

1912.
VICTORIA.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

R E P O R T

OF THE

SECRETARY AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1911.

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

By Authority:

ALBERT J. MULLETT, ACTING GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

APPROXIMATE COST OF REPORT.

	£	s.	d.
Preparation—Not given.			
Printing (650 copies)	18	0	0

REPORT.

DEPARTMENT FOR NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

Melbourne, 26th June, 1912.

SIR,

I have the honour, in compliance with section 10 of the *Neglected Children's Act*, section 320 of the *Crimes Act* 1890, and Infant Life Protection Acts 1198 and 2102, to submit for your perusal my report on the work of this Department for the year ending 31st December, 1911, with the returns and statement of expenditure and statistical tables pertaining thereto.

Statistical Tables.—As shown by Table 1 the total number of children who were wards of the State on the 31st December, 1910, was 6,860, and on the 31st December, 1911, 7,178, showing an increase of 321.

The committals for the current year were as follows :—

CAUSES OF COMMITTAL.

Neglected.

No means	...	...	...	...	990
Arrears of maintenance	...	...	...	...	236
Dwelling with a drunkard	...	...	...	...	5
Associating with a drunkard	...	...	...	...	1
Dwelling with a prostitute	...	...	...	...	2
Associating with a reputed thief	...	...	...	...	1
Larceny	...	...	...	...	16
Housebreaking	...	...	...	...	2
Vagrancy	...	...	...	...	1
Uncontrollable	...	...	...	...	1
Illegally using a horse	...	...	...	...	1
Transfer from Scots Church	...	...	...	...	1
Transfer from Gordon Institute	...	...	...	...	1
Section 11, Infant Life Protection Act No. 2102	...	...	...	...	4
" 17 " " " " " 1198	...	...	...	...	1
Drunk and disorderly	...	...	...	...	1
Total	...	...	...	...	1,264

Reformatory.

Larceny	...	...	...	...	24
Shopbreaking	...	...	...	...	2
No means	...	...	...	...	5
Housebreaking	...	...	...	...	2
Idle and disorderly	...	...	...	...	2
Behaving indecently in a public place	...	...	...	...	2
Vagrancy	...	...	...	...	1
Wilful damage to property	...	...	...	...	1
Assault...	...	...	...	...	1
Assault on a girl	...	...	...	...	1
Total	...	...	...	...	41

Transfers from Gaol.

Unlawful assault	...	...	...	...	1
Carnally knowing a girl between 10 and 16 years	...	...	...	...	2
Housebreaking and larceny	...	...	...	...	1
Housebreaking	...	...	...	...	1
Attempted horse-stealing	...	...	...	...	1
Unlawfully wounding	1
Larceny	2
Total	8

Transfers from Aborigines Board.

For better care, &c.	1
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The number of Neglected children committed during the year was :— Court committals, 1,023, showing a decrease of that of 1910 ; a decrease also shows in the number of children who became wards of the State through the operation of

section 9 of the Infant Life Protection Act. In 1910 these having being 298, in 1911, 241 ; a decrease of 57. The total number of Neglected children for the year being 1,264 against 1,365 of the previous year.

Of these 1,264 children, 747 were left with their mothers who numbered 292, a decrease of 5.

The accompanying table shows the position of the mothers at the time of their children's committals, and though it seems strange that so many should require the help of the State to rear their families, yet that every case in need of such help is proved by careful investigation.

Particulars showing the number of children committed during 1911 and left with their mothers, also the condition of the latter.

Number of Cases.		Number of Children.	
164	Father dead	Mother poor	423
57	" deserted	" "	124
32	" invalid	" "	96
14	" in gaol	" "	35
10	" in hospital	" "	29
10	" in lunatic asylum	" "	26
2	" a cripple	" "	8
2	" blind	" "	3
1	" too old to work	" "	3
<hr/> 292			<hr/> 747

The number of Reformatory committals show a decided decrease, being 49, against 62 for 1910. Of these, 8 were transferred from gaol and they have been sent to the Reformatories—5 to Excelsior and 3 to Bayswater. Of the 15 transferred from gaol in 1910, 8 are doing fairly well ; of the remainder I cannot give a good account.

It would, I think, be a great advantage if we had a special farm home to which the less promising reformatory cases could be sent. Mr. Adcock, of Rutherglen, is doing good work with the better class of boys, but in my opinion some establishment, such as the Wyuna State farm might be utilized, for it is a necessity. At such a farm, conducted by the State for the purpose of the reformation and the training of lads who have had few advantages and many temptations, excellent work could be done in giving these lads experience of all branches of farm work. I believe that, in this connexion, Wyuna could probably be made self-supporting, and the lads trained there could be equipped to fit them to become good farm workers, and even to take up farming on their account. In this connexion, I might state that the experimental work heretofore carried on at Wyuna could be continued, and would, under the system I suggest, be a means of reducing the expenditure of the place.

The total committals each year since 1900 are :—

1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.
874	1,152	842	397	382	493	702	707	1,178	1,219	1,365.

Mortality.—The total number of deaths for 1911 was 90, (viz., 1·31 per cent.) of the total number under supervision. Fifty-seven of these were under twelve months and 47 of the 57 under three months. The medical officer states in his report that "It has to be recognised that a definite proportion of these infants are doomed before admission, either by reason of certain inherited diseases, defects or malformation, or from their assimilative powers being destroyed by previous ill-feeding or starvation."

Expenditure.—The expenditure during the year was £97,883 12s. 3d. being an increase of £8,185 1s., over that for the previous year. The expenditure in connexion with Neglected children was £87,171 6s. 10d., and for Reformatory children, £3,562 13s. 4d., the expenses of administration accounting for £7,149 12s. 1d. This is the third successive year in which there has been a large increase in expenditure due to the continued rise in the numbers of children committed to the care of the Department.

There was an average number of 6,771 Neglected children under supervision during the year (including those at service and on probation) the cost being £11 8s. 4d. per head, and an average of 176 Reformatory children costing £20 4s. 11d. per head.

Collection of Maintenance.—The amount collected for the maintenance of children for the year was £4,070 5s. 6d., being an increase of £577 11s. above the preceding year. The policy of arranging for the voluntary contributions of maintenance payments under the Infant Life Protection Act has been justified by the results, the amount received in these cases without publicity or court proceedings being £1,868 8s. 5d.

The number of cases in which families are deserted by their fathers, and seek aid from the Department, is about the same as last year, and represents 124 children. We are practically powerless to reach the defaulting father, should he leave the State, until there is some amendment of the present Act on the lines suggested in my previous report.

The total number of children who were a cost to the State on 31st December, 1910 and 1911 respectively, was—

NEGLECTED.		1910.	1911.	REFORMATORY.		1910.	1911.
Boarded-out	...	4,875	5,316				
In institutions	...	324	318			122	97
Total	...	5,199	5,634				

Of these 5,316, 2,778 were placed in foster homes, and 2,358 left with their mothers. The mothers number 1,083, as against 994 for the previous year.

Service.—In 1911, 202 children were placed in service homes for the first time. Boys, 111; girls, 91.

In regard to the choice of homes one can only repeat the statement of last year, that, in the great majority of cases, inspection and visitation prove the homes to be of a desirable class. There has been no difficulty in securing good homes, because we can pick and choose, as, as in previous years, the demand for the services of the wards far exceeds the supply.

The officers have done their best to secure good wages terms, but have not lost sight of the fact, that a good home with good training and a helpful moral environment is of more value than money.

Once again I would bring under notice the desirability of withholding the savings of ex-wards until they reach 21 years, at least in those cases where it is apparent that the young people are of a thriftless tendency; and the need for a larger measure of Industrial Training opportunities, and for a training farm for backward boys is still ever in my thought.

The health of the girls and boys at service has been, on the whole, good. In sickness the children are invariably treated with kindness and consideration by their employers, who occasionally are put to some expense and inconvenience. Under the service conditions the employer is responsible for expense on account of doctor and medicine, and this is an aspect of the agreement that has to be taken account of in determining the rate of wages. The amount banked by the Department to the credit of the service children for the year amounted to £2,731 4s. 9d. The balance at credit at the end of the year was £8,930 19s. 11d.

