |
| DISCHARGES. | | | |
| By Order of the Governor in Council | 269 | 8 | 277 |
| " Death | 71 | 1 | 72 |
| " Effluxion of time | 199 | 85 | 284 |
| " Transfer to Lunatic Asylum | 8 | ... | 8 |
| " " Neglected Children's Department | ... | 16 | 16 |
| " " Reformatory | 52 | ... | 52 |
| " Absconders during 1900 not returned | 39 | 38 | 77 |
| Number under supervision on 31st December, 1900 | 4,863 | 368 | 5,231* |
| | 5,501 | 516 | 6,017 |

* The location of the 5,231 children is shown hereunder :—

| | |
|-----|---|
| † { | 3,331 Neglected Children were being maintained in foster-homes. |
| | 137 " " " " institutions. |
| | 196 Reformatory " " " " reformatory schools. |
| | 752 Neglected Children were maintaining themselves at service. |
| | 110 Reformatory " " " " " " |
| | 658 Neglected Children were with relatives, &c., without cost to the State. |
| | 61 Reformatory " " " " " " |
| | 4 Neglected Children were in Hospitals. |
| | 1 Reformatory Child was in Hospital. |
| | 1 Neglected Child was on a visit to relatives. |

† In addition to these, 31 who are free from legal control are still being maintained by the State, as they are incapacitated.

The following will show the numbers of Neglected Children and Reformatory wards who were a cost to the State on the 31st December, 1899, and the 31st December, 1900, respectively :—

| | <i>Neglected.</i> | 1899. | 1900. |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Boarded out | ... | 3,113 | 3,331 |
| In Institutions | ... | 135 | 137 |
| Total | ... | 3,248 | 3,468 |
| <i>Reformatory.</i> | | | |
| In Institutions | ... | 199 | 196 |

Committals.—While it is gratifying to be able to report that the anticipated reduction for the year, to which I hopefully referred in my last Report, was realized, only 874 Neglected Children having been committed, as against 928 in the previous year, I regret to say that, judging from the largely increased monthly average already received during the current year, there is every prospect of our reaching, if, indeed, we do not exceed, the abnormally large number of committals of the year 1898.

This, I need hardly say, is very disappointing to those who were looking and hoping for a different result year by year as our State emerged from its long period of depression. The large number of men still out of employment will doubtless partially account for the number of children still coming into our hands; but it is to be feared that the migratory habits of many parents, which frequently lead them to the other States, where they too often form fresh family ties, to the neglect of those they are legitimately responsible for in Victoria, is mainly answerable. Be the cause, however, what it may, the serious and important fact remains that out of our small population of 1,199,404, as per the last census, 874 children were committed to the care of the State as Neglected, and this, of course, exclusive of those dealt with by the several societies registered under Part VIII. of the Neglected Children's Act, whose operations are, as usual, referred to in another portion of the Report.

Of the 874 children received last year, 328 were left with their own mothers with a view to boarding-out pay being allowed for them. This was one-fourth less than the year 1899, but unfortunately our experience of this portion of the Department's work for the present year points to a very large increase, 157 such cases having been already received during the first four months. I have so repeatedly fully dealt with this question in former Reports that I do not propose to add anything further than to express the hope that ere long some means will be devised of affording monetary assistance to deserving widows and deserted wives, without their having to go through the ordeal of taking their little ones before the justices for committal as Neglected Children.

Mortality.—Seventy-two children died during the year under notice, being only 1·4 per cent. of the total strength of the children under the care of the Department, and when it is remembered that of the 874 Neglected Children newly admitted during the year, 171, or nearly 20 per cent., were infants under one year of age, many of them in an emaciated state when received, the mortality is very low indeed.

The system we have adopted of late years, and to which I have referred in former Reports, of encouraging young mothers of illegitimate infants to suckle them by placing them for the purpose in specially selected foster-homes, is still resulting satisfactorily, both as regards the children and the subsequent career and conduct of their mothers, the latter, I need hardly say, a most important consideration.

In view of the fact that its establishment may possibly have an important and satisfactory bearing upon the reduction of the general infant mortality of the State, I should like to say how gratifying it is to find that the Roman Catholic Church authorities have now opened a maternal home of their own, in which young friendless women about to become mothers can find a temporary harbor of refuge until their little ones are born. I trust, however, that I may be permitted to express the hope that in drawing up the regulations, &c. for its management, while every care should very properly be taken to protect those who have perhaps fallen for the first time from unrestricted intercourse with habitual offenders in a similar way, some provision will be made for the latter, who, I regret to say, are somewhat numerous. To exclude them altogether from admission to its benefits, because of their further lapse, as is almost invariably the case at present in nearly all similar institutions in the State, makes the outlook for them a dark and hopeless one with the doors of their own homes already shut against them.

Children at Service.—The greater demand for our children's labour has still continued, and, consequently, upon the whole, we have not only got a distinctly higher rate for those lately sent out, but we are gradually reviewing the wages of those children who were placed out during the years of depression, with a view to securing for them now a more adequate rate. Our children, as a general rule, are sent to service when thirteen years of age, but where it is found that any of them are at that period physically unfit to go to work they are given a further time in the foster-home

and at school, when, of course, the boarding-out allowance has necessarily to be continued. The reports to hand show that, upon the whole, the conduct of those at service has been good, only a small percentage of bad reports having been received from committees, employers, and others. Some very serious cases of misconduct have been dealt with by having the offenders transferred, under your authority, to one or other of the private reformatories, while those of a less serious nature have been sent to one of the training schools for 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.—These sections of our Act, which enable respectable relatives and others to receive children on probation, but without any cost to the Department, are still working satisfactorily both as regards the children and the State, there being now 658 wards of the Department for Neglected Children, and 61 from the reformatories, so placed at the close of the year under notice, and representing a large monetary saving to the country. Only in comparatively few instances has the Department been required to withdraw any of these children through their misconduct or that of the friends with whom they had been placed.

