

1905.
—
VICTORIA.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

R E P O R T

OF THE

SECRETARY AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1904.

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

By Authority:

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REPORT.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS,

Melbourne, 19th June, 1905.

SIR,

In compliance with the requirements of section 10 of the *Neglected Children's Act* 1890, and section 320 of Part II. of *Crimes Act* 1890, I have the honour to submit the report on the work of this Department during the year ended 31st December, 1904, with a statement of expenditure, and the usual statistical tables.

The annexed reports from the Superintendents and Matrons of the Industrial and Reformatory Schools are also furnished in accordance with the provisions of the Acts.

On reference to Table I., it will be seen that during the twelve months under review the discharges exceeded the admissions, with the result that a considerable reduction has taken place in the number of children under supervision, the total on 1st January being 5,361, and on 31st December 5,176. The following comparative statement shows the number of the children who were a cost to the State on 31st December, 1903 and 1904 respectively.

NEGLECTED CHILDREN.				1903.	1904.
Boarded-out	...	...	...	3,363	3,154
In schools	...	...	...	134	132
REFORMATORY WARDS.					
In schools	...	...	...	192	189

Particulars are given in Table I. of the location of all the children whose names were on the books of the Department on 31st December, 1904.

Committals.—The number of children committed during the year as “neglected” was 382, against 397 for 1903. The charges on which the children were dealt with were as follow:—328 no visible means, 19 dwelling with drunkards, 3 with vagrants, 7 with prostitutes, 2 in brothels, 11 on charges of larceny, 4 begging, 1 illegally using a horse, 1 imposition, 1 damaging property, 3 as uncontrollable, and 2 transfers from private societies.

Six of the children were foundlings, and 98 were reported as illegitimate. Of 105 who were allowed to remain with their mothers after committal, payment was made by the Department for 95; the remaining 10 were discharged.

The number of committals was lower than for many years past, and would seem to indicate that magistrates are exercising more care and discrimination than formerly in dealing with certain cases, and from this stand-point the decrease in committals may be regarded as satisfactory. At the same time, it is hoped that another class of children, who could with advantage to themselves and the community be placed under control, may not be overlooked, viz.: boys and girls who are allowed to roam the streets at all hours of the day or night, and who could be properly dealt with under the Act. A good number appear to be under the school age, and their removal from dangerous or vicious surroundings is worthy of consideration on the part of those interested in their welfare.

The committals to the Reformatories direct, for disciplinary treatment and training, numbered 50—37 boys and 13 girls. The following were the offences charged against them:—38 larceny, 7 no visible means, 1 dwelling with a drunkard, 2 idle and disorderly, 1 making a false statement, 1 assaulting a girl. In addition to these cases, 12 boys and 1 girl were transferred from gaols for reformatory treatment. The number under this heading in 1903 was 37—36 boys and 1 girl.

Boarding-out.—On 31st December, 1904, 2,197 children were under care in approved foster homes in various parts of the State, 777 boarded out with their own mothers, 13 in maternity homes, and 180, at present unfit to have the freedom of

foster homes, were in the under-mentioned places, viz. :—42 girls in Albion Home, Glenroy, 82 boys in Bayswater Homes, and 56 in the Christian Brothers' School, Geelong.

Some mentally defective wards, who are beyond the age of 20 years, are still maintained by the Department in the absence of any suitable institution to which they could be sent.

Boarding-out undoubtedly provides the most satisfactory way of dealing with the majority of young children committed to the care of the Department. They are maintained and educated under the good influences of family life; foster parents in innumerable instances become very attached to the children, who obtain employment direct from their homes, and to which they afterwards pay friendly visits. During 1904, only 16 children were sent to the Royal Park Depôt on attaining the service age, for whom situations could not be found locally. As already mentioned, all children are not suitable for family life, and for truants and others, who are uncontrollable, residential schools are provided. At Bayswater and Glenroy, Protestant boys and girls, respectively, are received. These schools have been examined by Inspectors of the Education Department, whose reports were of a favorable character, and the schools have been further supplied with regulation furniture and equipped in accordance with their suggestions. St. Augustine's School, at Geelong, for Roman Catholic boys, appears to be exceedingly well conducted, and has been reported on very favorably by the Inspector for Roman Catholic Schools. Abbotsford Convent School, under the care of the Nuns of the Good Shepherd, is technically an Industrial School, having been opened for State children under the old Act. Roman Catholic girls are received, and the educational course provided has been reported on by an Inspector of the Education Department, and stated to be suited to the needs of the children. A very decided improvement has been made here in the domestic training of the girls by the introduction of cookery classes under a competent teacher. This step indicates progress in the right direction, and deserves special commendation.

It will be seen that the education and training of the intelligent and healthy child is well looked after. There is, however, in addition to these, a percentage of subnormal children, described as "backward" or "feeble-minded," requiring to be educated on special lines. The necessity for schools for this class is now well known, and suitable provision is made in nearly every part of the world. It is recognised that while so much liberality is shown for the education of the normal children, those who are mentally defective have also strong claims for consideration, and should not be allowed to sink into imbecility and become permanent burdens on the community. It is hoped that the proposals submitted for residential schools will meet with favorable consideration.

As regards epileptics, the National Council of Women of Victoria have formulated a scheme for an epileptic colony, and it is anticipated that arrangements may be made for the reception therein of State wards who require care and treatment.

It is inevitable that complaints should now and then arise where so many children are concerned, many of whom are very troublesome and with depraved habits; and some foster parents, however respectable and well recommended, may prove deficient in tact and temper when put to the test. Only eight complaints of harsh treatment were made against foster parents during 1904, and in every instance the children were removed to other homes. A number of children have been transferred to new homes on the reports of the Visiting Officers and Ladies' Committees, where the home surroundings have turned out unsatisfactory, or the school attendance has been irregular.

Children at Service.—The number of children at service on 31st December, 1904, totalled 888, viz. :—826 "neglected" and 62 "reformatory" wards, and wages were received at varying rates according to their capabilities. During the year the sum of £2,707 11s. 8d. was received from employers as a proportion of the earnings of the children, to be placed in the Savings Bank, and to be added to from time to time until the children are free from departmental control, when the whole of their savings, with accumulated interest, is handed to them. The amounts paid to ex-wards in this way during the year amounted to £2,438 5s. 5d., including the sum of £103 10s. 10d., earned as interest. The balance to the credit of the wages account in the Savings Bank, on 31st December, 1904, was £7,783 17s. 5d.