The following analysis of the boys' service homes is appended. It shows the class of home and employment to which new boys were sent during 1911 :—

General farm homes	...	...	...	64
Dairy farms	..	..	..	8
Orchardist	...	...	...	5
Grazier	...	...	...	4
Viticultural College	...	..	...	4
Printer	...	...	...	3
Boot manufacturer	...	...	...	2
Warehouse	...	...	...	2
Engineering...	...	...	...	2
Coachsmith	...	...	...	1
Painter	...	...	...	1
Draper	...	...	...	1
Stovemaking	...	...	..	1
Vignerons	...	...	..	1
Butcher	...	...	...	1
Dispensary	...	...	...	1
*Various	...	...	...	10
Total	...	...	...	111

* For the most part left with foster parents on service conditions, with a small wage, employed in light duties, and sometimes continued at school.

Educational.—I would point out the practice of providing facilities for the deserving and industrious of the wards of the State to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the higher education is an innovation in this department, and one thoroughly justified by its results. I am very pleased with the progress, and the increase in number, of the children who are being educated at the High Schools. Those who have proved themselves ambitious and possessed of unusual ability are given every opportunity of advancing. One is attending the High School at Wangaratta, one at Melbourne, two at Geelong, one at Ballarat, one at Castlemaine, and one at grammar school. One boy whom I placed as a student at the Melbourne High School has gained his junior public examination within the two years, having passed in Latin, English, French, algebra, with distinction in history, geometry, and arithmetic. This boy has received uniformly good reports from the principal of the college. Another of the boys who passed through the High School is now a junior teacher in the service of the Education Department, and is very favorably reported upon. Another case I might mention is a boy who has won a Sunday-school scholarship of £50 per annum for two years. He has been sent to a college for the first year, with the intention of placing him the second year at a business college, thus giving him a good start in life. Another lad, who is crippled, and thereby debarred from entering an ordinary occupation, is at present receiving tuition in shorthand and typewriting at a country centre. He should, later on, be enabled to support himself on nearly equal terms with those who have not had to labour under his deformity.

Special opportunities have been given to a number of boys who have been apprenticed to the several trades for which they have shown aptitude. These cases show that the wards of the State, compared with other children, do not labour under unnecessary disabilities, but that their interests are studied and prospects in life kept in view by the Department.

Boarded-out with Foster Parents.—In connexion with the work of boarding-out wards I cannot but acknowledge the sterling worth of the lady correspondents who have given up their time and their abilities in this service—a service purely honorary—and whose efforts have been the means of saving the Department a very great expenditure. Mrs. Aitken, of Castlemaine, who is resigning the post of lady correspondent, served the Department in that capacity for over 20 years, giving the benefit of her wise and judicious experience, and displaying at all times a careful consideration of the welfare of the wards in her district and of the interest of the Department.

The average number placed out for 1911 was 5,267.

Seven hundred and twenty-three children were this year placed on probation with friends or relatives who were willing to take charge of them, free of cost to the State. In many cases these homes have proved satisfactory, the children being treated as members of the family, in fact not knowing but that they really belonged to the family. In each case on the child leaving school, the friends or relatives have provided a trade or suitable occupation.

Some provision should certainly be made for backward and feeble-minded children who are not fit subjects for the idiot asylum and still require special attention and special educational facilities. That there should be some home to which these children should be sent is recognised, yet the question is hedged round with difficulties, for amongst this class are "backward" children, "very backward" children, and some who are mentally weak. It would, in my opinion, be a great mistake to house these in one home for fear of constant contact would have a bad affect on those who were only "backward." However, this matter is now in the hands of a committee, and it is to be hoped that something will be done during the coming year.

Clifton Home (Wedderburn), which is carried on by Miss Colvin and Miss Bromley under Part VIII. of the *Neglected Children's Act*, has for some years been available by the Department as a foster-home for delicate children—for the most part suffering from chest and tubercular diseases—on account of the dry and equable climate. It is a home in the best sense of the word, and the ladies named endear themselves to all by their whole-hearted kindness and sympathy. On the 31st December those being paid for by the Department numbered eight, who had been placed there under ordinary boarding-out conditions.

It is with pleasure I acknowledge the assistance received by this Department from kindred bodies and Associations, and the officers thereof, in other States. Mr. Green, of New South Wales, and Mr. Gray, of South Australia, have given the Department the benefit of their experience wherever possible, and the Police Departments of the various States, as well as our own, have also co-operated with the Department as far as lay in their power.

Receiving Depôt, Royal Park.—The sewerage works in the girl's division have been completed, and the alterations in laundry and drying room have made a great improvement. The kitchen is in need of alteration. A new kitchen, or the fitting up of the present one with modern appliances, is necessary. The plans of the new Nursery and Isolation Ward are now being prepared, and it is to be hoped that these buildings will be completed before next summer. The want of conveniences in this direction has been long and urgently felt, and their erection will certainly be a great boon to the Depôt.

A Gymnasium for boys is much needed, especially in the long winter evenings. A store room is also urgently required, the one now in use being both unsuitable and inadequate to the requirements.

A Kindergarten for the little ones is another urgent want. It is recognised that the training of young children on these lines keeps them both employed and amused.

To insure the safety of the buildings from the risk of fire certain alterations in the dispositions of the stand-pipes are necessary. I have already brought these matters under notice, and trust the required expenditure will soon be authorized.

19,562 quarts of milk were supplied from the farm during the year, and this was ample for all requirements. This full supply of fresh milk twice daily is of inestimable value to the young and sickly infants. A good supply of vegetables was also provided from the garden (11,912 lbs). The work of the farm and garden provides good healthy occupation for boys while detained at the Depôt.

From time to time comments of certain visitors to the Depôt have appeared in the press, in some cases in so exaggerated a form as to mislead and prejudice the mind of the public. In more than one instance it has been asserted that girls of an age to earn their own living have been kept at the Depôt for an indefinite period, so as to do the work and save the Department the cost of attendants. This is incorrect. In every case where a girl has been kept there for any length of time, it has been either for medical attention or for her own safeguarding.

Another misleading statement was made some time ago concerning the bathing accommodation for boys, which said only two bath-rooms were provided for 60 boys. There are certainly only two bath-rooms, but they each contain one plunge, and one spray bath and shower (hot and cold water). There is ample bathing accommodation for at least 60 boys; the average never exceeds 35.

There are numbers of statements which I could contradict. It seems a pity that such statements should be circulated, and a bad impression upon the public mind.

With regard to the appointment of nurses and attendants, I wish again to point out that those appointed do not in all cases possess the qualifications that should be considered essential. If it is necessary to insist upon certain acquirements and qualifications in candidates for employment in the Penal Establishments and Asylums for the Insane, it is not, I think, less necessary that nurses and attendants of this Department should also possess equal if not higher qualifications. In all cases I think it absolutely necessary that candidates for employment should have a certificate of fitness from this Department.

Rutherglen Viticultural College.—Four new boys were sent to the College this year, making a total of 24. The boys certainly receive an excellent training at the College. On my visits I am surprised to see the improvement in the boys, for though they are all of good moral character, no doubt a large percentage are rough diamonds when sent to Mr. Adcock. Under his treatment the rough edges are smoothed away, and the boys appear bright, manly and mannerly lads, fitted to compete with any of their own age in the State, that is at their own work. I am satisfied that they receive an excellent start in life from Rutherglen.

East Melbourne Training Home.—The number of girls in this home at the end of the year was 24. Seven were placed out at service for the first time, and the Matron reports that with the exception of two they are all doing well. No doubt girls well trained in domestic work should be able to command good homes and a good wage.

Albion Home (Glenroy) for Protestant Girls.—The girls in this home are not of bad moral character, but are wayward and need control. Many are trained for service. Five girls were tried at service for the first time during the year, with fairly satisfactory results.

Bayswater Home for Protestant Boys.—Twenty-seven boys were sent to this home, making a total of 73 at the end of the year. Eighteen were placed in service homes during 1911, and with the exception of two they have retained their situations, and favorably reported on. We regret the loss of Major Heads, caused by his removal to another State. His successor, Major Blake, with his previous experience will no doubt render equally good assistance to the Department in the management of this home.

Christian Brothers' Home for Roman Catholic Boys (Geelong).—This home receives wayward and troublesome boys requiring discipline. Twenty-nine boys were sent during 1911; at the end of the year sixty-five remained. Nine were placed at service; six proving satisfactory in their new homes. These results speak well for the training received from the Reverend Brothers in this home.

Industrial School (Abbotsford) for Catholic Girls.—Of the girls sent to this home six were placed at service for the first time during the year with very good results; four giving every satisfaction. Too much credit cannot be given to the Reverend Mother and Sisters for the way in which they manage and train these troublesome girls.