Transfers from Gaol, section 333, Act 1079.—Under this section 18 young people, 16 lads and 2 girls, were transferred from gaol to one or other of the private reformatories during the year. Apart from the monetary saving to the State, there can be no doubt that the operation of this section in the past has, in most of the cases, resulted satisfactorily in diverting into freer and healthier moral surroundings these young beginners in a life of crime. With a few notable exceptions, those so far transferred are doing well, and in several instances they are known to be now filling respectable and responsible positions, and will ever remember with feelings of gratitude that they were given in this way an opportunity of redeeming their characters under more suitable surroundings than the gaol. I have again to thank Mr. Groom, and Major Bray of the Salvation Army, and other gaol visitors, for their continued assistance and advice in working this most important section.

Suspension of Sentences by Courts and Release of Prisoners on Probation under sections 353 and 354, Act 1079.—It is very gratifying to find that the first of these sections is still being largely made use of by the various courts when having first offenders before them, 104 being so dealt with during the year. Of these 90 were males and fourteen females. I cannot help, however, venturing to again express the hope that some systematic supervision will yet be placed over these first offenders, not only as a means of ascertaining results, but with a view to assisting the probationers with advice and to gain respectable employment, as is provided for under the New Zealand First Offenders Act. Section 354, I regret to say, has not been put in operation during the year.

Receiving Depôts, Royal Park.—The matron reports that the usual routine but nevertheless important work of receiving and distributing the large number of children, neglected and reformatory, annually committed to the care of the Department, in addition to the various transfers, has been carried out in a satisfactory manner. Many of the infants were, as usual, received in a dying state, suffering from marasmus and congenital ailments, added to which there was an outbreak of measles, resulting together in many of the more weakly little ones being carried off, and thus raising the death rate in the depôt for the year to 24, as compared with six in 1899.

In view of the fact that most of the buildings for the accommodation of the two classes of older boys, neglected and reformatory, are of wood, and therefore of an inflammable nature, it is considered advisable to have them replaced as soon as possible by more substantial structures, the present buildings being removed and utilized for more suitable and necessary purposes in the girls' portion of the grounds. I have, therefore, in anticipation of your approval, ventured to place a sum of money on the departmental Estimates towards meeting the cost of the proposed new buildings, &c., and in the meantime have asked the Public Works Department to kindly provide a preliminary sketch plan of our requirements.

I have again to thank the members of the Visiting Committee and clergymen and the many other ladies and gentlemen for their continued kindly interest in our children. I think it right to here mention the great loss the children have sustained

in the death of their old friend, Mr. Veal, who had for very many years been a regular visitor for religious instruction, and took the greatest interest in the work of the Department generally. With the exception of the epidemic of measles already referred to, the general health of the children has been excellent, and their conduct, with a few exceptions, good.

The Training School for Protestant Girls.—The matron is able to give a satisfactory account of the girls under her care, both as to their general health and conduct. Two had to be sent away for misconduct, the matron and her committee considering that they should no longer be allowed to mix with the other inmates.

Salvation Army Albion Training Home for Protestant Girls.—I cannot speak too highly of the excellent and substantial work that is being carried on in this school. A thoroughly qualified teacher is retained here to carry on the education of the young and backward inmates. The girls are being most carefully trained in every department of domestic duties, as will be seen by perusing Mrs. Booth's interesting report for the year. I understand that the Army authorities are on the look-out for, and hope to secure very shortly, more substantial and commodious buildings further in the country in which to carry on this part of their work. The present buildings are kept scrupulously clean in every way, and are roomy, but, being built entirely of wood, there is at all times additional anxiety involved in consequence of the inflammable nature of the structures.

The Salvation Army Bayswater Home for Young Protestant Boys.—My remarks with regard to the satisfactory work being carried on at the Albion Home are equally applicable to this school. It is fully realizing all that we anticipated from it, when asking for the necessary authority to open it.

There is a properly organized day-school here also, with a fully qualified teacher in charge to carry on with regularity the education of the backward children, which, of necessity, is of the utmost importance, in view of their hitherto neglected state. The health and conduct of the inmates have been very satisfactory.

Christian Brothers' Home for Roman Catholic Boys, Geelong.—The reverend brother in charge gives me a most interesting and hopeful account of the progress the boys are making who have been placed by the Department under the experienced and judicious care of the kindly brothers, and, personally, I feel very grateful to them for so readily coming to my assistance and taking over these little fellows, who, to say the least, were more than the ordinary foster-mothers could cope with, at all events until they had gone through some such preparatory course as they are receiving in this school.

Roman Catholic Industrial School, Abbotsford.—The reverend mother reports that the usual routine work in connexion with this school has been carried out in a satisfactory manner, and that she has gratifying accounts of and from the majority of the girls who have gone out from her care to make their way in the world, either at service or on probation with friends. The meeting together of former inmates at the annual re-union in the "Old Home," as they call Abbotsford, appears to have been again a great success. On my last visit I found the children looking happy and contented, and with a few exceptions, in perfect health. As at most of the other schools, there are here a few inmates who are incapacitated, physically and mentally, from earning their own living, and will, it is feared, continue to be a cost to the State, as the reverend mother cannot be expected to retain them without payment, more especially in view of the very many outside cases she takes in gratuitously.

Boys' Private Reformatories.—The reports of the various superintendents will be found of interest, and, giving as they do particulars of each school's operations for the year, it seems only necessary for me to say that on my various visits of inspection I found the lads happy and contented, and, generally speaking, in the most robust health. I may add that during the year we had the pleasure of receiving a special visit of inspection to our institutions from Mr. Whiting, Secretary to the State Children's Department of South Australia; and also from Mr. J. Longmore, Inspector of Charitable Institutions, Western Australia. They were able to visit most of our reformatories for boys and girls, and both expressed to me their surprise and satisfaction at what they had seen, and at the completeness and continuity of our system generally.