The boys and girls at service, on the whole, behave satisfactorily. There have been, of course, complaints from employers of misconduct and incompetency, and new homes have had to be found, and in some instances it has been necessary to send the worst offenders to a reformatory for disciplinary treatment, but the percentage of such cases is small. On the other hand, three charges of harsh treatment were made against employers by boys of ages ranging from 14 to 16½ years, and, although these youths were far from reliable, they were withdrawn from their employers.

Girls' Training Home, East Melbourne.—This institution is officially an "industrial school," having been established before the present Act came into force. Young Protestant girls are received who have little or no knowledge of domestic work, or have proved themselves so lazy and indifferent to their surroundings that no mistress will keep them. Skilful and tactful treatment is required to make these girls useful and intelligent workers, and a comparatively large staff is necessary. The Matron is capable, and the Committee interested in the institution, but the want of funds is a serious obstacle to the introduction and carrying out of a well-organized system. However, I am glad to say an improvement in the methods adopted was observable as compared with the previous year, and I hope further efforts will be made to bring the institution up to the proper standard. I may mention that the State only pays a small capitation allowance for maintenance.

Receiving Depot, Royal Park.—The new dairy has been erected during the year, and is a very useful acquisition to the establishment. No steps have been taken, however, to improve the dormitory accommodation in the boys' depot, pending receipt of plans from the Public Works Department.

There would seem to be room for considerable improvement in the methods adopted in dealing with the boys and girls who are, in my opinion, more likely to be confirmed in bad habits than improved under the present system. Apparently the establishment has hitherto been regarded as custodial only, no educative or reformatory work being attempted, on the plea that the inmates were only detained for a short period, yet the daily average numbers resident last year was 86. Children are detained for a reasonable time until their mental, moral, and physical condition can be ascertained, so that they can be properly dealt with. A number of youths and girls are returned from service for misconduct, and other reasons, and it seems an anomaly that they should not be profitably employed while a large sum is paid monthly to the Penal Department for laundry work, and outside labour has to be obtained for ploughing a small paddock, and sowing and harvesting the crop. In other respects, the institution has not been up to the standard of private establishments. As a remedy I would strongly advise that the Secretary to the Department be given power to deal directly with minor offences, instead of forwarding them to the Under-Secretary for his decision, and the staff generally should be placed more directly under his control.

Rutherglen Viticultural College.—In accordance with arrangements made with the Agricultural Department, 13 wards of the State were sent to the College as trainees, the boys being specially selected as suitable for the work. There is accommodation for about 30 boys, but, pending the appointment of a suitable staff capable of supervising and training the lads, no further transfers have taken place.

REFORMATORIES.

There are six institutions for boys and five for girls, viz. :—

Bayswater, for Protestant boys, average number resident	...	43
Wandin Yallock, do.	do.	19
Excelsior Home, Brighton, do.	do.	14
Kingsbury, Newstead, do.	do.	4
Mount Paradise, Pakenham, for R.C. boys	do.	5
Straight View, Harcourt, do.	do.	4
Riddell's Creek, for Protestant girls	do.	68
(including branch at Murrumbeena)		
Mintaro, Monnegatta, do.	do.	18
St. Ann's, Heywood, do.	do.	2
Oakleigh Convent, for R.C. girls	do.	22

having a daily average of 199 inmates during the year.

Reformatory schools are established under the provisions of the Crimes Act, and the rules and regulations made thereunder, after satisfactory evidence has been given that they are suitable for their purpose, and will be properly equipped and staffed. A capitation payment is made for maintenance, but no grant is given towards buildings. Each boy and girl, however, is provided with an outfit of clothing at the expense of the State on going to a service home.

All the boys' establishments, except the Excelsior Home, Brighton, possess a large area of land, and general farm work is taught on the best lines, and the school work, physical training, and recreation are important features in developing the intelligence of the lads. The health of the inmates has been remarkably good, only one death (at the Alfred Hospital, from tuberculosis) having occurred during the year.

Committals can be made to the schools by magistrates up to the age of 17, and transfer from gaols by the Governor in Council up to 18. It is noteworthy that the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments is satisfied with the results achieved in dealing with these young offenders, and he advises the age of committal being extended to 21 years, so that this Department may receive an increased number of this class.

At Bayswater, additional officers were appointed, affording more opportunity for the individual treatment of the boys, who were kept busy all the year round at industrial work, school work, and organized games, and a decided improvement was shown in the moral tone of many of them. Major Bray, who was Superintendent for many years, was relieved from direct duty early in the year, with a record of able and tactful management, but he still inspects and kindly assists on behalf of the Salvation Army. He is succeeded in the Superintendency by Major Suttor, who bears a high reputation as a capable manager.

At Wandin Yallock new dormitory accommodation was erected at considerable expense. A competent staff was appointed, including a schoolmaster, who took the boys in hand for a regular course of instruction, and it was gratifying to see the intelligent interest shown by all in their studies. Here, also, the agricultural work was varied, and intelligent methods of teaching adopted.

At Excelsior Home, Brighton, there is no large area of land available for industrial training. The dormitory accommodation consists of single rooms, and close attention is paid to the individual characteristics of the boys; their confidence is won; they are tried in local situations, and eventually secured employment in country homes.

The other institutions are on large farms, but there are but few inmates, the numbers at each sometimes dwindling down to one or two, and seldom rising to more than seven or eight. The boys are here trained, as elsewhere, with the one object in view—that they may take their place in the community as decent, capable workmen. Kingsbury is especially distinguished for the kindly and paternal treatment of the boys, many of whom return there to spend the Christmas holidays, and demonstrate the permanency of their reformation.

In the Girls' Reformatories the industrial training consists of laundry work, dressmaking, cooking, and general housework. The majority of the girls before committal have led a very irregular life, and it is found by experience that they are more adapted for domestic service than for any other occupation.