PRIVATE REFORMATORIES.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Inmates on 31st December, 1911.</i>
Bayswater (Protestant)	11
Excelsior Home, Brighton (Protestant and Roman Catholic)	1
Heathfield Home, Apollo Bay (Protestant)	6
Kingsbury, Newstead (Protestant)	1
Total	19
	<i>Girls.</i>	
Riddell's Creek (Protestant)	12
Murrumbeena (branch of Riddell's Creek)	32
Mintaro Home, Monegatta (Protestant)	7
Oakleigh Convent (Roman Catholic)	22
Total	73

Riddell's Creek Reformatory for Protestant Girls.—The number of inmates at the end of the year was twelve. New admissions, six. Two who were placed at service during the year are doing well, and two others whose time had expired have since married. The worst class of girls are sent to this home, and the control of them calls for great tact and patience on the part of the Matron and her assistants. On my visits I found the girls happy and contented.

Murrumbeena Sub-Reformatory.—Thirty-two girls were in this home on the 31st December, 1911. Four were placed at service during the year, and only one was reported badly upon, and returned to the home. The health of the girls was good. They are taught fancy work in addition to being trained for service in general house work. The results from both these homes are very satisfactory.

Mintaro.—This home is now closed. Some of the inmates being transferred; the others at service.

Oakleigh Reformatory for Roman Catholic Girls.—There were twenty-two girls in this home at the end of the year. Four were placed at service and only one unfavorably reported upon. Considering the class of girls we sent here, this result in itself speaks for the excellent training bestowed on them by the Reverend Mother and Sisters.

Bayswater Reformatory for Protestant Boys.—Eleven boys remained in this home at the end of the year. These are the worst class of boys we get, and the ages range from 16 to 19 years. A number of these are committals from gaol, and as can be imagined, are difficult to train and manage. Four who have been placed at service

have given satisfaction; one has proved such a credit that he has been sent to Germany, to his relatives. Two others who were tried in service absconded, and were returned to the Institution. The country life away from the temptations of the city, and the healthy farm work is certainly beneficial to the boys. On my visits no complaints from the boys as regards their treatment or food. They appeared well and contented.

Excelsior Home, Brighton.—At the end of the year only one boy remained in this home. Four were licensed and are still engaged in their various employments Mr. Groom shows his usual interest while in his charge, and in endeavouring to keep in touch with them after their term of control expires.

Apollo Bay.—There were six boys in this home at the end of the year. One has been placed in a situation, and one on probation with his relatives. In Heathfield, Kingbury, Straight View, and Mount Paradise there were no boys at the end of the year. As I remarked in my last Report, the difficulty we have to contend with in these homes is to keep boys who are so inclined from absconding.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

I am pleased to report that the necessity for this Act and the wisdom of its provisions is abundantly proved in the attainment of its chief object, viz., the saving of infant life. This is evidenced in the still decreasing death rate; the mortality for 1911 being 33 out of 825, as against 57 out of 801 infants during 1910.

The deplorable results of the period prior to the passing of the Act when parents were at liberty to hand their unfortunate offspring over to irresponsible persons and the consequent heavy toll of victims demanded some preventive legislation. The efficiency of the Act may, however, be considerably extended by some desirable amendments which have previously been proposed.

APPLICATIONS TO BOARD OUT.

During the year under review 494 applications to board out infants were dealt with. These children were placed with experienced registered nurses under the supervision of the Inspectors, who have carried out their duties in a highly creditable manner. Unfortunately very many of these infants, when application to board them out is made, are in a very low state of health, requiring the greatest care and skill on the part of the nurse to rear the child. Every credit should be given to these women for the good work they are doing, many of them for weeks together being unable to obtain a night's rest in their anxiety to rear the delicate infant intrusted to their care.

NURSES.

Applications come in regularly from women willing to take charge of these infants, and excellent homes are being obtained, both in the country and suburbs. The country homes as far as possible are used for placing delicate children in. The nurses on the whole have been most conscientious in their duty towards the little ones placed in their care.

INFANTS UNDER SUPERVISION.

The total number of infants under constant supervision on 31st December 1911, was 388, as compared with 331 for 1910, the numbers being disposed of as indicated by the following table :—

AGES OF INFANTS IN REGISTERED HOMES ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1911.

2 wks.	3 wks.	4 wks.	2 mths.	3 mths.	4 mths.	5 mths.	6 mths.	7 mths.	8 mths.	9 mths.	10 mths.	11 mths.	1-2 years.	2-3 years.	3-4 years.	4-5 years.	TOTAL.
1	11	13	22	19	21	16	12	18	14	13	10	13	79	61	31	34	388

During the year 825 infants have been under supervision. Out of this number 236 became wards of the State, 38 died, 163 have been taken by relatives or friends, or have reached the age of five years, and so passed from the jurisdiction of the Act. The remaining 388 under supervision at the close of the year were placed thus:—

252	homes with 1 child ...	...	...	...	252
42	" " 2 children	...	...	...	84
12	" " 3 "	...	...	...	36
4	" " 4 "	...	...	...	16
	Total ...	...	...	...	388

ADOPTIONS.

During the year 97 adoptions were reported, being 21 less than for the previous year. On the whole these adoptions appear genuine, still there is evidence that a great amount of trafficking goes on in the way of arranging adoptions.

An amendment of the Act, making an agent who arranges adoptions for money equally responsible with the party who adopts the child and takes a lump sum, would, I think, minimize the evil.

The proposed amendment of the Act would effectually deal with the question of adoption by giving the Department greater discretionary power, and compel the adopting parties to make their arrangements through the Department, which would have the power of keeping a certain amount of supervision over the child as to its being well cared for, and the adoption was for the good of the child.

EXEMPTIONS.

There were only 8 exemptions for the past year, as against 26 for 1910. The children in all cases being left with relatives.

MORTALITY.

I am pleased to state the death rate for 1911 was much less than for the previous year, being 38 as against 57 for 1910. Unfortunately, as a rule the infants boarded out under the Act are very delicate from birth; many of them having been fed on different foods, which have thoroughly impaired their digestive organs, making it more difficult for the nurse into whose care the child is placed to try and rear the infant. When possible a wet nurse is availed of.

To show that the Department should have some discretionary power to see that an illegitimate infant is properly cared for from birth, I append the following table, showing that the greater number of deaths occur shortly after the child has been placed out with the nurse. The majority of these cases have a very small chance of surviving owing to their condition at the time the boarding-out application is made.

LENGTH OF TIME IN HOME AT TIME OF DEATH.

1	2	3	4	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1-2	Total.
Wk.	Wks.	Wks.	Wks.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Mos.	Yrs.	
7	8	1	9	4	1	2	1	...	...	...	2	3	38

That the amending Act of 1907 has done much to save infant life there can be no doubt, as the appending figures, kindly supplied by the Chief Commissioner of Police, will show:—

Year.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.
No. of deaths.	115	89	79	107	71

Since the transfer of the Act to the control of this Department the results so far are as follow:—

Year.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.
No. of deaths.	48	34	57	38

This shows a great decrease in the death rate. The appointment of female inspectors, and free and compulsory medical attendance being made available for any infant boarded out under the Infant Life Protection Act, being the main contributors to the improvement in the direction shown.

The number of deaths under various causes is shown in below :—

Marasmus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital disease and exhaustion	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Hydrocephalus and exhaustion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Gastritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Inanition and congenital syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Gastro enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Asthenia and jaundice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Whooping cough and marasmus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Exhaustion through inability to assimilate food	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Prematurity	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Diarrhoea and exhaustion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Broncho-pneumonia and meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Enterocolitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Enterocolitis and exhaustion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Congenital debility and marasmus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pneumonia and heart failure	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Broncho-pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital debility	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Eudo-colitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Ileo colitis and convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Gastro-enteritis and exhaustion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Enterocolitis and toxæmia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Total									38

Districts.	No. of Deaths.	Months.	No. of Deaths.	Age at Time of Death.
Ballarat	4	January	10	1 week
Bendigo	1	February	3	2 "
Brunswick	3	March	8	3 "
Carlton	4	April	5	1 month
Coburg	5	May	1	2 months
Colac	1	June	1	3 "
Essendon	1	July	2	4 "
Fitzroy	3	August	1	5 "
Footscray	1	September	—	6 "
Geelong	1	October	1	7 "
Hamilton	2	November	—	8 "
Kensington	1	December	6	9 "
Malvern	1		—	10 "
North Melbourne	4	Total	38	11 "
Port Melbourne	2		—	12 "
Prahran	2			
Richmond	1			Total
Williamstown	1			38
Total	38			

INSPECTORS.

There are now six inspectors (female) appointed under the Act. One is located in Ballarat, and one, an experienced married woman, deals with the office work (mothers applying to board out their children, &c.). The other four each have their own districts ; visiting regularly and reporting on registered nurses' homes and the children in their care ; also reporting on adoptions and exemptions.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. SMITH,
Secretary.

