

1929.

VICTORIA.

CHILDREN'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND
REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1928.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT PURSUANT TO ACTS 6 GEO. V. No. 2703,
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REPORT.

CHILDREN'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

Melbourne, 30th June, 1929.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my Report on the working of the Children's Welfare Department and the Reformatory Schools for the year ending 31st December, 1928, with returns, statements of expenditure, and statistical tables, as required by the provisions of the Acts administered in this Department.

TABLE I.—COMMITTALS DURING THE YEAR 1928, WITH CAUSES OF SUCH COMMITTALS.

<i>Neglected.</i>				<i>Reformatory.</i>			
No means	..	..	1	Larceny	..	..	16
Neglected	..	..	165	Breaking and entering	..	..	12
Larceny	..	..	24	Idle and disorderly	..	..	5
Forgery and uttering	..	..	1	Neglected	..	..	2
Uncontrollable	..	..	6	Dwelling with a thief	..	..	1
Breaking and entering	..	..	9	Illegally using car	..	..	1
Assault and robbery	..	..	1	Illegally using horse	..	..	1
Idle and disorderly	..	..	1	Immoral living	..	..	1
Rogue and vagabond	..	..	1	Indecent assault	..	..	3
Section 16, Children's Maintenance Act	..	..	501	Carrying a bludgeon	..	..	1
Section 12, Children's Maintenance Act	..	..	14	Unlawfully on premises	..	..	1
Section 5, Children's Maintenance Act	..	..	42				44
Section 15, Infant Life Protection Act	..	..	127				
				<i>Transfers from Gaols.</i>			
				Housebreaking	..	..	1
				Obscene exposure	..	..	1
				False pretences	..	..	1
				Larceny	..	..	1
				Indecent assault	..	..	1
							5
<hr/>				<hr/>			
893				49			

I give here a comparative table of the number of committals for the past five years:—

1924	..	Neglected	838	..	Reformatory	47	..	Transfer from Gaols	7	= 892
1925	..	..	792	..	..	44	..	..	3	= 839
1926	..	..	794	..	..	39	..	..	10	= 843
1927	..	..	850	..	..	38	..	..	5	= 893
1928	..	..	893	..	..	44	..	..	5	= 942

Table I. shows the various sources from which children come into the charge of the Children's Welfare Department. For the period under review, 209 children were committed direct from the various Courts as "Neglected" children, and 44 were committed to the reformatories.

During the year there were only five transfers from gaol under Section 340 of the Crimes Act.

More than half of the 942 children who became wards of the Department this year did so through the operation of Section 16 of the Children's Maintenance Act. This section provides that where any child is without sufficient means of support, and no available legal proceedings can be taken to obtain sufficient means of support for such child, the mother, relatives, or officers of the Police Force may make application to have the child made a ward of the Children's Welfare Department. There was an increase of 40 children under this section this year as against the number for the previous year. Section 12 of the Children's Maintenance Act makes provision for the removal of her children from an unworthy mother—for the previous year eighteen children were so removed, while for this year only twelve children were transferred.

Section 5 of the Children's Maintenance Act provides for the children of a mother who dies while receiving maintenance for the children. This year 42 children were so provided for as against 49 for the year 1927. We put Section 5 into operation only when there are no relatives able and ready to provide for the children suitably.

Section 15 of the Infant Life Protection Act provides that where the arrears of maintenance for such children extends for four consecutive weeks, the children automatically become wards of the Children's Welfare Department. During this year 127 children so became wards. The operation of this section of the Infant Life Protection Act lends itself to the desertion of the children by their parents, and as far as we possibly can we guard against the deliberate use of this section to impose on the State. Still, with all our care, there are cases where the maintenance ceases to be paid a fortnight after the child has been boarded out, and we are unable to locate the parents. In the interests of the child, however, we take some risk in many cases lest worse things happen.

TABLE II.—COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF CHILDREN UNDER SUPERVISION OF THE CHILDREN'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT FOR PAST FIVE YEARS.