Biddell's Creek and Murrumbeena are under the control of the Salvation Army. The former is for the worse class of girls, and the latter for younger and less depraved offenders. These institutions are exceedingly well managed; the matrons in charge have considerable experience, and adopt a kindly and tactful way with the girls, and discipline is well maintained.

At Mintaro Reformatory, for Protestant girls, satisfactory results were obtained in placing girls in service homes, and liberality was shown in providing them with many articles in excess of the regulation "kit." At the same time, there was considerable want of judgment shown in dealing with some of the inmates; the staff had no rational views of discipline, and the supervision was lax, all due to inexperience in dealing with the class of girls under care. This condition could not be overlooked, and a new matron will be appointed and a change of staff made.

Oakleigh Convent has been receiving Roman Catholic girls for some years, and it is gratifying to find that the management keeps up to the high level of previous years. The girls look bright and healthy, and contented in their surroundings.

As regards St. Ann's, at Heywood, it is not intended to send any more girls there. This place served a useful purpose some years ago as an adjunct to "Brookside," but there is now room for all girls in the institutions near Melbourne.

Only one death occurred amongst female wards of the Reformatory Schools; she was suffering from tuberculosis, and was sent to the Austin Hospital, where she died.

During the year four boys, who had absconded from one of the reformatories, complained that they had been harshly treated and badly fed. All had bad records, but inquiry was at once made into the matter. There appeared to be no grounds for this particular complaint, but the Superintendent seemed to hold strict views of discipline, and did not win the boys' confidence. A more friendly and sociable relationship has since been established.

An all round improvement in the methods of training was apparent in the reformatories, but, in my opinion, further progress would be made by the introduction of the "mark" system. This would appear to be the best plan of all to stimulate the boys and girls to good conduct and industry, and involving a consequent decrease in punishments. The system would require to be very carefully and sympathetically carried out, and should be of great value in bringing into prominence the characteristics of each boy and girl, and their progress towards a healthy feeling of self-reliance and self-respect, and more quickly qualifying them for discharge to private employment.

The system was lately tried at Wandin Yallock with good results, but that institution is to be voluntarily closed shortly, and so the matter ends there. I purpose, however, ascertaining the views of the other superintendents and matrons, as I feel that the matter should no longer remain in abeyance.

Children on Probation.—The authority given under the Act to place "neglected children" and reformatory wards with relatives or friends on trial is a very useful provision, as the children remain subject to supervision, and may at any time be returned to the Department if their conduct is not good, or the home surroundings are unsatisfactory. On 31st December, 1904, 769 neglected children and 33 reformatory wards were being maintained under these conditions by their friends, without cost to the State.

Inspection.—The Ladies' Committees continue to render indispensable assistance to the Department in the selection and supervision of homes for the children, and in furnishing periodical reports. An idea of the extent of their labours can be gained by a perusal of the annexed report of the Geelong Committee. In the absence of Lady Correspondents, clergymen and other gentlemen have kindly placed their services at the disposal of the Department; State-school teachers also supply valuable information regarding school children, and the police make prompt and intelligent inquiries into any matter placed in their hands. The Inspector visits all the reformatories and other institutions, and two Visiting Officers on the departmental staff are engaged all the year round in visiting and reporting on the wards of the State who are in foster or service homes, or on probation with friends.

The Department received with great regret notification of the death of Mrs. Davison, Lady Correspondent of the Committee for the Geelong District. Mrs. Davison for many years undertook a large amount of clerical and other labour in this district in the interests of the children, for whose welfare she was always anxious. Her services were highly appreciated by all who came in contact with her.

Mortality.—There were 39 deaths during the year, 37 being "neglected" children, and two reformatory wards. This is a very satisfactory record, considering the large number of children under care, and their neglected condition before committal, many of the infants being in a dying state when received

at the depôt. Nurse Thom, in charge of the nursery at the Royal Park Depôt, deserves to be mentioned for her kind and intelligent care of the children in her anxious endeavours to bring them into a healthy condition prior to boarding-out.

Maintenance Collections.—The amount collected from relatives during the year for maintenance of children amounted to £1,388 17s., being an increase of £162 5s. 9d. as compared with last year. Neglectful parents are, as far as possible, forced to contribute towards the maintenance of their children whilst in the Department's care.

Expenditure.—The net cost of the Department, after taking credit for the collections paid into the Treasury, was £61,687 9s., showing a decrease of £4,423 11s. 4d. as compared with the previous year.

The great falling-off in the number of committals, and consequent decrease in boarding-out expenses, would account for the reduced expenditure.

Societies dealing with Neglected Children under Part VIII. of Act 1121.—Table 5 will show the extent of the work carried on by these societies. Good work is undoubtedly done in caring for waifs and strays, many of whom would otherwise have to be maintained by the State. At the same time, as the State vests the managers of these societies with the control of the children during their minority, it would seem advisable that an officer of the State should periodically visit the institutions, examine the records, and ascertain the provision made for the education and kind treatment of the children, and the supervision exercised when they are placed in homes, or otherwise disposed of. This close inspection does not appear to be provided for under the present regulations.

Children's Courts.—No action has as yet been taken in the direction of establishing separate courts for the hearing of children's cases. These courts have been opened in South Australia for many years, and it is proposed to establish them in New South Wales and Queensland. In England, America, and Canada, where they are in operation, they are spoken of as a conspicuous success, and it is hoped that consideration will be given to the matter in this State. I may mention that I understand some of the magisterial benches here now use their discretionary power in dealing with juveniles apart from adults. I am not sure if the police, however, take full advantage of the regulation made under the provision of section 19 of the Neglected Children's Act, by which a child may be forthwith remanded to the Receiving Depôt, Royal Park, until the case is heard and disposed of, and if it is not practicable to place it in the depôt, the constable may arrange to place the child with some respectable private person, or in his own dwelling, if a married man, until the charge is decided. This obviates the necessity of taking a child to the watchhouse or gaol pending disposal.

I beg to thank the office staff for the prompt and intelligent discharge of their duties, evincing in every way interest in the welfare of the children.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. DAVIS,

Secretary and Inspector.

The Honorable, The Chief Secretary,
Melbourne.