To the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

TABLE I.—NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY CHILDREN.

STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FOR 1911.

	Neglected.			Reformatory.			Grand Total.
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1910 ...	3,507	3,149	6,656	88	116	204	6,860
ADMISSIONS.							
Court committals ...	554	469	1,023	30	11	41	1,064
Section 9, Infant Life Protection Act No. 2102 ...	129	107	236	...	...	...	236
Section 11, Infant Life Protection Act No. 2102 ...	2	2	4	...	...	...	4
Section 17, Infant Life Protection Act No. 1198 ...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1
Transfers from Gaol ...	...	...	...	8	...	8	8
" " Neglected Children's Department ...	...	...	...	8	14	22	22
" " Reformatory Department ...	12	1	13	...	...	...	13
" " Aborigines Board ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Returned absconders ...	12	1	13	4	1	5	18
Total Admissions ...	710	580	1,290	51	26	77	1,367

DISCHARGES.

By Order of the Governor in Council ...	232	234	466	4	...	4	470
" Death ...	49	41	90	...	...	...	90
" Effluxion of time ...	181	120	301	34	36	70	371
" Transfer to Neglected Children's Department ...	...	...	...	12	1	13	13
" " Reformatory ...	8	14	22	...	...	...	22
" " Kew Asylum ...	1	5	6	...	...	...	6
Unreturned absconders ...	43	3	46	21	7	28	74
Total Discharges ...	514	417	931	71	44	115	1,046
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1911 ...	3,703	3,312	7,015	68	98	166	7,181

LOCATION.

* } Maintained in foster-homes ...	2,794	2,522	5,316	...	...	...	5,316
{ " institutions ...	185	133	318	22	75	97	415
In service homes ...	313	340	653	16	18	34	687
With relatives and others, without cost to the State ...	394	300	694	25	4	29	723
In Hospitals ...	14	12	26	...	1	1	27
In Gaol ...	...	...	...	5	...	5	5
On a visit to friends ...	3	5	8	...	...	...	8
Total ...	3,703	3,312	7,015	68	98	166	7,181

* In addition to these, 40 (9 males, 31 females), who are free from legal control, are still being maintained by the State, as they are incapacitated.

TABLE II.—DEATHS DURING 1911.

Length of Time under care of Department.	AGE AT TIME OF DEATH.									
	Under 1 Year.	1 to 2.	2 to 3.	3 to 4.	4 to 5.	5 to 6.	6 to 7.	8 to 9.	14 to 15.	15 to 16.
6 days	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
12 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
14 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
16 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
18 "	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3 weeks	7	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
4 "	5	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
5 "	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6 "	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
7 "	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2 months	12	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3 "	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
4 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5 "	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
6 "	5	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
7 "	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
8 "	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
9 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10 "	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
11 "	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
12 "	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
13 "	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
14 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
17 "	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
22 "	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
2 years	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	2	..	1
3 "	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
4 "	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
7 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
TOTAL	57	14	2	6	1	3	1	4	1	1

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Acute gastro-enteritis and heart failure	..	1	Gastro-enteritis and exhaustion	..	..	2
Acute milk infection	..	1	Gastro-enteritis and heart failure	..	..	1
Acute colitis	..	1	General tuberculosis and congenital syphilis	..	..	1
Acute nephritis and broncho-pneumonia	..	1	Gastro-entero colitis	..	..	1
Acute tuberculosis and exhaustion	..	1	General debility	..	..	1
Acute gastro-entero colitis	..	1	Gastro-enteritis, congenital syphilis and hydrocephalus	..	..	1
Athrepsia exhaustion	..	5	Heart disease	..	..	2
Asthenia and congenital syphilis	..	1	Inanition and congenital syphilis	..	..	2
Asthenia	..	1	Inanition and marasmus	..	..	1
Acute gastro-entero colitis	..	1	Inanition and exhaustion	..	..	1
Bronchitis	..	2	Ileo-colitis and heart failure	..	..	1
Broncho-pneumonia	..	4	Inanition and entero-colitis	..	..	1
Bronchitis and diarrhœa	..	1	Ileo-colitis	..	..	1
Brain trouble	..	1	Marasmus	..	..	2
Convulsions	..	1	Marasmus, gastro-enteritis and congenital syphilis	..	..	1
Congenital syphilis and exhaustion	..	1	Marasmus and congenital debility	..	..	2
Diarrhœa	..	1	Marasmus and congenital syphilis	..	..	3
Drowned	..	1	Marasmus and convulsions	..	..	1
Diphtheria	..	5	Measles and pneumonia	..	..	2
Exhaustion, marasmus and congenital syphilis	..	3	Measles and acute broncho-pneumonia	..	..	1
Entero-colitis and exhaustion	..	3	Meningitis	..	..	6
Entero-colitis and congenital syphilis	..	1	Prematurity and marasmus	..	..	1
Exhaustion and tuberculosis	..	1	Prematurity and congenital debility	..	..	1
Entero-colitis	..	1	Pneumonia and exhaustion	..	..	1
Empyema and tuberculosis	..	1	Septic pleurisy	..	..	1
Enteritis and heart failure	..	1	Syphilis and whooping cough	..	..	1
Entero-colitis and asthenia	..	1	Tubercular meningitis and exhaustion	..	..	1
Fracture of skull	..	1	Tuberculosis	..	..	1
Gastro-enteritis	..	5				
Exhaustion and general tuberculosis	..	1				
Gastro-enteritis and convulsions	..	1				

Re DEATHS DURING 1911.

32 died at Depôt—

22 of them being under 12 months old
 7 " " between 1 and 2 years
 1 " " " 2 and 3 "
 2 " " " 3 and 4 "

34 died in foster homes
 12 " boarded-out with mother
 1 " on probation
 1 " in Haven, North Fitzroy
 1 " " Alfred Hospital
 1 " " Melbourne "
 5 " " Children's "
 3 " " Infectious Diseases Hospital

Total 90

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

Name of Society or Person.	Children under Supervision on 31.12.10.	Admissions during 1911.			Children under Supervision on 31.12.11.
		Court Committals.	Transfer of Guardianship.	Voluntary Admissions.	
Presbyterian and Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society	292	3	9	11	283
Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society	404	9	5	52	339
Church of England Neglected Children's Aid Society	104	4	2	19	98
Methodist Homes for Children	472	4	10	37	413
Misses Colvin and Brumley, Clifden Home, Wedderburn	96	...	1	...	81
Gordon Institute, Melbourne	134	9	9	32	131
Burwood Boys' Home	57	...	18	2	77
Methodist Boys' Training Farm, Burwood East	88	...	...	13	66
Latrobe-street Ragged School Mission ...	153	1	1	150	151
Mission Rescue and Children's Home, Ballarat East	42	2	...	3	45
Presbyterian Home for Girls, Elsternwick	17	2	2	...	18
St. Joseph's Home, Surrey Hills	174	2	...	63	156
Mr. W. M. Forster (Try Society), Hawksburn	64	...	...	50	39
Total	2,097	36	57	432	1,897

TABLE IV.—PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMMITTED IN 1911.

Particulars supplied with Order of Committal.	Neglected.	Reformatory.	Total.
Parents dead	17	2	19
" unknown	10	1	11
" deserted	6	1	7
" poor, of good character	54	24	78
Father dead; Mother poor, of good character	442	6	448
" " in gaol	2	...	2
" " an invalid	1	...	1
" " in hospital	2	...	2
" " a drunkard	1	...	1
" " in lunatic asylum	1	...	1
Father deserted; Mother poor, of good character	404	1	405
" " dead... ..	15	2	17
" " a cripple	1	...	1
" " in hospital	2	...	2
" " an imbecile	3	...	3
" " a drunkard	1	...	1
" " immoral	3	...	3
" " of bad character	1	...	1
Father unknown; Mother poor, of good character	25	1	26
" " deserted	1	1	2
" " in hospital	1	...	1
" " in lunatic asylum	4	...	4
" " an imbecile	1	...	1
" " in gaol	1	...	1
" " immoral	4	...	4
" " dead	1	...	1
Father a drunkard; Mother poor, of good character	6	4	10
" " dead	4	...	4
" " in hospital	2	...	2
Father invalid; Mother deserted	2	...	2
" " poor, good character	95	...	95
" in lunatic asylum " " "	31	...	31
" in hospital " " "	32	...	32
" blind " " "	1	...	1
" a cripple " " "	9	...	9
Father bad character; Mother dead	2	...	2
Father in gaol; Mother poor, good character	47	...	47
" " dead	1	...	1
Father poor; Mother drunkard	7	...	7
" " in gaol	1	...	1
" " deserted	6	1	7
" " dead	14	2	16
Father in good circumstances; Mother dead ... ..	...	1	1
" dead; Mother deserted ... ..	...	1	1
Parents drunkards ... ..	...	1	1
" poor, of bad character ... ..	...	1	1
Total	1,264	50	1,314

TABLE V.—TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN—NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY, 1911.