Year.	Wards of Children's Welfare Department in Foster Homes, Institutions, Service, or Probation.	Boarded-out to Mother under Section 3 <i>Children's Maintenance Act 1919.</i>	Boarded-out with Registered Persons under <i>Infant Life Protection Act 1915.</i>	Total under Supervision during Year.
1924	6,488	7,660	758	14,903
1925	6,712	8,154	828	15,694
1926	6,913	8,532	700	16,145
1927	7,161	9,094	680	16,935
1928	7,496	9,901	646	18,046

The 18,046 children who were during the year under the direct supervision of the Department were not all fully maintained by the State. The 646 children under the Infant Life Protection Act were not a cost to the State except for medical and nursing supervision. Their maintenance while under the Infant Life Protection Act was paid for by parents or relatives. However, during the year, 127 became a cost to the State under Section 15 of the Act.

All of the 7,496 wards shown in above table were not a cost to the State, as 1,842 were placed on probation with friends or relatives, and while on probation no regular maintenance is paid for them, though at times we have smaller expenses to meet regarding them. Again, 441 wards were in Service homes, and while there are not a cost to the State except as regard supervision expenses.

TABLE III.—CHILDREN A CHARGE ON THE STATE ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928, AND A COMPARISON FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

Year.	Boarded-out with their own Mothers, Section 3 <i>Children's Maintenance Act.</i>	Boarded-out with Foster Parents.	Children in Institutions.	Children in Reformatories.	Totals.
1924	7,660	4,123	477	75	12,335
1925	8,154	4,212	477	86	12,929
1926	8,532	4,263	502	83	13,380
1927	9,094	4,367	558	98	14,117
1928	9,904	4,473	578	111*	15,066

* Many of these are mentally defective wards whom we cannot, with safety to themselves or others, allow to leave the institutions so long as we have control.

TABLE IV.—WARDS OF THE CHILDREN'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

(a) WARDS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

Institutions.	<i>Neglected.</i>		<i>Reformatory.</i>	
	Boys.	Girls.	Institutions.	Boys. Girls.
Royal Park Receiving Depots	146	95	Royal Park Reformatories	7 0

(b) WARDS IN NON-STATE INSTITUTIONS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

<i>Neglected.</i>				<i>Reformatory.</i>			
Institutions.	Religion.	Boys.	Girls.	Institutions.	Religion.	Boys.	Girls.
Abbotsford Industrial School	R.C.	..	*50	Bayswater Reformatory ..	S.A.	†44	..
St. Augustine's Orphanage ..	R.C.	63	..	Oakleigh Reformatory ..	R.C.	..	12
Bayswater Boys' Home ..	S.A.	61	..	Riddell Reformatory ..	S.A.	..	48
Box Hill Boys' Home ..	S.A.	96	..				
East Kew Girls' Home ..	S.A.	..	67				
		220	117			44	60

* This does not include the twelve girls who were absent on Christmas holidays.

† This includes both Protestant and Roman Catholic Reformatory lads, as at present we have only one Boys' Reformatory for all wards.

(c) WARDS IN FOSTER HOMES—ON PROBATION, OR AT SERVICE.

Four thousand four hundred and seventy-three wards were boarded out during this year in 3,170 foster homes, so that we still have an average of less than two wards in each foster home. If it is advisable to do so, we keep the members of the same family together as far as possible, but when the families number more than three children, it is not always possible to keep them in the same foster home. At times, on account of bad habits or bad influences, it is very desirable that the members of a family should be separated for their own good.

As pointed out in this Report, all our wards are not a cost to the State under normal circumstances. We do not pay maintenance for the children who are placed on probation. During this year there were 1,842 wards on probation either with their own parents or with foster parents. It often happens that children have got out of the control of their parents, and have been sent to this Department from the Children's Courts. After these children have been checked, and have come to realize what disobedience and delinquency will mean to them, we allow them in many cases home on trial while still keeping legal control over them. This is how children come to be on probation with their own parents.

During this year we had 6,315 wards in foster homes as against 578 in institutions. Most of those in the institutions are there on account of some mental or moral deficiency, or because of waywardness or delinquency.

On 31st December, 1928, there were 441 wards in service homes. Of these, 258 were youths and 183 were girls. The ages of these service wards range from about fifteen to twenty years. There has been a decrease in the number at service this year, and this is accounted for by the greater numbers placed on probation and by the difficulty of securing suitable country situations this year for our boys. The poor harvest, and the necessity for small economies by the "man on the land," have led to the return of many of our lads at a time when, in normal years, every available lad would have been in a situation.