TABLE I.—STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FOR 1904.

	Neglected.			Reformatory.			Grand Total.
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
ADMISSIONS.							
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1903 ...	2,697	2,348	5,045	165	151	316	5,361
New committals ...	222	160	382	37	13	50	432
Transfers from Gaol ...	...	...	...	12	1	13	13
" " Neglected Children's Department ...	...	...	...	11	20	31	31
" " Reformatory Department ...	12	...	12	...	...	...	12
Returned absconders ...	9	...	9	12	2	14	23
Total ...	2,940	2,508	5,448	237	187	424	5,872
DISCHARGES.							
By Order of the Governor in Council ...	117	114	231	7	3	10	241
" Death ...	23	14	37	1	1	2	39
" Effluxion of time ...	135	87	222	52	38	90	312
" Transfer to Neglected Children's Department ...	...	...	...	12	...	12	12
" " Reformatory Department ...	11	20	31	...	...	...	31
" " Lunatic Asylum ...	1	5	6	...	...	...	6
" " Blind ...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1
Absconders during 1904 not returned ...	29	2	31	21	2	23	54
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1904 ...	2,623	2,266	4,889	144	143	287	5,176
Total ...	2,940	2,508	5,448	237	187	424	5,872
LOCATION.							
* Maintained in foster-homes ...	1,668	1,486	3,154	...	...	...	3,154
" " institutions ...	34	98	132	94	95	189	321
In service homes ...	494	332	826	24	38	62	888
" Probation homes with relatives, without cost to the State ...	425	314	769	25	8	33	802
" Hospitals ...	1	3	4	...	2	2	6
" On a visit to friends ...	1	3	4	1	...	1	5
Total ...	2,623	2,266	4,889	144	143	287	5,176

* In addition to the e, 44 (5 males, 39 females), who are free from legal control are still being maintained by the State, as they are incapacitated.

TABLE II.—AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO THE CARE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN 1904.

	AGES.																	Total.
	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.	
Neglected ...	91	22	27	30	29	23	18	19	17	18	21	15	13	11	9	16	3	382
Reformatory ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	5	5	6	9	10	24	63
Total ...	91	22	27	30	29	23	18	19	17	19	24	20	18	17	18	26	27	445
RELIGIONS AND BIRTHPLACES.																		
	Number Committed.	Religions.		Birthplaces.														
		Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Australia.	America.	Unknown.												
Neglected ...	382	244	138	375	1	6												
Reformatory ...	63	46	17	63	...	...										
Totals ...	445	290	155	438	1	6												

TABLE III.—DEATHS DURING 1904.

AGES OF DECEASED.

—		Under 1 year.	1 to 2	3 to 4	4 to 5	6 to 7	7 to 8	8 to 9	9 to 10	10 to 11	12 to 13	13 to 14	15 to 16	16 to 17	17 to 18	Total.
Neglected .. ..	..	19	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	37
Reformatory .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	2
Total .. ..	..	19	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	3	39

LENGTH OF TIME UNDER CARE OF DEPARTMENT.

—		5 days.	8 days.	11 days.	14 days.	16 days.	18 days.	3 weeks.	5 weeks.	2 months.	3 months.	4 months.	6 months.	8 months.	12 months.	15 months.	2 years.	3 years.	4 years.	7 years.	9 years.	10 years.	11 years.	13 years.	15 years.	16 years.	Total.	
Neglected	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	37
Reformatory .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total .. ..	..	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	39

PLACES WHERE CHILDREN DIED.

Neglected.

11 boarded out in foster homes.
 6 boarded out with mother.
 1 boarded out, Foundling Hospital, Broadmeadows.
 10 at Depôt.
 5 in probation homes.
 1 in Haven Maternity Home, North Fitzroy.
 1 in Melbourne Hospital.
 1 in Bendigo Hospital.
 1 in service.

37

Reformatory.

1 in Austin Hospital.
 1 in Alfred Hospital.

2

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Neglected.

3 gastro enteritis.
 1 pneumonia.
 4 drowning.
 1 athrepsia.
 4 tuberculosis.
 1 suffocation.
 3 diarrhœa.
 2 heart disease.
 1 thrown from a horse.
 2 marasmus.
 1 congenital debility.

Total .. 37

1 diphtheria.
 1 diphtheritic croup.
 1 croup.
 2 atrophy and exhaustion.
 2 tubercular meningitis.
 1 consumption of brain.
 1 hip disease.
 1 rheumatic fever.
 3 asthenia.
 1 enterocolitis.

Reformatory.

2 tuberculosis.

Out of the 37 neglected children who died, 14 were committed during 1904.

TABLE IV.—PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMMITTED TO DEPARTMENT IN 1904.

Particulars supplied with Order of Committal.	Neglected.	Reformatory.	Total.
Parents dead	11	5	16
" unknown	9	...	9
" deserted	4	1	5
" drunkards	6	...	6
" poor, of good character	34	27	61
Father dead; Mother poor, of good character	71	6	77
" " in lunatic asylum	1	...	1
" " in hospital	3	...	3
" " deserted	1	...	1
" " a drunkard	9	2	11
" " immoral	1	...	1
" " of doubtful character ... ..	...	1	1
Father deserted; Mother poor, of good character	88	3	91
" " dead	11	...	11
" " in hospital	9	1	10
" " in lunatic asylum	3	...	3
" " in gaol	3	...	3
" " imbecile	2	...	2
" " a drunkard	1	1	2
" " immoral	12	1	13
Father poor; Mother dead	12	6	18
" " weakminded ... ..	...	2	2
" " a drunkard	6	2	8
" " deserted	3	...	3
" " in gaol	1	...	1
" " immoral	1	...	1
Father in gaol; Mother poor, of good character	10	...	10
" " dead	1	...	1
Father unknown; Mother poor, of good character	5	...	5
" " in lunatic asylum	2	...	2
" " dead	7	...	7
" " imbecile	4	...	4
" " deserted	7	...	7
" " in gaol	6	...	6
" " immoral	5	...	5
Father a drunkard; Mother poor, of good character	2	5	7
" " dead	4	...	4
" " an invalid	1	...	1
" " deserted	3	...	3
Father in lunatic asylum; Mother poor, of good character	13	...	13
" " " deserted	2	...	2
Father an invalid; Mother poor, of good character	5	...	5
Father a cripple; Mother poor, of good character	1	...	1
Father in hospital; Mother poor, of good character	2	...	2
Total	382	63	445

TABLE V.—WORK OF SOCIETIES AND PERSONS REGISTERED UNDER PART VIII. OF THE NEGLECTED CHILDREN'S ACT.