Girls' Private Reformatories.—As my remarks with regard to the reformatories for boys will apply in every respect to those for girls, I will simply refer for the detailed account of the operations of each school to the very interesting reports furnished by Mrs. Booth and the other ladies in charge of them.

Children Boarded Out.—Some idea of the growing importance of this portion of the Department's work will be realized, when it is pointed out that in ten years the number of children boarded out has risen from 1,840 in the year 1890, to 3,330 in that under review, distributed throughout the State in over 1,600 foster-homes. The large increase in our numbers year by year has, of course, added very considerably to the work and responsibilities of the official staff, and especially to that of the many indefatigable honorary lady workers and others, whose loyal and systematic aid in supervising our children and their homes has now been continued for many years, and, in not a few instances, since the inception of the boarding-out system in this State. In gladly taking this annual opportunity of cordially and unreservedly acknowledging their great services to the State, I feel they will bear with me when I again impress upon them the importance of continued vigilance in their visitation, for there can be no doubt that upon this, to a great extent, will depend, as hitherto, the success of their work, and the comfort and happiness of the children, and while the invaluable services rendered by the conscientious foster-parent should not fail to receive the heartiest recognition at the hands of both the honorary and the official visitors, I feel sure that the practical experience of our ladies will be very much that of a sister worker in England, who writes thus :—

“I have been reading with very great interest the report of your Department. As a Poor-law Guardian, and also a member of a Voluntary Certified Committee for boarding out children, I can add my testimony to the value of the system, chiefly, and above all, because when the foster-parents are worthy of the name the boarded-out child acquires a real home, and retains it after ceasing to be a child, when the dangerous age of independence and temptation begins. We find in England that even after careful selection there are homes where neglect, or even unkind treatment, is discovered. My idea is that we should by no means discourage a very definite examination by the lady visitor. I agree, above all things, that it is necessary to keep up the respect of the child for its foster-parents, and to avoid saying anything that can lower them in its opinion, or making the child imagine itself a personage of importance. By cultivating the power of observation, and especially noting the looks and manner of the child, the visitor may judge pretty correctly as to its welfare, without resorting to questions which imply distrust as to the conduct of those who have undertaken to treat it in every way as their own. The good foster-parent will welcome inquiry, and my experience is that only the bad or neglectful will resent it, when conducted with the courtesy and good feeling that a visitor of tact will show. The children, if not well treated, are so painfully defenceless that I think we should incline to excess of precaution rather than the reverse. My interest in your important experiments in Victoria is my apology for writing.”

The general health and conduct of the children has been good.

Aboriginal Children.—The Aborigines Board has for some years past been in the habit under their Act of from time to time transferring half-caste children who were orphans to this Department, in order that they might have the advantages of being dealt with in the same way as the other wards of the State, and with such satisfactory results that, after very mature and careful consideration, it was deemed desirable, as far as possible, to send other suitable children, irrespective of their being orphans or otherwise. Consequently a modification of the regulations under the Aborigines Act was made to meet these special cases, and under it, ten children—two girls and eight boys—were transferred to this Department, and were disposed of as under. One girl was sent for a few months training to the Albion Home, and then was placed in a carefully selected service home, where she is happy and contented, and is well reported upon by her mistress; the other was at once taken into the service of a lady and gentleman specially interested in her, and with whom she remained, giving every satisfaction, until they were leaving the State, when she was transferred to another employer, who is also able to speak well of her. Of the eight boys, five were sent

for a time to the Bayswater Training Farm preparatory to their being found situations ; one went direct to the service of a clergyman to whom he was well known, and with whom I have every reason to believe he is doing well ; and one was, on the approval of the Inspector and Secretary of the Aborigines Board, allowed home on probation with his parents, they having left the Mission Station, and being reported to be in employment and to be living respectably. The eighth and last boy, I regret to say, died. He was in delicate health when received, and shortly after being sent to the Bayswater Farm developed consumption, which increased so rapidly that it was deemed desirable to send him to the "Austin Hospital," where he was attended with the utmost care to the last, and was visited by his mother and other relatives, who were brought from the Lake Condah Mission Station for the purpose. I have thought it might be of interest to thus show in detail how we disposed of the first ten children received under the new departure of the Aborigines Board, as I feel sure that it is a step in the right direction, seeing that it practically places at their disposal for the benefit of their wards the machinery of this Department, which has for so many years been in successful operation in dealing with and disposing of the ordinary wards of the State. And here I should like to add how pleased we are at being called upon to aid the Board in trying to solve what, I feel sure, they must have long felt to be an anxious and difficult problem, viz., how best to dispose of their young wards when paternal claims conflict with the higher welfare and interest of their children. While the mere fact of the transfer of these children to the Department constitutes them wards of the Secretary, I propose in dealing with them to largely avail myself of the expert knowledge of them possessed by the board and its officers ; and with a view to satisfying them that the children in whom they are so deeply interested are being well and kindly treated, I have thought it well to invite them and any of the respectable parents of the children to visit and satisfy themselves on this point. Some of the parents and officers have already done so, and have expressed themselves as being greatly pleased, which I felt sure they would be. In the Appendix will be found a very gratifying and interesting letter from the Vice-Chairman of the Aborigines Board, giving the result of a visit to some of the children.

Maintenance Collections.—I am pleased to be able to report a further increase in our maintenance collections, £1,439 3s. 1d. having been received as against £1,288 19s. 2d. in 1899.

Societies Dealing with Neglected Children under Part VIII. of Act 1121.—I append the usual table showing the extent of the work these societies are doing, and I have again to thank them very cordially for the assistance they thus render the Department in diverting into their own hands many children that would otherwise, in all probability, have come under our control.