Most of our working wards have their own Savings Bank account, and we have also a savings account at our office for each ward who is earning. The savings sent in during 1928 amounted to £2,675 14s. 10d. The whole amount now to the credit of the wages account at this office is £8,790 18s. 10d. The largest amount drawn by a ward whose term expired during the year was £46 4s. 11d.

REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER AND SUPERINTENDENT, ROYAL PARK DEPOTS.

Boys and Girls' Depots,
Royal Park.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

SIR,

I beg to submit the following report on the medical work of the Depot for the year ending 31st December, 1928 :—

1. *Health.*—The general health of the inmates has been good. This can be chiefly attributed to the care and skill of the Matron, the Superintendent of the Boys' Depot, and their respective staffs.

Of the children admitted to the Depot, few have been found to be entirely free from physical defects, the commonest of these being varying grades of malnutrition, dental defects, defects of the eye, ear, nose, and throat, and congenital syphilis.

Epidemic sickness is one of the greatest problems at the Depot, and will continue so until an admission ward for the isolation of incoming contacts and "carriers" is provided. During the year, all of the commoner infectious diseases have broken out at the Depot (fifteen outbreaks in all). Fortunately, they were controlled and prevented from reaching large dimensions.

I attach a list of various new measures in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease introduced during the past year.

Owing to the work and enthusiasm of Dr. H. Bull, of the staff of the City Health Officer, "Schick" and "Dick" testing and immunization against diphtheria and scarlet fever is now properly organized at the Depot. From now on it will rest with the Medical Officer to carry on the work. I would stress the necessity for its continuance, as it is now part of the routine of similar institutions in Great Britain and the United States of America.

Dr. C. H. Johnson, of the V.D. Clinic, continues to visit the Depot once a week, with a trained staff. The institution of the routine Wasserman test has resulted in a large increase of the children undergoing special treatment in Dr. Johnson's clinic at the Depot.

2. *Dental Treatment.*—Mr. J. R. Heath, Dental Surgeon, continues to visit the Depot on three days a week, and the dental defects of the inmates are being dealt with very satisfactorily.

3. *Psychological Examination.*—The systematic psychological examination and classification of inmates by Dr. K. C. Cunningham, assisted by Dr. Batchelard and Mr. Whiteoak, of the Teachers' College, and Miss Evans, of the Depot School, has continued throughout the year. The methods have been elaborated, and the results are proving the great value of this work. Occasional special examinations are performed at the request of the Children's Court.

4. *Mental Deficiency.*—The large number of mentally-deficient children at the Depot is increasing. It is to be hoped that some provision for the segregation and special education of these cases will soon be provided.

5. *Mortality.*—The following table gives the details of deaths among the inmates during the year. It will be noted that two deaths occurred at the Depot and ten in hospital, and also that most of the cases were seriously ill on admission to the Depot.

The progress that is being made in providing increased accommodation and facilities at the Depot is very necessary. Overcrowding has been frequent during the year, and the congestion caused by the present limited ability to control infectious disease has played a large part in the causation of such.

In conclusion, I would add that although this report is for the twelve months ending 31st December, 1928, I have held the position of Medical Officer from 14th April, 1928. I am, therefore, indebted to my predecessor, Dr. A. P. Derham, for information as to the medical service prior to that date.

I wish to express my appreciation of Dr. A. P. Derham's work in raising the medical service at the Depot to such a high standard of efficiency.

I have the honour to be,

Yours obediently,

(Sgd.) V. P. JOHNSON, M.B.B.S.,
Medical Officer.

TABLE SHOWING CAUSES OF DEATHS.