Name of Society or Person	Number under Supervision on 31.12.03.	Admissions during 1904.			Number under Supervision on 31.12.04.
		Court Committals.	Transfer of Guardianship.	Voluntary Admissions.	
Presbyterian and Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society ...	342	12	19	19	348
Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society	788	1	10	77	823
Wesleyan Neglected Children's Aid Society	226	33	6	13	264
Church of England Children's Aid Society	69*	3	3	2	77
Clifden Home, Wedderburn ...	92	...	...	9	100
Gordon Institute, Melbourne ...	150	5	24	23	160
Mr. W. M. Forster (Try Society, Surrey-road, Hawksburn ...)	62	2	...	62	68
Burwood Boys' Home ...	58	...	13	6	41
Geelong Try Boys' Brigade ...	137	...	...	53	186
Latrobe-street Ragged School Mission ...	86	1	2	67	106
Mrs. Ida Berry (Rescue Home, Ballarat)	11	1	1	...	10
Rev. G. H. Coe, Central Methodist Mission	17	...	14	5	30
Mrs. Goldspink, 285 Rathdown-street, Carlton ...	113	14	10	32	165
Fitzroy Streets Mission ...	25	...	...	...	25
Total ...	2,176	72	102	368	2,403

* Wrongly shown as 37 in 1903 Report.

TABLE VI.—TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN—NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY.

Neglected Children.	Average strength.	Items of Expenditure.												Total.
		Provisions.	Clothing and Bedding.	Fuel, Light, and Water.	Stores, Stock, &c.	Medical Attendance, &c.	Incidentals, &c.	Transport and Travelling Expenses.	Telephone Service.	Salaries.	Postage and Telegrams.	Maintenance.		
		£ 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.
Boys' and Girls' Receiving Depôts	86	466 19 6	38 7 10	329 5 6	141 1 0	52 11 5	197 15 0	..	..	1,429 15 10	..	..	..	2,655 16 1
Abbotsford Industrial School	60	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	841 10 9	..	841 10 9
Training Home for Girls	49.5	..	..	..	..	14 17 3	..	..	..	..	..	412 7 7	..	427 4 10
Service Children	..	..	521 19 8	..	..	..	1,058 2 10*	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,580 2 6
Boarded-out Children	3,219	..	707 9 3	..	..	2,271 11 1	..	846 8 8	..	..	..	43,408 0 4	..	47,233 9 4
Telephone Service	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18 16 10	..	..	..	..	38 16 10
Total ...	3,404.5	466 19 6	1,267 16 9	329 5 6	141 1 0	2,338 19 9	197 15 0	1,904 11 6	18 16 10	1,429 15 10	..	44,661 18 8	..	52,777 0 4
Reformatory Children.														
Oakleigh	22	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	523 19 11	..	523 19 11
St. Ann's	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	57 13 8	..	57 13 8
Riddell's Creek	68	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,773 8 7	..	1,773 8 7
Mintaro	18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	475 1 5	..	475 1 5
Excelsior Home	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	360 9 1	..	360 9 1
Wandin Yallock	19	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	483 3 9	..	483 3 9
Kingsbury	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	98 0 5	..	98 0 5
Straight View Farm	4.5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	119 16 1	..	119 16 1
Mount Paradise	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	134 9 3	..	134 9 3
Bayswater	43	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,120 0 9	..	1,120 0 9
Service Children	..	..	223 15 11	..	..	..	..	308 18 0	..	..	..	..	..	532 14 9
Telephone Service	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	105 11 0	..	..	..	..	105 11 0
Total ...	199.5	..	223 15 11	..	..	..	..	308 18 0	105 11 0	..	..	5,746 11 11	..	5,784 17 8
Head Office	..	..	..	27 11 0	116 19 11	..	155 11 6	..	..	3,971 18 0	296 1 6	..	..	4,568 1 11
Grand Total ...	3,604	466 19 6	1,491 12 8	356 16 6	258 0 11	2,338 19 9	9 353 6 0	2,213 10 4	144 7 10	5,401 13 10	296 1 6	49,808 10 7	..	63,129 19 11
<i>Deduct—</i> Amount received for Maintenance of Children £1,388 17 0 All other receipts, £53 13 11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,442 10 11
Net cost	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	61,687 9 0

* £700 4s. 5d. of this expenditure was incurred under Part VIII. of the Neglected Childrens Act.

REPORTS ON SCHOOLS.

REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE, ROYAL PARK RECEIVING DEPÔTS.

We have the honour to report that the Committee have visited and inspected the several departments of the Institution regularly. The Committee desire to assist the Department to make this Depôt and school a model for the State. There are splendid opportunities, a splendid estate, and with good management it ought to make for improvement in the lives of those passing through it. Difficulties have been met with, but the Committee have received the hearty co-operation of the attendants in the carrying out of their suggestions. We have to regret the loss by death of Mrs. E. Nolan, and Mr. D. Brodie, J.P., who did valuable service.

J. C. LANGLEY, Chairman.
R. LORD, Correspondent.

RECEIVING DEPÔTS, ROYAL PARK.

I have the honour to submit for your information, a report on the operations at the Depôts for the year 1904.

The health of the children has been very good, and discipline well maintained.

The Rev. W. L. Langley, of St. George's, Royal Park, and the Rev. Father Gleeson, with the Sisters of Mercy, have been very attentive to the religious instruction of the children of their respective denominations.

I have again to thank the daughters of the late Mr. Petersen for their kindly gift of toys to the children at Christmas.

JANE WILSON, Matron.

BOYS' RECEIVING DEPÔT.

SUMMARY OF BOYS RECEIVED AND DISCHARGED AT THE BOYS' DEPÔT, ROYAL PARK, DURING THE YEAR 1904.