TABLE B.
WORK OF SOCIETIES UNDER PART VIII. NEGLECTED CHILDREN'S ACT, NO. 1121,
FOR THE YEAR 1900.

| Name of Society. | Number under Supervision on 31.12.99. | Admissions during 1900. | | | Number under Supervision on 31.12.00. |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | Court Committals. | Transfer of Guardianship. | Voluntary Admissions. | |
| Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society | 459 | 5 | 25 | 104 | 554 |
| Wesleyan Church Neglected Children's Aid Society | 185 | 4 | 9 | ... | 195 |
| Presbyterian and Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society | 373 | 4 | 22 | 10 | 358 |
| Church of England Deaconesses' Home ... | 54 | 6 | ... | 5 | 65 |
| "Clifden" Home, Wedderburn... .. | 65 | ... | 5 | 5 | 75 |
| Gordon Institute | 200 | 3 | 33 | 85 | 305 |
| "Try Society," Surrey-road, Hawksburn | 123 | ... | ... | 87 | 93 |
| Burwood Boys' Home | 45 | ... | 20 | 8 | 52 |
| Fitzroy Streets Mission | 12 | 1 | ... | 1 | 14 |
| Geelong "Try" Boys' Brigade | 181 | ... | ... | 65 | 191 |
| Latrobe-street Ragged School Mission ... | 313 | 1 | 5 | 170 | 345 |
| St. Joseph's Home, Surrey Hills | 218 | ... | 1 | 46 | 200 |
| Ballarat Rescue and Children's Home ... | Nil | 1 | 3 | 7 | 7 |
| Total | 2,228 | 25 | 123 | 593 | 2,454 |

In conclusion, it is but right for me to express my indebtedness, during another year, to the valuable and efficient co-operation afforded me by the officers in charge of the various schools, the very large number of devoted foster-parents throughout the State, and generally by the officers of the Department. I have before referred to the many honorary workers, and to their cordial and continued services.

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.

| Industrial Schools. | Average strength. | Items of Expenditure. | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| | | Provi- sions. | Clothing and Bedding. | Fuel, Light, and Water. | Stores Stock. | Medical Attend- ance. | Inciden- tals. | Transport and Travelling Expenses. | Tele- phone Service. | Salaries. | Main- tenance. | Total. |
| | | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. |
| Boys' and Girls' Depôts | 97 | 391 18 6 | 52 3 2 | 119 13 6 | 193 8 6 | 27 9 3 | 197 13 3 | .. | .. | 1,255 19 9 | .. | 12,443 10 11 |
| Abbotsford .. | 63 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 880 14 2 | 880 14 2 |
| Servants' Training School | 23 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 296 2 0 | 296 2 0 |
| Service Children .. | .. | .. | 483 18 8 | .. | .. | .. | .. | (293 0 8 | .. | .. | .. | 1,415 6 6 |
| Boarded-out Children .. | 3,223 | .. | 877 18 8 | .. | .. | 2,324 15 3 | .. | 638 7 2* | .. | .. | 43,219 4 4 | 47,224 7 3 |
| Telephone Service .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 802 9 0 | 55 13 4 | .. | .. | 55 13 4 |
| Total Industrial Schools | .. | 391 18 6 | 1,414 0 6 | 119 18 6 | 198 8 6 | 2,352 4 6 | 197 13 3 | 1,733 16 10 | 55 13 4 | 1,255 19 9 | 44,395 0 6 | 52,315 14 2 |
| Reformatory Schools. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oakleigh .. | 31 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 794 16 5 | 794 16 5 |
| Brookside .. | 16 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 16 0 8 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 423 14 5 | 423 14 5 |
| St Ann's .. | 10 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 10 0 0 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 266 5 9 | 266 5 9 |
| Riddell's Creek .. | 56 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,454 3 11 | 1,454 3 11 |
| Excelsior .. | 18 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 483 6 8 | 483 6 8 |
| Wandin Yallock .. | 13 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 339 10 11 | 339 10 11 |
| Kingsbury .. | 4 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 108 2 11 | 108 2 11 |
| Straight View Farm .. | 3 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 81 0 4 | 81 0 4 |
| Mount Paradise .. | 14 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 357 11 5 | 357 11 5 |
| Bayswater .. | 35 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 939 1 1 | 939 1 1 |
| Service Children .. | .. | .. | 343 0 2 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 883 12 8 | .. | .. | .. | 1,226 12 10 |
| Telephone Service .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 198 13 2 | .. | .. | 198 13 2 |
| Total Reformatory Schools | .. | .. | 343 0 2 | .. | .. | 26 0 8 | .. | 883 12 8 | 198 13 2 | .. | 5,231 13 2 | 6,682 19 10 |
| Head Office .. | .. | .. | .. | 26 19 0 | 56 1 0 | .. | 117 8 5 | .. | .. | 3,554 12 1 | .. | 3,755 0 6 |
| Total Industrial and Reformatory | .. | 391 18 6 | 1,757 0 8 | 346 17 6 | 254 9 6 | 2,378 5 2 | 315 1 8 | 2,617 9 6 | 254 6 6 | 4,810 11 10 | 49,627 13 8 | 62,753 14 6 |
| Deduct— | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,439 3 1 |
| Amount received for Maintenance of Children | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,439 3 1 |
| Net cost | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 61,314 11 5 |

* Under Part VIII. of Act.

† The value of labour performed by the inmates of this school in the manufacture of outfits, &c., is £150 15s. 5d.

AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO THE
CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1900.