Serial No.	Date of Admission.	Age on Admission.	Sex.	Condition on Admission.	Date Transferred to Hospital.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.
1	13.12.27	Born 10.10.26	M.	Poor condition; impetigo; splenomegaly	To Children's Hospital, 16.1.28	17.1.28	Acute dysentery
2	18.1.28	Born 2.9.27	M.	Poor condition; hypertelorism; rash; illegitimate	To Children's Hospital, 14.2.28	16.2.28	Gastro-enteritis
3	26.1.28	Born 25.12.27	M.	Twin, undersized, poorly nourished; illegitimate	..	21.2.28 Depot	Malnutrition, thrush, Respiratory failure
4	3.2.28	Born 20.4.27	M.	Healthy; illegitimate ..	To Children's Hospital, 20.2.28	24.2.28	Infective gastro-enteritis
5	26.1.28	Born 25.12.27	M.	Poor condition; twin; illegitimate	..	2.3.28, Depot	Malnutrition. Cardiac failure
6	10.3.28	Born 16.11.27	F.	Severe malnutrition; scabies	To Children's Hospital, 19.3.28	24.3.28	Malnutrition
7	13.4.28	Born 31.5.27	M.	Desperately ill ..	To Children's Hospital, 13.4.28	13.4.28	Gastro-enteritis
8	12.3.24	Born 10.5.19	M.	Congenital syphilis; amentia	To Alfred Hospital, 12.9.28	19.9.28	Congenital syphilis; septic pyaemia
9	14.5.27	Born 24.11.26	M.	Congenital syphilis ..	To Children's Hospital, 15.9.28	24.9.28	Broncho-pneumonia
10	29.9.28	Born 28.10.23	M.	Severe rickets; illegitimate	To Children's Hospital, 16.10.28	25.10.28	Broncho-pneumonia; rickets
11	7.4.27	Born 8.9.26	F.	Congenital syphilis; illegitimate	To Children's Hospital, 7.11.28	8.11.28	Accidental burns
12	9.11.29	Born 2.9.29	M.	Marasmus; rash; acute bronchitis	To Children's Hospital, 14.12.28	18.12.28	Marasmus; broncho-pneumonia

ABBOTSFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL (R.C.).

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to forward my report for the year ended 31st December, 1928.

The number in school on the 31st December, 1928, was 50.

The health of the girls has been good, and the general behaviour satisfactory.

The children attending school made fair progress during the year. One girl gained a scholarship, and is now attending a business college.

The girls capable of being trained in culinary matters have the benefit of practical lessons in cookery, and facility is afforded for self-improvement in similarly useful domestic knowledge.

Among the gala days were those on which the School was honoured by visits from the Papal Legate, His Eminence Cardinal Cerretti, and the visiting Prelates of the Eucharistic Congress.

During the holiday season they enjoyed various recreative outings, such as excursions to the beach, Zoo, pantomime, and moving pictures. Enjoyable recreations were provided in the various school fêtes, notably amongst these being the delightful Santa Claus treat very generously supplied by members of Tattersall's Club Committee, also a picnic to Moonee Valley and distribution of toys given by the Automobile Club. To Mr. White of the *Sun Pictorial* gratitude is due for the gift of toys and sweets.

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

In concluding this 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 be, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

(Sgd.) CATHERINE O'CONNOR,
Provincial Superior.

BAYSWATER INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1928.

At the commencement of the year there were 62 boys in the home, and during the year 32 were admitted, 33 discharged, leaving 61 at the end of December.

The discharged comprised 15 sent to situations, 13 allowed on probation, 3 were transferred to the reformatory, and 2 were admitted to hospital. One of these boys died.

The health and conduct of the boys has been good. Their progress at school has been satisfactory, and the majority of those sent to situations and allowed on probation have given satisfaction.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) J. R. STEPHEN,
Superintendent.

THE SALVATION ARMY BOYS' HOME, BOX HILL.

19th February, 1929.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

At your request we are herewith forwarding our annual report for the year 1928.

On 1st January, 1928, we had 90 wards, and during the year received 33 new boys, and three from probation, making a total of 126. Of these, 15 were sent to situations and 15 went on probation, leaving 96 in the Home at the end of the year.

The health of the boys has been good, and we are pleased to say that we have no case of sickness to report. Their conduct, although, perhaps, not so good as we would have wished, altogether has been very satisfactory.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) M. JOHN,
Superintendent.

CATHERINE BOOTH GIRLS' HOME, EAST KEW.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour of submitting the annual report of the above-named School.

The conduct of the children during the year has been generally good, there has not been any serious outbreak of illness, and the children at school have made very good progress.

There are now 67 wards of the State. During the year 18 wards were discharged and 17 wards admitted.

Yours obediently,

(Sgd.) CHARLOTTE SCOTT,
Matron.

BAYSWATER REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to submit my report for year ending 31st December, 1928, for above School.