NEGLECTED CHILDREN.

ADMISSIONS.				DISCHARGES.			
Remaining on 31/12/03	...	...	37	Service	...	...	171
Service	...	...	120	Boarded out	...	...	135
Boarded out	...	...	90	Remands	...	...	67
New Committals	...	...	83	Probation	...	...	16
Remands	...	...	68	Hospitals	...	...	3
Probation	...	...	20	Discharges	...	...	3
Absconding	...	...	29	Absconders	...	...	15
Hospitals	...	...	4	Transfers to other institutions	...	...	9
Transfers from Girls' Depôt	...	...	1	Lunatic Asylum	...	...	1
				Remaining on 31/12/04	...	...	32*
Total	...	...	452	Total	...	...	452

* Including one who is free from legal control, but is incapacitated, and two who were on remand.

REFORMATORY CHILDREN.

ADMISSIONS.				DISCHARGES.			
Remaining on 31/12/03	...	...	2	Transfers to other institutions	...	...	50
New committals	...	...	37	Service	...	...	5
Absconders	...	...	27	Probation	...	...	1
Probation	...	...	1	Absconders	...	...	6
Transfers from other reformatories	...	...	2	Discharges	...	...	2
Hospitals	...	...	1	Remaining on 31/12/04	...	...	6
Totals	...	...	70	Totals	...	...	70

GIRLS' RECEIVING DEPÔT.

SUMMARY OF GIRLS RECEIVED AND DISCHARGED AT THE GIRLS' DEPÔT, ROYAL PARK, DURING THE YEAR 1904.

NEGLECTED CHILDREN.

ADMISSIONS.				DISCHARGES.			
Remaining on 31/12/03	...	...	30	Boarding out	...	...	198
New committals	...	...	168	Service	...	...	83
Received on remand	...	...	67	Probation	...	...	8
Boarding out	...	...	81	Visits	...	...	5
Service	...	...	96	Transfers to other institutions	...	...	53
Hospitals	...	...	6	Remand	...	...	55
Visits	...	...	3	Died*	...	...	13
Transfers from other institutions	...	...	4	Remaining on 31/12/04	...	...	40†
Totals	...	...	455	Totals	...	...	455

* Including three who were on remand.

† Including three who were free from legal control, but are incapacitated, and seven on remand.

REFORMATORY CHILDREN.

ADMISSIONS.				DISCHARGES.			
Remaining on 31/12/03	...	...	1	Transfers to other institutions	...	...	10
New committals	...	...	10	Final discharges	...	...	2
Transfers from other institutions	...	...	2	Service	...	...	1
Probation	...	...	1	Absconded	...	...	1
Absconding	...	...	1	Remaining on 31/12/04	...	...	1
Total	...	...	15	Total	...	...	15

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, ABBOTSFORD, FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC GIRLS.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1904.
The number of girls remaining in the home on 31st December, 1903, was 46.

ADMISSIONS.				DISCHARGES.			
Remaining in school, 1/1/04....	...	...	46	Sent to service (including girls eligible on re-admission)	...	...	58
Admitted (including re-admissions)	...	...	44	Probation	...	...	1
Transfers from Depôt	...	...	15	Transfers to Reformatory	...	...	2
				Remaining on 31/12/04.	...	...	44
Total	...	...	105	Total	...	...	105

For the year ended 31st December, 1904, I am pleased to be able to report satisfactorily with regard to the general conduct and health of the girls of this school. Little worthy of note has occurred except that a special class of Domestic Economy was established in June (for the better training of the girls) under the direction of Miss Glennen, Principal of the College of Domestic Economy, South Yarra. At the end of the term, theoretical and practical examinations were held by the ladies from the training college. The prizes and certificates awarded, were graciously distributed by Lady Talbot to the successful candidates. The first prize for cookery was won by a ward of the Industrial School. Every afternoon the pupils practice what has been taught under the direction of the sisters. The term for cookery lessons having expired, a class for millinery and dressmaking was formed, which we feel confident will prove most useful in after life. We take this opportunity of publicly thanking our many generous friends who have on many occasions given pleasure to the little ones by their visits and presents.

MARY V. KENNEDY, Provincial Superioress.

TRAINING HOME FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS, EAST MELBOURNE.

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

The health of the inmates has been excellent.

The conduct in the Home has been good. One or two girls at service have behaved badly, and the Committee were obliged to send them away.

The service girls are staying out well, and in most cases are giving satisfaction.

Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood, Dr. Percy Webster, and Dr. Clara Stone, have been kind and attentive when necessary, also Mr. Fred. Baker, the honorary dentist. Dr. W. R. Boyd is now on the staff, so far we have not needed his services.

The Committee feel very grateful to the many friends who have sent donations in money and kind. We received presents as usual in memory of the late Mr. William Peterson.

LILIAN M. WATSON, Matron.

MINTARO REFORMATORY FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS, MONNEGATTA.

In reviewing the first year's work, we have great cause for thankfulness.

The health of the inmates has been very good, and the improvement in the morals and general behaviour of the girls very marked. Instead of the profane language that used to be so prevalent, the girls sing merrily at their work, and severe punishment has rarely to be resorted to.

All the different departments of the work have been well sustained during the year, and careful instruction and training by qualified sisters have been imparted in such branches as general house-work, cooking, dairying, sewing, laundry work, and light gardening.

Our staff has never been less during the year than five sisters, and as the average number of girls in the Home has been about seventeen, it has been possible for the sisters to make a study of each girl's character and temperament, and so achieve much by personal influence over each girl.

At present we have eight girls doing well in good situations; three others have been returned for various reasons, and one absconded from her situation.

The total number of girls placed under our charge during the year was 31, and for 12 of these good situations were found, thus indicating an honest attempt on our part to give the girls a good start in life again.

All the dresses, underclothing, &c., used in the Home are made by the girls, with the help, and under the guidance of, the sisters. Knitting and drawn-thread work are also taught.

On Xmas Eve, the girls enjoyed a beautiful Xmas Tree; each one receiving presents sent for them by sympathizing friends. A magic lantern was also shown, and on Boxing Day, they had a picnic.