Neglected Children.	Average strength	Items of Expenditure.												Total.
		Provi- sions.	Clothing and Bedding.	Fuel, Light, and Water.	Stores, Stock, &c.	Medical Attend- ance, &c.	Inciden- tals.	Transport and Travelling Expenses.	Tele- phone Services.	Salaries.	Postage and Tele- grams.	Main- tenance.		
		£ 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 Depots	98	521 5 11	75 5 8	371 17 7	244 9 3	37 13 2	278 2 9	..	..	2,350 0 10	..	..	3,878 15 2
Abbotsford Indus- trial School ..	47	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	693 13 5	693 13 5
Training Home for Girls ..	22	..	..	..	..	10 17 10	..	..	..	..	..	287 1 9	287 19 7
Service Children ..	..	..	352 14 1	..	..	..	..	1,061 12 7*	..	..	..	..	1,414 6 8
Boarded-out Chil- dren ..	5,267	..	914 11 2	..	..	4,534 2 0	..	659 7 7	..	..	..	74,729 18 2	80,837 18 11
Telephone Services ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	48 13 1	..	..	..	48 13 1
Total ..	5,423	521 5 11	1,342 10 11	371 17 7	244 9 3	4,582 13 0	278 2 9	1,721 0 2	48 13 1	2,350 0 10	..	75,710 13 4	87,171 6 10	
Reformatory Chil- dren.														
Oakleigh (Girls) ..	27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	709 3 8	709 3 8
Mintaro (Girls) ..	10 5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	273 18 5	273 18 5
Riddell's Creek (Girls)	50	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,291 16 1	1,291 16 1
Excelsior Home, (Boys) ..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	160 19 11	160 19 11
Kingsbury (Boys) ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7 18 7	7 18 7
Straight View Farm (Boys) ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30 9 9	30 9 9
Moun. Paradise(Boys)	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20 2 1	20 2 1
Heathfield Home (Boys) ..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	163 16 5	163 16 5
Bayswater (Boys) ..	11 5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	299 7 5	299 7 5
Service Children ..	..	..	143 11 4	..	..	..	..	377 4 7	..	..	..	..	520 15 11
Telephone Services ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	84 5 1	..	..	..	84 5 1
Total ..	113	..	143 11 4	..	..	..	..	377 4 7	84 5 1	..	..	2,957 12 4	3,562 13 4
Head Office ..	..	..	..	4 16 6	79 9 10	..	116 18 6	795 4 8	..	5,711 11 11	441 10 8	..	7,149 12 1
Grand Total ..	5,536	521 5 11	1,486 2 3	376 14 1	323 19 1	4,582 13 0	395 1 3	2,893 9 5	132 18 2	8,061 12 9	441 10 8	78,668 5 8	97,883 12 3	
<i>Deduct—</i> Amount received for Maintenance of Chil- dren, £4,070 18. 6d. All other receipts £32 5s. 2d.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,102 8 8
Net cost ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	93,781 3 7

*£697 os. cd. of this expenditure was incurred under Part VIII. of the Neglected Children's Act.

TABLE VI.—AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED IN 1911.

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	Over 16	Total.
Neglected ..	370	95	82	84	94	84	100	72	63	65	56	45	19	10	15	7	3	1,264
Reformatory ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	3	5	8	15	16	50
Total ..	370	95	82	84	94	84	100	72	63	65	58	46	22	15	23	22	19	1,314

RELIGIONS AND BIRTHPLACES.

	Number Committed.	Religions.			Birthplaces.			
		Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Jew.	Australia and New Zealand.	England.	South Africa.	Unknown.
Neglected	865	398	1	1,257	2	2	3
Reformatory	33	17	..	50	..	..	..
Totals	898	415	1	1,307	2	2	3

REPORTS OF SCHOOLS.

GIRLS' RECEIVING DEPÔT, ROYAL PARK.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

Since sending you my last report the time has gone quickly, and I am happy to say we can show some improvements during the year, the largest being the sewerage of the entire Depôt, also a drying-room—an addition to the laundry that was badly needed. Though the large clothing is all sent to Pentridge laundry, there are still a number of garments washed here. Rations for nurses and attendants have also been granted, for which the staff is deeply grateful.

I am hoping that before this report appears in print still another request may be granted, *i.e.*, a Kindergarten, which, if acceded to, will be a source of pleasure and instruction to our little people.

With the exception of the babies, of whom, unfortunately, we always have a number sick, but who are constantly under the supervision of the medical officer and trained nurses, whose combined efforts are sometimes unavailing, the health of the children has been satisfactory.

We all spent a happy Christmas. The children, and indeed the grown people, too, enjoyed the Christmas tree. Some of the toys and beautiful dolls being kindly sent by Mrs. Legge, to whom we return our sincere thanks; also to the ladies and gentlemen of the Moonee Ponds Congregational Church, who gave a most enjoyable concert and supper.

Religious instruction is given to the Protestant children regularly by Mr. Brewer and Mrs. Delaney, and by Rev. Father O'Doherty and the Nuns to the Roman Catholic children.

LILIAN RIORDAN,
Matron.

21st May, 1912.

BOYS' RECEIVING DEPÔT, ROYAL PARK.

SIR,

I beg to submit my report for the past year. The health and conduct of the boys has been excellent. The absence of a gymnasium for the boys to exercise, play, or romp in during the evenings, or in wet weather, is severely felt. Much inconvenience is also caused by the absence of a general store. The present restricted storing accommodation is quite unequal to the demands made upon it, and considerable confusion is the result. I would strongly urge that these most necessary works be undertaken as soon as possible. I beg to thank Mrs. Delaney, Rev. Mr. Brewer (Church of England), the Rev. Father O'Doherty (Roman Catholic), who have attended to the boys' religious training; also the ladies and gentlemen who have given treats and concerts at various times.

J. MARWOOD,
Superintendent.

The Secretary,
Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools,
Melbourne.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER.

I have the honour to briefly report as follows, on the medical work at the Neglected Children's Depôt, Royal Park :—

During the year 1911, 342 children were admitted to the Infants' Division of the Institution, and of these, 197 were under 3 years of age, and 101 under 12 months. As may naturally be expected, these "neglected children" were, especially as regards the young babies, mostly in a state of disease, ill-health, or malnutrition, and a high mortality rate was inevitable, in spite of every care and attention.

It has been recognised that a definite proportion of the infants are doomed before admission, either by reason of certain inherited diseases, defects, or malformations; or from their assimilative powers being destroyed by previous ill-feeding or starvation. They do not thrive in foster homes, and institutional treatment does not appear to mend matters.

Naturally the supply of available wet-nurses is extremely limited, and they are secured whenever available, and when the child can be safely regarded as free from all danger of infecting the mother; but failing these, and in cases where wet-nursing is contra-indicated, it is difficult to suggest a method, under present conditions, effective enough to secure trained and competent foster-parents who would carry out artificial feeding scientifically.

In continuance of my custom of last year, I have had specimens of blood taken (in 57 instances this year) for testing the "Wasserman" reaction for syphilis; and 23 have shown the presence of this disease, while 4 have given a partial reaction. It should be pointed out that only a small proportion of children, the subjects of congenital syphilis, are capable of infecting others; nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, every proved or suspected case of this disease is, on admission at once isolated, and segregated with other similar cases, in a large tent; and directions are given as regards quarantine and personal hygiene, that should make hetero-infection impossible.

Thirty-two babies and children, wards of the State, died in the Dépôt during the past year, twenty-two being under 12 months of age, and half of these under 3 months. The cause of death briefly summarized was as follows:—

Intestinal and gastro-intestinal diseases	...	...	...	...	9
Marasmus, inanition, or asthenia (the result of congenital disease or defect)	...	...	...	...	14
Tuberculosis, local and general, and its complications	...	...	...	...	6
Sequelæ of measles (Broncho-pneumonia and Bright's disease)	...	...	...	...	3
					32

(In addition, 3 babies on remand died in the Dépôt.)

In 18 instances, congenital syphilis was either a predisposing or an exciting cause of death.