We commenced the year with 45 boys in the Home; 40 were admitted, and 41 were discharged, leaving 44 in the Home at the end of the year.

Those admitted included—

- 31 from Department.
- 6 transferred from Court and gaol.
- 3 transfers from Children's Welfare Department.

Those discharged were—

- 15 to situations.
- 10 on probation.
- 10 absconded.
- 2 to hospital.
- 4 returned to friends—time expired.

We desire to extend our very grateful thanks to Dr. Langley, who has very willingly given any medical attention required. On the whole, however, the health of the boys has been good.

The boys' conduct has been good, and their progress at night school satisfactory. Those who were sent to situations or on probation have been generally satisfactory.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) J. R. STEPHEN,
Superintendent.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S ORPHANAGE, GEELONG.

21st March, 1929.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

The following is the report of the State Wards of St. Augustine's for the year ended 31st December, 1928 :—

On 1st January, 1928, there were 54 State wards present in the Orphanage. Forty more were admitted during the year. Of these, 31 were discharged throughout the year, leaving 63 in the Institution on 31st December, 1928.

The health and conduct of the boys during the year were excellent.

I beg to thank the officers of the Department for their kindness and courtesy at all times.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) F. H. MOLLOY.

OAKLEIGH REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

DEAR SIR,

In furnishing the returns for the year under review, I am happy to inform you that the general conduct of the wards has been most satisfactory.

One girl was placed on probation—doing well. Many ex-wards visit frequently, and thus prove their gratitude for training received.

Many more enjoyable evenings have been spent since the gift of a bioscope has been received. Amongst the pictures shown were several of a highly instructive and educational class.

Hoping the year upon which we have entered may bring many blessings to you and all connected with the great work for State wards,

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,
(Sgd.) CATHERINE PHELAN,
Mother Superior.

GIRLS' REFORMATORY, RIDDELL.

The Secretary,
Children's Welfare Department.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending the 31st December, 1928.

We commenced the year with 40 girls in the Home, 23 were admitted, 9 were sent to situations, 5 on probation and 1 absconded. We finished the year with 48 girls remaining in the Home.

The health of the girls, apart from that in connexion with the clinical work, has been exceptionally good. I am also pleased to say we have been most successful in that branch of our work, for which we would like to thank Dr. Johnson for his help and unfailing kindness throughout the year. The conduct of the girls has been good.

The situation girls are doing well, and also most of the girls on probation, and we believe they are trying to make good.

We would like to thank the Secretary, Mr. Thomas, for his help, interest, and thoughtfulness during the past year, also the officers of the Department for their assistance in our work.

(Sgd.) A. COPE,
Matron

TABLE V.—NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY CHILDREN.

STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FOR 1928.

	Neglected.			Reformatory.			Grand Total.
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1928	3,791	3,206	6,997	98	66	164	7,161

ADMISSIONS.

Court committals (Neglected)	130	79	209	31	13	44	253
Section 16 } Children's Maintenance Act	281	220	501	..	..	..	501
Section 12 }	5	9	14	..	..	..	14
Section 5 }	20	22	42	..	..	..	42
Section 15—Infant Life Protection Act	72	55	127	..	..	..	127
Transfer from Children's Welfare Department .. .. .	..	..	..	21	15	36	36
" " Reformatory Schools	3	..	3	..	..	..	3
" " Gaol .. .. .	..	..	..	4	1	5	5
Returned absconders	15	3	18	6	..	6	24
Total admissions	526	388	914	62	29	91	1,005

DISCHARGES.

By Order of Governor in Council	65	59	124	..	..	..	124
" Death	29	12	41	1	..	1	42
" Effluxion of time	227	118	345	38	24	62	407
" Transfer to Children's Welfare Department	21	15	36	..	..	..	36
" " Reformatory Schools .. .. .	..	..	..	3	..	3	3
" " Lunacy Department	5	3	8	..	..	..	8
" Unreturned absconders	32	6	38	9	2	11	49
" Transfer to Gaol .. .. .	..	..	..	1	..	1	1
	379	213	592	52	26	78	670
Number under supervision on 31st December, 1928	3,938	3,381	7,319	108	69	177	7,496