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 ... | 171 | 61 | 52 | 58 | 62 | 59 | 50 | 61 | 54 | 55 | 55 | 43 | 29 | 24 | 20 | 14 | 6 | 874 |
| Reformatory | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 13 | 30 | 79 |
| Total ... | 171 | 61 | 52 | 58 | 62 | 59 | 50 | 61 | 55 | 58 | 56 | 54 | 33 | 31 | 29 | 27 | 36 | 953 |

AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT
IN 1900—*continued.*

RELIGIONS AND BIRTHPLACES.

| | Number committed. | Religions. | | Birthplaces. | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | Protestant. | Roman Catholic. | Australian Colonies. | England. | Ireland. | Germany. | Unknown. |
| Neglected | 874 | 629 | 245 | 866 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Reformatory | 79 | 62 | 17 | 76 | 2 | 1 | ... | ... |
| Total | 953 | 691 | 262 | 942 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 |

PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO THE CARE OF THE
DEPARTMENT IN 1900.

| Particulars furnished with Order of Committal. | Neglected. | Reformatory. | Total. |
|---|------------|--------------|--------|
| Parents dead | 23 | 7 | 30 |
| " unknown | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| " deserted | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| " drunkards | 14 | 2 | 16 |
| " in gaol | 8 | ... | 8 |
| " poor, but of good character | 27 | 31 | 58 |
| Father dead; Mother poor, good character | 250 | 10 | 260 |
| " " in hospital | 4 | ... | 4 |
| " " in lunatic asylum | 2 | ... | 2 |
| " " an imbecile | 7 | ... | 7 |
| " " deserted | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| " " in gaol | 13 | ... | 13 |
| " " a drunkard | 11 | ... | 11 |
| " " immoral | 19 | ... | 19 |
| " " unknown | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " a cripple... .. | 1 | ... | 1 |
| Father poor; Mother a drunkard | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| " " of doubtful character | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| " " immoral... .. | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " in gaol | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " deserted | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| " " dead | 25 | 4 | 29 |
| " " in hospital | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " in lunatic asylum | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " an imbecile | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " an invalid | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Father deserted; Mother poor, good character | 173 | 4 | 177 |
| " " dead | 33 | 1 | 34 |
| " " in hospital | 7 | ... | 7 |
| " " in lunatic asylum | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " a cripple | 2 | ... | 2 |
| " " an imbecile | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " immoral | 7 | ... | 7 |
| " " doubtful character | 2 | ... | 2 |
| " " in gaol | 4 | ... | 4 |
| " " a drunkard | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Father a drunkard; Mother poor, good character | 7 | 5 | 12 |
| " " dead | 18 | 1 | 19 |
| " " in hospital | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " in lunatic asylum | 6 | ... | 6 |
| " " deserted | 2 | ... | 2 |
| " " an imbecile | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " blind | ... | 1 | 1 |
| " " doubtful character | ... | 1 | 1 |
| Father in gaol; Mother poor, good character | 14 | 1 | 15 |
| " " dead | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| " " in hospital | 4 | ... | 4 |

PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1900—*continued.*

| Particulars furnished with Order of Committal. | Neglected. | Reformatory. | Total. |
|--|------------|--------------|--------|
| Father unknown; Mother poor, good character | 21 | ... | 21 |
| " " in hospital | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " in lunatic asylum | 3 | ... | 3 |
| " " dead | 10 | 1 | 11 |
| " " an imbecile | 1 | ... | 1 |
| " " in gaol | 5 | ... | 5 |
| " " deserted | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| " " immoral | 9 | ... | 9 |
| " " a drunkard | 3 | ... | 3 |
| Father an invalid; Mother poor, good character | 7 | ... | 7 |
| Father in lunatic asylum; Mother poor, good character | 26 | ... | 26 |
| Father blind; Mother poor, good character | 4 | ... | 4 |
| Father in hospital; Mother poor, good character | 6 | ... | 6 |
| " " " deserted | 4 | ... | 4 |
| Father a bad character; Mother poor, good character | 1 | ... | 1 |
| Total | 874 | 79 | 953 |

REPORTS ON SCHOOLS.

RECEIVING DEPÔTS, ROYAL PARK.

I have the honour to furnish for your information my report on the work here for the year 1900.

During the year we received more than our usual number of infants who were in a dying condition from marasmus and congenital ailments. We also had an outbreak of measles in August which carried off some of the weakly ones, causing our death rate to be higher than formerly, the number of deaths being 24.

The conduct of the inmates has been good, and the usual routine of work carried out satisfactorily.

The annual treat given by the Visiting Committee passed off pleasantly, all enjoyed themselves, and the children did full justice to the good things provided.

I have again to thank the members of the Committee for their kindly visits, the ladies of the Presbyterian Church, Brunswick, and the Rev. Mr. Langley and the Rev. Mr. Flockhart for their visits of instruction to the Protestant children, and the Rev. Father Norris and the Sisters for their visits to the Roman Catholics.

JANE WILSON, Matron.

Report of the Visiting Committee to the Royal Park Receiving Depôt.

I have pleasure in stating that all the sections of the institution have been regularly visited monthly, especially have the ladies of the Committee been zealous and punctual in this good work.

The reports generally have been favorable, both as regards health, discipline, and cleanliness, Miss Wilson, the matron, had a serious illness during the year, but your Committee rejoices in her restoration to her wonted vigour. We felt the removal, by death, of Mr. Veal, who not only was a member last year, but for several years past had given religious instruction to many of the children. Mr. J. C. Langley has been appointed in Mr. Veal's place, and your Committee looks forward to increased activity and usefulness thereby.

The annual treat and evening entertainment to the boys and girls was much enjoyed, and contributed to the pleasure of all connected with the schools.

Every facility for inspection has been uniformly given to the visiting members, and the greatest courtesy shown by the officers in charge.

M. L. HUTCHINSON, Hon. Secretary.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, ABBOTSFORD.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year 1900.

The general health of the inmates was good. Only one death occurred.