Although the place has now been sewerred, sporadic cases of zymotic disease have appeared from time to time; 2 cases of typhoid fever, and 4 cases of diphtheria occurred; while a very severe outbreak of measles was introduced from outside, and re-introduced later on. With the adoption of immediate isolation and hygiene, the spread of contagion in each instance, has been checked; but this does not apply altogether to the measles epidemic.

With regard to matters of construction, it is regrettable that no work has been commenced with the new hospital and nursery buildings, the plans of which were drawn up about a year ago. With the present buildings and structures, it is impossible to do justice even to the healthy babies, much less to the great number of sick and congenitally enfeebled.

The nursing work at this place is onerous and fatiguing, and I consider that to maintain efficiency in nursing, there should be always on duty, two or more trained nurses in the day time, and one at night. A greater strengthening of the nursery staff all round would be advisable.

I desire to acknowledge my thanks to Dr. Bull and his assistants at the University for their valuable work in examining and reporting on the many specimens and secretions sent by me for bacteriological examination; and especially for the difficult work of testing for the "Wasserman" reaction

CLARENCE GODFREY, M.R.C.S., Eng., &c.
Medical Officer.

The Secretary,
Neglected Children's Department.

RECEIVING DEPÔT, ROYAL PARK.

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1911.

We have the honour to submit the Report of the Visiting Committee of the Receiving Dépôt, Royal Park, for the year 1911.

During the year the Committee have been assiduous in their endeavour to promote the welfare of the wards of the State who from time to time find a home in the Dépôt.

The Committee meet every month to transact business and inspect the institution, but during the month the members visit the establishment and report the result at each monthly meeting.

At the beginning of the year the report of Drs. O'Brien and Robertson was brought under the notice of the Committee and very carefully considered by them, and, while agreeing with the greater part, they took exception to several paragraphs, the result of which they have already reported to you.

The attention of the Committee has also been called to the reports which have recently appeared in the public press with reference to the state and management of the Receiving Dépôt, especially the report of a meeting in connexion with the Council of Women, which was published in the *Argus* of 9th November, 1911. The Committee protest against the statements there made as being grossly exaggerated.

The Committee realize the want, and have frequently drawn the attention of the Department to the urgent need, that exists for new buildings for the infants, but they consider that the attendants do their very best with the imperfect means provided, and that the criticism which appeared in the public press was uncalled for and very unfair.

We are glad to know that a sum of money has been set apart for the purpose of making a start with the erection of a new infant room, and trust that no time will be lost in bringing the work to a satisfactory completion.

We would again urge upon the Department the necessity of a gymnasium for the boys. The only room available for recreation is the dining-room which, if used for that purpose, would very soon be in a terrible state of disrepair.

A store-room is also very much needed, and should be provided without delay.

The State school has been in active operation all through the year, and children of school age have been able to receive instruction during the short time they remain at the Dépôt instead of spending their time in idleness and play.

A kindergarten room is very much needed, and we again desire to bring this want of the young children under the notice of the Department with the hope that our oft-repeated request on this matter will ere long receive its fulfilment.

We are glad that a number of books has recently been provided, which will form the nucleus of a library. This ought to prove a great boon to the boys, especially during the winter months.

We think, from some of the reports which recently appeared in the daily press, that many of the public have an erroneous idea about the scope of management of the Receiving Depôt, and look upon the institution as a kind of orphan asylum where the children remain under the care of the attendants for months, if not years. But this is not the case, as the following statistics for the past six months will show :—

—		Children admitted during the month.	Children discharged during the month, i.e., sent out to homes.
September	...	85	83
October	...	69	68
November	...	75	90
December	...	82	88
February	...	129	107
March	...	120	126

From this it will be seen that children are constantly coming and going, and criticism that might be perfectly just in the case where the inmates are fairly stationary does not apply to the Receiving Depôt at Royal Park.

Unfortunately, the number of neglected children is increasing every month. These children will ere long be citizens of the State, and have to take their share in the future welfare of our country; it behoves the Government, therefore, to see that they are properly housed, fed, and educated while they are under State control, and fitted to stand side by side with their more favoured comrades in the battle of life.

We trust, therefore, that every care will be bestowed by the Department to erect the most suitable buildings that can be obtained for the health and comfort of the children—made as much a real home as is possible, and be a credit to the Government and the State.

JOHN WALKER, Chairman.
T. C. CAMM, Correspondent.

The Secretary,
Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools.

REPORT OF THE LADY CORRESPONDENT AND INSPECTOR, BALLARAT DISTRICTS.

In furnishing my half-yearly Report of the Ballarat Districts I have much pleasure in stating that the good emanating from the methods adopted by the Government, and through the Department of the Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, is discernible on all sides.

Ballarat being a mining centre we have a very large percentage of widows and fatherless children. In all, we have 180 homes receiving help from the Government for the maintenance of the children. Of these, nearly 120 are boarded out with own mothers, the remainder being foster parents.

Under present conditions these homes are regularly visited, and every six months the homes are inspected, and an individual report of 350 children is forwarded to the Secretary.

Health.—All the children are remarkably healthy. During the last three months typhoid fever and diphtheria have been prevalent and some half-a-dozen of our children were taken to the Hospital, but no deaths occurred, and the children are at home stronger and healthier than ever. Dr. Dane (East), Dr. Gardiner (West), and Dr. Longdon, Buninyong, are unremitting in their visits to the homes where sickness prevails.

School Attendances.—I find our children hold their own, and nothing gives me greater pleasure than to submit the list of names to the Secretary at the end of each half-year of those who have not missed a half-day.

Attainments.—There are three students at the Ballarat Agricultural High School who have won scholarships. (They were reared by foster mothers.)

At the competitions recently held at Hobart a little girl won a first and two second prizes for elocution against all comers. In the various churches and Sunday-schools the children do well. Many of the boys are trained as choristers, and girls and boys win a number of prizes for regular church attendance and Sunday-school prizes.

Service Homes.—All the girls are doing well. The rule established for the girls to receive five shillings per week to start with (one shilling of which is sent to the Secretary), and one shilling per week rise each year of service, is satisfactory to all.

Wages Board Regulations.—Relying on the promise that "Out of evil will come good" we must be hopeful. At present, this winter will prove a severe strain, and many hardships must be endured by scores of poor widows. Hitherto the winters have been looked forward to as the season of a small revenue—balls, assemblies, parties, dinners, and in fact re-unions of all descriptions were held. Caterers were engaged, which meant necessity for waitresses. To each widow it meant five shillings or seven and sixpence and a basket of unused food. Many of the mothers arranged with the caterer to supply her with bread until the sum of money she had earned was exhausted, and then there would probably be another opportunity for her services, and so there was at least bread provided for her children. The prohibitive rate of wages has necessitated the caterers making quite other arrangements, and the poor widows are anxious. Again, a number of boys who were earning ten shillings a week have been dismissed. The boys are not necessary, and the wages stipulated are too high for the employer to give an inexperienced lad. In a few instances where the mothers have elder sons just out of their time, and where they come under the benefits of the Wages Board, the change for the better is readily acknowledged, but the number is so small, compared with those who are "out of it," that it will take some years to be appreciated. The homes are as a whole clean and comfortable, and the children have all the advantages of home life and the same privileges as other favoured children.

Infant Life.—Too much praise cannot be given to the registered nurses for the care bestowed on the infants placed with them. I visit them at all hours, before baby is bathed, and no mother is more solicitous for the care and comfort of her infant. At midnight, during sickness, there you will find the nurse watching with the greatest anxiety for “the turn for the better,” a neighbour keeping her company. If the expectant mother would only refrain from the use of drugs and tight-lacing, neither of which will ever be effectual, and if the sale of herbs could be abandoned, strong healthy children instead of so many marasmus infants would be born.

State Infants.—These remain with the nurse and receive exactly the same care and attention, and my visits are just as frequent. About once in three months each of the nurses (registered and State) bring the babies to visit me, and it is the greatest pleasure to see how prettily and comfortably each is dressed and cared for.

Mother.—In every instance the nurse welcomes the mother and encourages her to visit her infant once or twice each week. There are very few instances where a mother neglects this.

Mortality.—During the six months from November, 1911, to May, no deaths have been reported to me of any child boarded out to own or foster mother.

Out of about 90 infants and toddlers placed with registered nurses and State nurses, ten deaths have occurred with very young infants during the months of intense heat, each easily traced to prematernal interference.

Total of children the Government hold themselves responsible for in my districts are about as follows :—

Children in Foster Homes ...	...	...	390
Infants ...	...	...	80
Service Homes ...	...	...	14
Probation Homes...	...	...	12

			496

As there are some other homes since added, one will be correct in stating there are fully 500 children under my care and inspection.