We are particularly attentive to the moral and religious side of the work, and have been greatly cheered in it.

EMMA BICKFORD, Matron.

RIDDELL'S CREEK REFORMATORY FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1904.

The progress made throughout the year by the girls in this Reformatory in connexion with their work and general behaviour has been very encouraging.

There have been a few very troublesome ones who have caused us a great deal of anxiety; but even these are gradually becoming amenable to discipline, and we are very hopeful concerning their future welfare.

Two girls whose terms had expired, and for whom we were still caring, died just at the close of the year. They were both ready for their Heavenly Home.

Throughout the year, kind friends have, as usual, visited the Reformatory and brought much cheer and blessing to the girls. Commissioner and Mrs. McKie are greatly interested in them, and spare no efforts to raise and inspire each girl with high and noble ambitions.

Games of various kinds, both indoor and out, are thoroughly enjoyed by the girls, and prove helpful factors in our management of them.

During the year, a new cottage has been added to our already commodious building, and will, no doubt, prove to be of real benefit to us.

The girls sent out to situations have done well, and, as a rule, give great satisfaction to their mistresses.

CLARA LANE, Matron.

SUB-REFORMATORY AT MURRUMBEENA FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS.

I have the honour to submit my report for 1904.

The work has progressed during the year, although there is not much of special interest to record.

The general health of the girls has been good, and those who have been placed in situations have done well.

The usual treats and picnics have been provided and enjoyed by the girls, especially the Christmas festivities provided by Mrs. Commissioner McKie, who takes a deep interest in each girl.

The kindness of Dr. H. Murray, of Caulfield, and Mr. Haworth (dentist), of Collins-street, continues to be a source of satisfaction and gratitude.

The work of developing the character of these girls, and creating within them pure aspirations and right conceptions of life and duty, at times seems to bear but little fruit, but we believe that the constant example and the pure influences surrounding them, aided by the spirit of God, is accomplishing more than appears on the surface.

With this confidence, we are happy to toil on, seeking always the highest interests of those committed to our care.

ANNIE COWDEN, Matron.

OAKLEIGH REFORMATORY FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC GIRLS.

I have the honour to forward you my report for the year ended 31.12.1904.

During that time little of note has occurred to break the usual round of daily school life.

The girls have been very happy and contented, and the general health excellent. Dr. F. E. Dunkley and Mr. McGregor (dentist) have been most attentive in all cases requiring their care.

Lady Talbot and Miss Grosvenor paid an impromptu visit towards the end of the year, and expressed themselves well pleased with the general appearance of the girls and the various branches of work taught.

Eight girls were placed in service, and, with one exception, all gave satisfaction.

In conclusion, I beg to thank the Visiting Committee, who take great interest in the school, and provide yearly a very agreeable picnic; also the many kind friends for their useful gifts at Christmas-tide.

MARY A. O'SHEA, Mother Prioress.

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE.

We have paid the annual visit to the Oakleigh Reformatory, conducted by the Nuns of the Good Shepherd, and feel great pleasure in reporting most favorably on the health of the inmates and the excellent arrangements of everything connected with the institution. We repeat the favorable comments of our previous annual visits.

(Signed) H. O'CALLAGHAN,
JAMES HOGAN,
EDWARD O'DONNELL,
M. MORNANE.

BAYSWATER REFORMATORY FOR PROTESTANT BOYS.

I have the honour to place before you the Annual Report for 1904 from the Bayswater Reformatory. This has been a remarkable year as regards the small number of admissions, there being little more than one-fourth the boys received this year that were admitted into the institution during 1903. It is to be hoped that this is a sign that crime amongst juveniles is decreasing. A change in Superintendents has taken place, and I should like to pay a tribute to the outgoing Superintendent, Major Bray. He has spent years of devoted and efficient toil amongst the boys of Victoria. I have received letters from old boys, now residing and prospering in different parts of the Commonwealth, expressing gratitude for the benefits received during their stay in the Home. Better evidence than this as to the permanency of the boys' reformation during Major Bray's superintendence it would be impossible to find. A special feature of the past year has been the establishment of a night school. Almost without exception the boys have readily availed themselves of the opportunity thus afforded, and have shown a very encouraging disposition not to let this—probably their last chance of learning to read and write—slip away. After the school had been in operation for a few months, a great many of the boys' parents wrote, expressing gratification at the improvement that was noticeable in their boys' handwriting.

Due regard has been paid to providing the boys with healthy recreation. A football team has been formed, and matches arranged with the different clubs in the district. One Wednesday or Saturday the boys would be conveyed in two large vans to meet their opponents on the latter's ground, and at a subsequent date the return match would be played on the Institution ground. These football matches were very much appreciated and enjoyed by the boys, not the least part of the enjoyment being the pleasant country drives.

The high standard of agricultural training that has been given in this reformatory in years past has been maintained.

Applications from farmers for boys who were efficient milkers have been more numerous than we could fill. This large number of applications for milkers shows that there is a good opening for lads who are efficient in this respect, so that boys who undergo a course of training here would never go long without remunerative employment. I very heartily thank Mrs. Suttor, Ensign and Mrs. Caisley, and the other officers for their devoted, loyal, and efficient assistance during 1904; and I trust, with the blessing of God, that we shall be able in the coming year to reach the expectation of the present Government, and also of the Government which passed the Juvenile Offenders' Act, as far as the permanent reclamation of the boys is concerned. To do this shall be our constant endeavour.

W. A. SUTTOR, Superintendent.

EXCELSIOR REFORMATORY FOR BOYS, BRIGHTON.

I have the honour to submit my report for year 1904.

The work, conduct, and health have, in my opinion, been very satisfactory. A good report is to hand re the boys at school. The camp was again a great success, five of my old boys, whose terms have expired, spending their holidays with us.

The boys transferred from gaol have done well again this year.

I must again thank Dr. Praagst and Mr. Davey (dentist), and our many friends who have helped to entertain and instruct the boys during the year.

Four of our old boys, whose terms had long expired, came back to the home, and remained with us till suitable work could be found for them.