Their conduct, on the whole, was also good.

Many innocent festivities were provided for the girls, and several treats were given by kind friends, thus brightening their daily round of duties.

The annual re-union of former inmates gave great pleasure to the girls. It is gratifying to see them take delight in returning to their old home on such occasions, and relate their success at service.

I have to return grateful acknowledgments to all kind friends and benefactors of the little ones.

MARY V. KENNEDY, Provincial Superioress.

GIRLS' TRAINING INSTITUTE.

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

The girls at service kept their situations remarkably well, and, in most instances, gave satisfaction.

The conduct of the girls has been generally good; there has been a decided improvement in several who had previously given trouble; but, I am sorry to say, that I had to send away two who behaved badly at service.

Their health, with few exceptions, has been excellent. There were four cases of measles in the spring, and one girl died last November from internal inflammation. I cannot speak too highly of the kindness and prompt attention received by the girls from our honorary medical staff, Dr. Jeffreys Wood, Dr. Percy Webster, and Dr. Clara Stone, the last named having undertaken to see the older girls at her rooms. Mr. Fred. Baker, the honorary dentist, has also been most kind and attentive.

I have received donations from many kind friends, including several service girls, and this enabled me to give the girls a Christmas treat.

In consequence of delay of the vessel from England bringing them, we have not yet received the presents given in memory of the late Mr. Wm. Peterson, but we expect to receive them shortly.

LILIAN M. WATSON, Matron.

ALBION TRAINING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

The advance at this Home, in almost every sense of the word, has been of a very pleasing nature throughout the year. Poor little waifs and strays, called upon so early to fight the odds in the great battle of life, have, indeed, found a sure haven of rest within its walls, and everything that thoughtful care, tenderness, and wisdom can devise for their well-being and comfort has been lovingly thought out and carried out to the veriest detail as far as we have been enabled to do so.

A notable advance is particularly to be chronicled in connexion with the school work, owing to certain facilities placed at our disposal by the Government, and which have assisted us in carrying out a much more satisfactory system of training. The girls readily learn, and with much gratification their teacher notes that one powerful incentive that assists her greatly in her labours is the desire that each one has to excel and outshine the other.

In the other branches of industry, housework and needlework, this is equally applicable, many of the inmates acquiring a surprising proficiency in both, and giving decided satisfaction in a large number of cases in which they have been placed out in situations. In fact, so much has their reputation in this particular connexion stood good, that at times we have been unable to cope with the demand for their services.

They enter with much delight into all the innocent and healthful amusements provided for their recreation, and many who a year ago were rough and wild have, under the softening and spiritual influences brought upon them, changed completely. The old order of things has passed away, and under the new are being built up brighter, better, and nobler characters, for whom our prayers daily and hourly go forth that they may one day take their places in the world as true servants of God, and happy, honoured, and respected members of society.

CORNELIE BOOTH.

BAYSWATER INTERMEDIATE HOME.

Our Intermediate Home for boys at Bayswater is a thorough success, and 38 boys are now receiving a good lesson in discipline and work. Ensign and Mrs. Carless, the officers in charge, assisted by officers under them, are doing an excellent work.

There is a properly organized day-school with a capable teacher, so the little lads are being properly trained and taught to become useful men.

It is very distressing to find that there is so much depravity among small children; still we are proving conclusively that, when taken in hand in a sympathetic and systematic way while young, great and lasting good can be done to them.

It is a grand work building up anew these poor little wrecked lives. There is nothing our Army leaders, Commandant and Mrs. Booth, would not do to bless these little boys. And, personally, Mrs. Bray and I as the superintendents love to every now and then join with Ensign and Mrs. Carless and spend a happy evening.

JAMES H. BRAY, Superintendent.

GEELONG BOARDING-OUT DISTRICT.

The Visiting Committee for the Geelong District has much pleasure in again forwarding its annual report.

The children, we are happy to state, are in fairly good health, with one or two exceptions, who are suffering much from the after effects of measles, one poor little infant especially. However, under the care of the medical officer, and the unceasing attention of the foster-mother, she is gradually recovering. One boy met with an accident, fracturing his arm for the second time, but he is now able to attend school again.

The inspection of the homes by the Visiting Officer this year was rather disheartening, so many of the old homes having complaints made against them. We think that, perhaps, the long time that elapsed between this and the previous visit has caused a little falling off in the attention of the foster-mothers to their homes.

The question is often asked—"What good results from boarding out these children?" There can be but one reply, they are placed in good homes, and trained to become respectable members of society, and it saves many from a life of crime and misery. Some there are, no doubt, who derive little benefit from all the care and kindness bestowed upon them, and will follow their own unfortunate inclinations, but we are pleased to say they are greatly in the minority. These boys and girls, often after their term has expired, return to their foster-mothers, and are received with a warm welcome, and in one case in our district two of the boys—young men now, one married, and the other about to be—are doing all they can to help their foster-mother in her old age, and she always speaks of them in terms of great affection. Two of our families have removed to Colac during the year, and there is now an effort being made to form Colac into a separate district. Seven boys and ten girls have been drafted off into service homes during the year. Three or four boys have absconded, and we have been obliged to ask the assistance of the police in a few cases, and we always found them very obliging. Six foster-mothers obtained permission to make their own arrangements with their foster-children when their school term expired, and the children were quite as anxious they should be allowed to remain with them. Four boys and four girls have been discharged, and received their savings, and we hope they will do well in the future. Two or three of the girls have married, and appear to have comfortable homes. I regret to have to report one death, that of an infant only a few weeks old. Thrush, combined with the intense heat, was more than the child could contend against.

Again, I sincerely thank my Committee, which has for so many years given me prompt and willing assistance, and to you and all the officers of the Department we again offer our hearty thanks for continued kindness and courtesy.