Rate of Pay.—There is a great difference of opinion as to whether an increase of two shillings a week should not be made. My committee are of opinion that in exceptional cases, strongly recommended, such would be advisable. On the other hand, owing to the absorption of girls in white-work and other factories, there is an unlimited supply of work for laundresses, charwomen, and day labour, and as the Wages Board has raised the amount to be paid, it is an easy thing for a woman to average three days work per week and her meals.

Office Accommodation.—My Committee are of opinion that in such an important centre as Ballarat, with so many under the Inspector's supervision, it is only a fair thing for the Department to provide an office and use of telephone to facilitate the work. At present the officer in charge has to pay for these out of a limited salary.

C. JULIE GUTMANN,
Inspector and Resident Officer.

The Secretary.

ABBOTSFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, R.C.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1911. The number of girls remaining in the school on 31st December, 1910, was 32.

ADMISSIONS.

Remaining in school, 1.1.11 ...	...	...	...	32
Admitted (including re-admissions) ...	...	...	...	42
Transferred from Dépôt ...	...	...	...	5
From Office ...	...	...	...	1
From Court ...	...	...	...	1
From Probation ...	...	...	...	1
From holidays ...	...	...	...	5

Total ...	...	...	...	87

REMOVALS.

To service ...	...	...	...	47
Transferred to Reformatory ...	...	...	...	2
Discharged on Probation ...	...	...	...	2
Boarded out ...	...	...	...	2
For holidays ...	...	...	...	3
Discharged ...	...	...	...	2
Absconded ...	...	...	...	1
Remaining, 31.12.11 ...	...	...	...	28

Total ...	...	...	...	87

Happily the health of the wards has been all that could be desired, they being entirely free from any epidemic—this gives proof of the healthiness of their surroundings.

Their recreations have been varied, notably two very interesting and instructive series of the moving pictures. Those under the age of fourteen attend school daily. The State Inspector paid two visits during the year with satisfactory results.

No event of further importance has to be recorded.

We take this opportunity of thanking our many generous friends who have given pleasure to the little ones by their visits and presents.

In concluding this brief report, permit me, dear Sir, to express on behalf of the Sisters and myself most grateful appreciation of your courtesy and that of your Departmental Staff during the year.

I have the honour to remain, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

MARY F. CORBETT,
Acting Superioress.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S HOME FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC BOYS, GEELONG.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1911.

On 1st January, 1911, there were 54 boys in the institution. During the year 29 were admitted and 18 sent out. Consequently 65 remained in the Institution on 31st December, 1911.

The conduct of the boys on the whole was very good. When one considers the previous association of the boys he wonders how they conduct themselves so well. The health of the boys was excellent. Good progress was made in the school during the year. At the annual examination the Brother Inspector expressed his satisfaction at the high standard attained. The chief object of the Brothers is to give the boys a good religious and moral training.

During the year several persons of distinction visited the home. Sir John Kirk paid a visit of inspection and was very much impressed with what he saw. He said he enjoyed the visit very much, and spoke very highly of the conduct of the boys in school, at work, and at play. Professor Gade paid a visit to hear the band play, and was delighted with the performance. The Mayor (Councillor Williams) and the Mayoress paid a visit and presented a framed photograph of the King and Queen. All the boys were assembled in the large study hall, and His Worship gave the boys a very nice address. At the conclusion each boy received a bag of lollies.

It is not all work and no play here. The boys are encouraged in good healthful games, cricket, football, handball, swimming, and other popular games. Football is the most popular game, and some of the boys would play it all the year round. They look forward to the league matches played here. They hurry through their work on these days to be present at the beginning of the match. Besides the football matches the boys go to the various sports, show, &c. When our band plays at the open-air concerts in the park, the boys are brought down to them, and enjoy the moving pictures very much.

The annual picnic was held at Black Rock. The weather was delightful, and the boys had a real good time feasting, bathing, &c., and returned home after a most enjoyable trip. During the summer the boys are taken down to the baths, and as most of them are very fond of a swim they look forward to the trip with pleasure.

M. D. S. KERRINS,
Superintendent.

TRAINING HOME FOR GIRLS, EAST MELBOURNE.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1911.

I have the honour to submit my report for the past year. The conduct of the inmates and service girls has been good, no girl having given serious trouble; the girls are staying out well, and visit the Home constantly. We had an outbreak of mild diphtheria caused by a child being admitted with it in so mild a form it was difficult to detect, otherwise the health was good.

The Committee are grateful to the many friends who have helped us in donations of money and kind, also to the Hon. Doctors W. K. and J. H. Boyd, who did everything in their power to help us; we cannot speak too highly of their kindness. They also wish to thank the Hon. Dentist, Mr. F. H. Baker, who attends so constantly to their teeth; also to the ladies from the Missionary Training Home who take the girls for Sunday-school and a week-night service.

Among the many gifts one can mention with gratitude the lovely flowers given by Messrs. Ronalds & Co., on Saturday evening; the flowers have been a great pleasure to the inmates and to the girls when sick.

At Christmas time the girls had a very happy time; two girls gave them a Christmas tree, one girl being dressed up as Father Christmas, and gave the children a delightful time. The girls who were at service had worked for months without our knowledge to get the presents for all the inmates.

LILIAN M. WATSON,
Matron.

SALVATION ARMY GIRLS' HOME, GLENROY.

We beg to submit our annual report on the work and inmates of this institution for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

The ordinary routine of the Home has been practically undisturbed since our last report, with the exception of the inauguration of a shorthand class, in which six of our girls participate.

One of our officers from headquarters, a qualified teacher of this branch, gives weekly lessons, on which a quarterly examination is held, and most of these have seen very creditable results.

Health.—With the exception of a few slight indispositions the health of our girls has been quite satisfactory. We have fortunately escaped the local epidemics and have not needed a medical visit during the year.

Education.—Under the tuition of Miss Bessie Scott the school children, of whom there are 19 at present, are doing very creditably. The annual examination was held on 4th August and proved highly satisfactory, as did also the general report by Mr. Russell, inspector of schools. At the close of the year quite a number of pupils received awards for satisfactory progress in various studies.

During the past twelve months there has been a continual ingress and egress of inmates. A goodly number have been placed in situations, and though some of these have not done too well, the large majority are giving satisfaction.

Departmental Work.—In each of the other departments, viz., laundry, cooking, house work, and sewing, the girls are making good progress, and especially in the latter branch are they giving much satisfaction.

Amusements.—The inmates have regular periods for recreation each day, and at the cessation of work hours each girl is encouraged to participate in some healthy game, such as cricket, club swinging, &c. Quite frequently a number of visitors are invited to spend a holiday or Saturday afternoon with the girls, and the games indulged in at such times are apparently much enjoyed by all. On 19th December, at 69 Bourke-street, City, the annual "Treat" was held and, judging by the appearance and tones of our forty-eight homeward-bound maidens, the outing was worthy of its title.

Ruby Pratt.—We think the case of this girl, an erstwhile ward of the State, is worthy of mention. Some time since she was an inmate of this Home for several years, and afterwards gave every satisfaction in her various situations as domestic servant. Three years ago, following close upon her freedom from State control, she expressed a desire to undertake work amongst the girls of the Institution from which she emanated. As her character and record were undeniably good, she was given employment in this Home preparatory to entering our Training College for the requisite training of a Salvation Army officer. She passed with honours through this ten months' course of practical and theoretical tuition, and was recently commissioned as assistant missionary to some way-back town in South Australia. When we extend a vote of thanks to the N.C. Department for their interest and aid in her case we are but passing on her heartfelt and oft-expressed feelings.

Commissioner Hay, the head director of Salvation Army affairs in Australasia, paid a visit recently to this institution, and after a minute examination of each department, expressed himself as very pleased with the management and general tone of the Home.

In the absence of Matron Horsley, who is recruiting her health for some months in New South Wales, I have the honour to subscribe myself, faithfully yours,

(Mrs.) NELLIE MERRIFIELD, Acting Matron.

The Secretary,
Neglected Children's Department, Melbourne.
30th January, 1911.

BAYSWATER NEGLECTED CHILDREN'S HOME.

I am gratified to report that during the past year the work amongst the boys in the above Home has been carried on with good success.

Some valuable additions have been made to the building during the year. These include a new dormitory large enough to accommodate 22 boys. A new school has also been erected, conveniently large to supply accommodation for all the scholars.