Mr. Connor, Inspector-General of the Penal Department, and those in authority at the gaols, deserve our thanks for the help they give in every possible way in order that we may be satisfied that the best interests of the public would be subserved by transferring offenders to a reformatory; and I must say that I am quite satisfied in my own mind that many a lad has been saved from going to gaol a second time through the same.

W. GROOM, Superintendent.

WANDIN YALLOCK REFORMATORY FOR PROTESTANT BOYS.

I have the honour to report that the work of the past year has been very similar to previous years.

The health of the boys has not been quite so good, but I attribute this in the first instance to the extreme cold and wet weather, followed by a continuation of hot weather.

We again wish to tender our sincere thanks and gratitude to Dr. Syme, of Lilydale, who gratuitously and kindly treated every case reported to him. In view of the kindly philanthropic spirit shown by Dr. Syme in the interests of the boys, this fact is pleasant to record.

The outdoor work, consisting of farming and dairying, combined with fruitgrowing and gardening, is directed by Mr. Dunstan, who is a practical farmer, and has had long experience with boys.

The schooling, gymnasium, club swinging, dumb-bell exercises, drill, &c., are ably conducted by Mr. Virgo. To the latter is added cricket, football, bicycling, bathing, hunting game, fishing, &c., thus filling up all time and leaving no idle hours wherein mischief can be bred.

The religious exercises morning and evening are conducted alternately by the officers in charge. We attend Divine service once or twice each Sunday, and receive frequent visits from the district clergy.

The boys at service are all reported to be doing well, but I must repeat the old, old story of the boys on probation.

With few exceptions this probation business is simply driving them back to criminal life.

M. McASKELL, Superintendent.

KINGSBURY REFORMATORY AT NEWSTEAD FOR PROTESTANT BOYS.

I have the honour to submit my report for the past year ending 31.12.1904.

The health of the boys has been good on the whole, with the exception of two cases, when it was necessary to see Dr. Eccles, who soon brought them round, for which I sincerely thank him.

The conduct during the year has been fairly good, but there are always some wild ones who never seem to be content till back in town. However, there were only two absconders from service at the close of the year.

There are several of our old lads, up to 26 years of age, remaining in the district where they worked as wards, and who come regularly to visit the home, and often put in a few days' holiday with us.

I am pleased to state that the majority of those at service are doing very well, and at times during the year I was unable to supply boys enough fit for service.

Those with friends on probation are also doing well, and we receive letters regularly from both.

There are at present under control nineteen, viz.:—Seven in the home, nine at service, and three on probation. The terms of four boys expired during the year.

The boys at home are employed at the different kinds of farm and orchard work, ploughing, harvesting, milking, pruning and spraying, fruit-picking, and packing, clearing, digging, and poultry farming.

I desire to thank all your officers who have so kindly assisted me during the year.

A. BREBNER, Superintendent.

STRAIGHT VIEW REFORMATORY AT HARCOURT FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC BOYS.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1904.

The health of the boys has been excellent, both in the home and at service.

The conduct of the boys on the whole has been very fair, with the exception of two, who gave us considerable trouble.

The boys are driven to mass at Castlemaine on Sundays.

PETER McMAHON, Superintendent.

MOUNT PARADISE REFORMATORY AT PAKENHAM, FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC BOYS.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1904.

The health of the boys at service and at home has been good.

The boys transferred from gaol, with one exception, have done well, and are receiving good wages at service, and behaving very satisfactorily.

Christmas and New Year, passed very enjoyably, under the circumstances, for the boys who appreciated the good things provided.

I wish to thank Mr. Mayger (dentist), Pakenham, for attention to the boys' teeth.

J. J. MILLANE, Superintendent.

ALBION HOME, GLENROY, FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS (NEGLECTED).

During the year which has just closed, and for which I have the honour to submit my report, we have had much to encourage us in our work among the girls.

Health.—With the exception of two girls, in both of whom tuberculosis has developed, there has been very little sickness in our Home. Of the two mentioned, one, at the expiration of her time, went to friends; the other is still in the Home. In both the disease was hereditary.

School.—Here several improvements have been effected, the principal being the enlargement of the school-room, additional lighting, and the procuring of new desks. The teaching has also been extended to embrace the sixth standard.

Housework.—The girls are trained in the different branches of housework, it being our endeavour to give each girl an insight into house, kitchen, and laundry work before sending her to a situation.

Recreation.—Healthful games and exercises occupy the girls' spare time. We have to thank several friends for the manner in which they have assisted in giving pleasure to the girls—Mr. Perry for the picnic, Mrs. Commissioner McKie for the limelight and kinematograph entertainment, and those also who helped to make Christmas time one of the happiest the girls had known.

Among the many visitors we have had during the year from this and other States were a number who saw the Home for the first time. Each and all have expressed their delight in it and its environment, opining that it compares favorably with similar institutions in the neighbouring States.

So we commence the new year hopefully, with gratitude to God, who has been with us in the past, and with confidence in Him for the future.

CLARA DENNISON, Matron.

GEELONG BOARDING-OUT COMMITTEE.

I have the honour to submit a brief report of the work of our committee for the year 1904.

Last April we sustained a very severe loss in the death of our much loved and highly esteemed member, Mrs. Davison, who had been correspondent of the committee for twenty-one years.

So thoroughly, and with such devotedness, had she performed the duties of her office that, deprived of her services, we were overwhelmed by our apparently helpless position. However, each member, realizing the difficulties that confronted us, has done her best to carry out the whole of the work of their own districts, with the result that we are now getting on fairly well, and becoming accustomed to the present order of working.

Every lady on the committee takes the deepest interest in the welfare of the children under her supervision.

The medical officers are very attentive to the children requiring their services. Only two cases have been treated at the hospital, where the patients received every care and attention.

During the year we have succeeded in placing twenty-one boys and sixteen girls in situations, where most of them are giving satisfaction, and some doing remarkably well.

Three children have been discharged to relations, five have received their savings and been discharged. All have been advised and encouraged to take care of their money, and add to it.

One death has occurred, that of a little girl accidentally suffocated at her foster mother's home.

We desire to thank you and the officers of the Department for your willing assistance at all times.

I have much pleasure in thanking my committee for their kind sympathy and hearty co-operation.

H. C. HISKENS, Correspondent.