FRANCES DAVISON, Correspondent.

BROOKSIDE REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to submit my first report.

The health of the girls in the home has been exceptionally good.

There was one death, that of a girl at service, from pneumonia supervening on influenza.

I regret to say that Dr. Raymond Fox, our medical officer, has left us. He is succeeded by Dr. McDougall, who has been most kind, attentive, and regular in his attendance.

A Committee has been appointed, several members of which have visited us, and I expect much help from their advice and sympathy, especially now that we are deprived of the presence and kindly assistance of the late superintendent of this institution (Mrs. Rowe), who died during the year.

The girls attend church at Cape Clear every Sunday, weather permitting. I have great pleasure in thanking the Revs. Seymour, Ingamells, Royce, Allan, Brown, Lau, and Mr. Bird for their kindness in visiting us, and holding services illustrated by the optical lantern. They all recorded in the visitors' book how pleased they were with the behaviour and the appearance of the girls and their surroundings.

Various amusements were provided during the Christmas holidays, including picnics and the usual Christmas treat.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Misses Rowe, of Glenfine, for the picnic given by them, Mr. and Mrs. E. Tinworth, and Mr. and Mrs. C. Walker, of Ballarat, for their donations of fruit and sweets, all of which were much enjoyed by the recipients.

All the girls at service are reported to be doing well. I have been ably assisted by the staff, consisting of a married couple and Miss Dear, whose help I much appreciate.

ROSE KING, Matron.

ST. ANN'S REFORMATORY.

The girls at service have all been visited in their homes by one of the staff, and were found to be doing well.

One girl had to be removed from her situation during the year, owing to misconduct.

I heard of nearly all my former wards last Christmas, and they are getting on well.

There is a constant demand for reformatory wards in this district, but the supply is not adequate to the requirements.

The ladies of the Visiting Committee visited the institution several times, and seemed pleased with what they saw.

With the exception of an epileptic subject, and a girl who had to be treated at the hospital for an abscess, the health of the inmates has been very good, there having been no illness of any other kind during the year. Dr. Docker, of Portland, is the medical officer.

The clergyman has held some services here, and we drive to church as often as possible.

I still have Mrs. Flaxman's assistance, and the married couple on the place also takes an interest in the girls.

Mrs. Rowe's death has been a great grief to all the inmates.

MARY S. FARIS, Matron.

GIRLS' REFORMATORY, RIDDELL'S CREEK.

It is with great pleasure that I have to record that the standard of progress in connexion with the above institution has been fully maintained during the year, the disappointing cases that must necessarily be met with in work amongst the class of girls we are called upon to deal with therein being somewhat conspicuous by their absence, and proving happily quite the exception rather than the rule.

This particular Home, formerly situated at Pakenham, was removed to Riddell's Creek in the course of the year just past. As in the case of the Murrumbenna Home the building was also erected for a gentleman's residence, and is delightfully located to the left of the Bendigo railway line, as approached

from the metropolis. It contains twenty rooms, and stands in the midst of about 40 acres of ground. A long drive, flanked on either side by pine trees, leads up to the house, which, as it stands revealed, is of imposing exterior, surrounded by spacious verandahs and balconies.

The grounds, which had practically fallen into desuetude up to the time of our taking the premises, are now nearing a high state of cultivation, several acres being devoted to the production of vegetables, and the flower gardens are also being brought up to the fullest state of perfection possible.

There is also a plentiful supply of water available, such being laid on direct from the hills situated within a short distance.

The general arrangements of this Home add greatly to the comfort and happiness of the girls, who take the deepest interest in all that concerns it, and whose characters are gradually bending to the necessarily refining influences inspired by their pure surroundings.

A gratifying improvement has also taken place in their general conduct, both in the Home as well as in their situations, many of the latter especially being reported as giving much satisfaction to their employers.

The external arrangements, too, leave little to be desired; a poultry farm, that never-failing source of interest to the girls, constituting one of these, besides piggeries, cow-sheds, and an elevated stable.

Sub-reformatory at Murrumbidgee.—I have also to record a very gratifying state of affairs as existent at this Home, a high standard of improvement obtaining largely throughout the year. Away from the contaminating influences which have surrounded and blighted so many of the fair young lives that have found a refuge therein, it is indeed wonderful to note how that soul of goodness, which it is claimed rests in the breasts of all things evil, has been so tenderly and wisely wrought upon, that instincts, perhaps hitherto undreamed of, have burst forth into active life, giving promise of a future that with God's help shall be indeed bright and beautiful.

They are perfectly contented and happy, and, as a rule, submit respectfully and willingly to discipline; in fact, their whole deportment, with, of course, a few inevitable exceptions, is of a satisfactory nature, while their characters have notably deepened and developed as by comparison with the previous year.

The reports also from those in situations and on probation have been in the main of an encouraging description, many of their employers expressing their appreciation of the earnest thorough fashion in which they carry out the various duties allotted to them.

For God's cause we live—For God as well as for their temporal welfare we endeavour to train these girls committed to our care, and that we may realize and carry out to the letter the great responsibilities we are charged with is our ever earnest and highest desire.

CORNELIE BOOTH.

REFORMATORY SCHOOL, OAKLEIGH.

The past year's operations have been of a fairly successful character.

With the exception of a few cases the general health has been good, and the children bright and happy.

It is with great satisfaction I report that many of the girls whose terms have expired are doing well at service, and that they frequently come to spend their "day out" at the School.

I have again to thank the many kind friends for their generous donations towards our Christmas tree and annual picnic, and also for giving the girls various entertainments.

MARY F. CORBETT.

BOYS' REFORMATORY, BAYSWATER.

It is with great pleasure that we are again able to report that we have had a very successful and interesting year at this institution.

The boys have been steadily improving in their general characters, and have responded to the treatment and influences brought to bear upon them in a very gratifying manner.