The general health of the boys has been satisfactory, no illness of a serious nature has occurred. Dr. Craig attends the Home regularly.

The boys have plenty of recreation with outdoor games, including cricket and football matches. Picnics and other outings have been arranged during the holiday time.

The boys are encouraged to interest themselves in gardening and orchard work. They have an excellent opportunity in this respect. Their abilities are appreciated in this direction by the employers of the various boys who have passed into service during the year.

Yours obediently,

JNO. BLAKE,
Superintendent.

To the Secretary,
Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools Department, Melbourne.

MINTARO REFORMATORY FOR PROTESTANT GIRLS, MONNEGATTA.

REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1911.

The year that has just closed has seen a marked decrease in the number of girls in the Mintaro School. At its commencement there were 14 on its roll. Gradually the number declined, until at its close there were only 7. No new girl has been sent in since September, 1910. At the close of 1908 there were 27 girls enrolled, a year later there were 25. The largest number in the Home was 31 towards the close of 1909. There were 18 admissions and 25 discharges during the year, all of these being of girls who entered the Home prior to the beginning of the year. Some of them entered, or left, more than once during the year.

The health of the girls generally has been good. Passing ailments, that required professional treatment (and happily they were few), were treated by Doctor Murdoch, of Romsey. Messrs. Tuckfield and Lyons, of Melbourne, have rendered good service in dental troubles.

The behaviour of the girls has been good on the whole, punishment for offences being comparatively rare.

Towards the end of March, Mrs. Adamson (who had done splendid work as Matron for six years) retired, and her place was taken by the present Matron, Mrs. Collocott.

The co-operation of the officials of the Department has been ungrudgingly given, and is gratefully acknowledged.

A. COLLOCOTT,
Matron.

Mintaro, 15th January, 1912.

RIDDELL'S CREEK REFORMATORY.

REPORT FOR 1911.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

Some changes have taken place in the staff of this Home, chief amongst these being a change of Matrons early in the year.

Quite a number of the older girls have been placed out in suitable situations, and the majority of these are giving satisfaction to their employers, and seem to have greatly profited by the earnest efforts which were put forth on their behalf whilst in the Home.

The spirit amongst those remaining is exceptionally good, and most of them appear to be earnestly endeavoring to improve themselves both in their work and character.

The health of the inmates has been excellent. Suitable entertainments have been provided from time to time. A biograph company gave an enjoyable treat.

A visit from Commissioner and Mrs. Hay, and a company of officers, and also the special Christmas treats and presents, were much enjoyed and appreciated by the girls.

We are full of faith for a most successful period during 1912.

ADA M. YOUNG,
Matron.

GIRLS' REFORMATORY MURRUMBEENA.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1911.

The health of the girls has been all that could be desired, and there has been no need for the doctor's attendance during the year.

There have been disappointments in our work, but in the main the results have been satisfactory. Most of the girls in situations are doing well, and the conduct of the girls in the Home is good.

The Christmas season was greatly enjoyed, the distribution of Christmas presents and prizes for highest marks gained, bringing pleasure and satisfaction to all. Commissioner and Mrs. Hay's annual treat in the City Temple was also very enjoyable.

A shorthand class (a new departure during the year) is proving a great success. Staff-Captain Blaskett, the teacher, is indefatigable in his efforts. This class consists of the studiously inclined, more suitable for clerical than domestic work. That these girls are working with a determined will, the results of the two quarterly examinations show. In a recent examination one girl gained the highest marks, 100 per cent., and no girl gained less than 92 per cent.

A calisthenics class held during the winter months was interesting and beneficial in every way.

We endeavour to train the girls to do with all their might any work they undertake, whether it be domestic or otherwise, and we find them responsive to our teaching and advice.

We have much to be thankful for in the successes of the past year, and look forward with hopefulness to the coming year's work.

MARGARET LOWERY,
Matron.

16th January, 1912.

GIRLS' REFORMATORY, OAKLEIGH.

To the Secretary,

Sir,—I have the honour to report that, during the year ending 31st December, 1911, the work of the Institute has advanced in a manner conducive to the well-being of the inmates.

Their conduct has been very good, and the general health all that could be desired, which is in a great measure attributable to the bracing air and healthy surroundings of the locality.

A visit was paid during the year by Mr. McKinley, the then Mayor, and Councillors of Malvern who expressed their high appreciation of the good being done.

In addition to our constant efforts to brighten and make happy as possible the time spent here by the girls, some kind friends aided us by providing extra musical and other entertainments, the most pleasing being the visit of Miss Amy Castles, when that amiable young lady charmed all by her marvellous gift of song.

Our grateful thanks are due to the many esteemed friends who by their generosity enabled us to make the Christmas festivities a bright and enjoyable termination to a very encouraging year.

I have the honour to remain,
Yours respectfully,
F. B. O'ROURKE.

REPORT OF VISITING COMMITTEE.

Our visit to the Oakleigh Reformatory Home, conducted by the Nuns of the Good Shepherd, has been made to-day.

We found the inmates apparently healthy, happy and contented. The dormitories are well aired and ventilated and are models of cleanliness. The lavatories, &c., are very complete and leave nothing to be desired.

All praise is due to the good nuns of this establishment for the care bestowed by them on those placed under their charge and for the good sound training given by them to the children.

Signed,
JOHN GAVAN DUFFY,
EDWARD O'DONNELL,
DAN WHITE,
T. O'LEARY.

BAYSWATER REFORMATORY FOR BOYS.

Bayswater.

Sir,

I have to report that the work during the past year at the above Reformatory has been of an encouraging nature. The boys who are committed to this Home are taught all branches of agricultural, horticultural, and dairy work. The boys who are fortunate enough to spend a few years in this institution should become a valuable acquisition to any farmer requiring the services of an experienced lad. The numbers have been somewhat smaller than in previous years, but I take this as being an evidence that the splendid work carried out by the various institutions in Victoria has been successful in dealing with these classes of boys. The general health of the boys during the year has been very satisfactory. It is a rare thing to have a case of serious illness in the Home. Officialism is discouraged, and every effort is made by the officers in charge to impress the boy with the idea that this Institution exists for the instruction and general training of all boys received. No effort is spared to assist each boy to become a useful and honorable citizen. The lads in this Home are given every opportunity to indulge in outdoor games, and some of them are ardent cricketers and footballers. Needless to say they appreciate the open-air recreation.

Yours obediently,
JNO. BLAKE,
Superintendent.

The Secretary,
Neglected Children and Reformatory Department,
Melbourne.

EXCELSIOR HOME, ELWOOD-STREET, BRIGHTON.

3rd March, 1912.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911. The year has been remarkable for the small number of boys received. The health of the lads has been good. The school reports are most satisfactory. The conduct of those at service and on probation is very encouraging.

W. GROOM,
Superintendent.

HEATHFIELD HOME, APOLLO BAY.

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

During the past year, I have had an average of six boys in the Home, and I am pleased to state there has been only one absconder, and he was returned after an absence of two months, and has remained contentedly since his return six months ago.

The conduct of these boys has been remarkably good, very little chastisement being needed.

The health of the boys has been very good; one boy had the misfortune to cut his finger off with an axe, and had to get medical assistance.

I took all the boys to the sports held on New Year's Day, and three of them were successful in winning prizes for the pedestrian events. I also took them to the annual tea meeting where they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. They are allowed every Saturday afternoon off to go fishing, and nearly every evening in the warm weather they are taken for a row in the boat; they are all taught to row and swim, and ride on horseback, and every boy takes his turn to ride into the township when required, and not one boy has misplaced the confidence I put in him.

The boys were presented with Coronation medals, and also with a lot of sweets for Christmas by some of the business people in the township.

Unfortunately, only one boy out of six that I sent out to service, has proved satisfactory. Two absconded before they reached their destination, and three only remained in their places a short while.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Officers of the Department for their kind assistance and attention at all times.

H. CLYNE,
Superintendent.

KINGSBURY REFORMATORY, NEWSTEAD.

Sir,

I beg to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

The health of the boys under my care has been excellent, none needing the doctor during the whole year.

Those at service have done well, with the exception of two, who absconded and were away for some time, but are now doing all right.

The demand for boys for service is greater than the supply.

We had several visits from many old boys throughout the whole State and three from New South Wales and Queensland, while many others correspond regularly.

I wish to thank the Officers of the Department for their help and sympathy.

A. BREBNER,
Superintendent.

STRAIGHT VIEW FARM REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ending 31st December, 1911.

Very little has transpired during the year. The boys' health has been excellent and conduct fairly good. Those placed at service have done well.

JAS. McMAHON,
Superintendent.