Under the supervision of capable men they have been taught how to earn their living, and we have no doubt that many of them will become creditable citizens of the Commonwealth. Their work has been systematic, and their recreation regular and interesting. I must here raise a tribute of thanks to Commandant and Mrs. Booth, who have during the whole year spared no pains to make the boys have good times.

They have from time to time sent up special attractions in the way of lantern services, musical parties, and, above all, the limelight and cinematograph, and the Commandant has also held a number of special gatherings with them, and tendered them good and helpful advice. The boys have appreciated it and profited thereby, I am sure.

Regarding the boys placed at service and on probation, it affords me much pleasure to say that in the very great majority of cases they are doing very well.

I should like to make mention of the fact that during this year there were transferred from gaol to us ten youths under the age of eighteen, imprisoned for various offences, their sentences ranging from two to eighteen months. These transfers were effected under section 333 of the *Crimes Act 1890*. It is with pleasure that I report that the success and wisdom of this procedure have been abundantly shown, and some of our very best boys are among this class.

We have now 40 boys in the institution. Some are unfortunately very vicious, and others are intellectually weak. But we are labouring on, feeling sure that patient perseverance will prevail.

JAMES H. BRAY, Superintendent.

EXCELSIOR HOME FOR REFORMATORY BOYS, BRIGHTON.

I have the honour to report that on the whole the past year's work has been very satisfactory. The health and conduct of the boys have been good, and in nearly all cases those at service have done well.

The reports from the State, St. James', and Sunday schools are much the same as last year.

W. GROOM, Superintendent.

WANDIN YALLOCK REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to report that the work for the past year has been very satisfactory. The general conduct of the boys in the institution and at service has been better than in any previous year.

The record of the boys on probation with their parents is not quite so good, since those parents who in the first place allow their children to fall into crime are, with but few exceptions, unsuitable to again have control of them.

A very gratifying feature of the work is the fact that some of the lads, who were most difficult cases to deal with when first taken in hand, and who after they ceased to be wards of the reformatory failed in making a start for themselves, were persuaded to return to the institution, and on making a fresh attempt were successful. Some of these are now in business in the city or suburbs, or are employed in country occupations.

The annual camp was held under canvas at Yarra Glen, and the week was passed without any mischance.

With two or three exceptions, the health of the boys was all that could be desired. The cases referred to were kindly and successfully attended to by Dr. Syme, to whom I am very grateful.

I also wish to express my thanks to the ladies and gentlemen of the district, who attend regularly for the purpose of giving the boys a musical evening, a form of recreation that we have found to be of the greatest use in refining the dispositions of the boys, and encouraging them to do well in future.

I must thank Mr. M. L. Hutchinson for many parcels of reading matter received from him in the past.

M. McASKELL, Superintendent.

KINGSBURY FARM REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

I have the honour to submit my report for the past year, and am happy to state that it has been a very satisfactory period.

The health of the boys has been excellent, and I desire to thank Dr. Eccles for his services so willingly rendered up to the present whenever required.

Their conduct has, with the exception of one or two restless ones, been satisfactory.

I am glad to state that there has been a good demand for service boys during the past year.

I believe this system of rural training to be a step in the right direction, and in its results to be far in advance of the old barrack system.

The boys at service are doing well on the whole, but I find that, in spite of all the precautions that I may take, some employers are not all they should be, and I think that it will need a better system of supervision to enable the boys to get the full benefit of the service conditions.

A. BREBNER, Superintendent.

STRAIGHT VIEW FARM REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to report that our work during the past year has been successful.

The boys, generally speaking, have behaved themselves very well. There were two absconders from the institution, and one of these was recovered after a little trouble.

The health of the boys has been excellent, not one of them having had a day's sickness.

P. McMAHON, Superintendent.

MOUNT PARADISE FARM REFORMATORY.

I have the honour to submit my report for the past year, which has been very satisfactory.

The health of the boys has been exceptionally good, there not having been a single complaint during the whole year.

Those placed at service, and those on probation with their parents, continue their monthly correspondence with me, and with only one exception I have received very favorable reports from the employers of service boys as to their abilities, usefulness, and trustworthiness.

Christmas and New Year passed very joyfully, all the boys singing the old year out and the new year in, and indulging in open-air games, and retiring after a midnight supper.

The Rev. Father Gleeson visits here and instructs the boys, some of whom are preparing for confirmation.

J. J. MILLANE, Superintendent.

Office of Board for Protection of the Aborigines,
City Bank Chambers,
Melbourne, 8th August, 1900.

COMMANDANT BOOTH,
Salvation Army, Bourke-street, Melbourne.

Dear Sir,

On Friday last I visited your two farms near Bayswater, accompanied by the Rev. F. A. Hagenauer, the General Inspector and Secretary of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines, and Mr. Le Souef, one of its members. Our primary reason for the visit was our wish to see some half-caste boys, who have lately been sent to the farms. Brigadier Kyle accompanied us from Melbourne, and we were courteously received on our arrival by Major Bray, the superintendent, who kindly showed us over the whole establishment.

All the arrangements seemed to us most complete, and the perfect cleanliness and comfort of the dormitories elicited our warmest eulogiums. The numerous scripture texts in the rooms, and other evidences of the value to be attached to the higher life, must have an elevating effect on the young people brought under such Christian influences.

The farm buildings and the other arrangements seemed all that could be desired, and we think that both establishments reflect the highest credit, not only on the officer in charge, but also on yourself.

The boys we were more particularly interested in, and they appeared to be very happy and contented. The training they are now undergoing is well calculated to make them upright and intelligent members of the community.

We spent a very pleasant and instructive afternoon, and were much impressed with our visit, and wish you every success in your good work.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

D. N. McLEOD, Vice-Chairman.