TABLE V.—NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY CHILDREN—STATEMENT OF ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FOR 1928—*continued.*

	Neglected.			Reformatory.			Grand Total.
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	
LOCATION.							
* { Boarded out with foster-mothers	2,437	2,036	4,473	..	..	..	4,473
{ Maintained in institutions	366	212	578	51	60	111	689
In Service Homes	247	177	424	11	6	17	441
With relations and others without cost to State	866	927	1,793	46	3	49	1,842
In Hospital	22	17	39	..	..	..	39
On a visit .. .. .	..	12	12	..	..	..	12
Totals	3,938	3,381	7,319	108	69	177	7,496

* In addition to these, 25 (3 males and 22 females) who are free from legal control are still being maintained by the State, as they are incapacitated.

TABLE VI.—PARENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMMITTED IN 1928.

Particulars Supplied with Order of Committal.	Neglected.	Reformatory.	Total.
Parents, poor, good character	84	19	103
„ „ doubtful character	10	..	10
„ drunkards	5	1	6
„ dead	44	1	45
„ deserted	33	1	34
„ unknown	20	1	21
„ in gaol	6	..	6
„ invalids	2	..	2
„ in asylum	2	..	2
Father dead ; mother poor, good character	55	11	66
„ „ „ doubtful character	7	1	8
„ „ „ deserted	9	..	9
„ „ „ drunkard	1	..	1
„ „ „ invalid	9	..	9
„ „ „ insane	4	..	4
Father deserted ; mother poor, good character	289	4	293
„ „ „ „ doubtful character	21	..	21
„ „ „ in asylum	1	..	1
„ „ „ dead	50	..	50
„ „ „ invalid	10	..	10
„ „ „ in gaol	1	..	1
Father unknown ; mother good character	31	2	33
„ „ „ „ doubtful	4	..	4
„ „ „ „ dead	11	..	11
„ „ „ „ deserted	15	..	15
„ „ „ „ mental	1	..	1
„ „ „ „ invalid	2	..	2
Father invalid ; mother dead	54	..	54
„ „ „ „ good character	16	3	19
„ „ „ „ deserted	2	..	2
Father drunkard ; mother doubtful	3	..	3
„ „ „ „ dead	4	..	4
Father good character ; mother doubtful character	4	..	4
„ „ „ „ „ dead	30	4	34
„ „ „ „ „ deserted	10	..	10
„ „ „ „ „ in asylum	9	..	9
Father in gaol ; mother good character	15	..	15
„ „ „ „ „ dead	7	1	8
„ „ „ „ „ deserted	1	..	1
Father in hospital ; mother dead	2	..	2
Father in asylum ; mother good character	4	..	4
„ „ „ „ „ in hospital	5	..	5
Total	893	49	942

TABLE VII.—AGES, RELIGIONS, AND BIRTHPLACES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED IN 1928.
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 ..	236	76	54	42	49	46	45	49	47	46	57	50	28	33	16	10	9	893
Reformatory ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	8	14	24	49
Totals ..	236	76	54	42	49	46	45	49	47	46	57	50	29	35	24	24	33	942

RELIGIONS.

	Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Lutheran.	Christian Israelite.	Hebrew.	Total.
Neglected ..	627	262	1	3	..	893
Reformatory ..	26	21	1	..	1	49
Totals ..	653	283	2	3	1	942

BIRTHPLACES.

	Australia and New Zealand.	England.	Scotland.	Canada.	Total.
Neglected ..	872	17	4	..	893
Reformatory ..	47	1	..	1	49
Totals ..	919	18	4	1	942

TABLE VIII.—AGES OF NEGLECTED AND REFORMATORY CHILDREN UNDER SUPERVISION
ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

	Neglected.			Reformatory.		
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Under 12 months ..	79	59	138	..	..	..
Between 1 and 2 years ..	143	102	245	..	..	..
" 2 " 3 " ..	141	109	250	..	..	..
" 3 " 4 " ..	193	162	355	..	..	..
" 4 " 5 " ..	189	162	351	..	..	..
" 5 " 6 " ..	183	140	323	..	..	..
" 6 " 7 " ..	188	142	330	..	..	..
" 7 " 8 " ..	194	175	369	..	..	..
" 8 " 9 " ..	212	188	400	..	..	..
" 9 " 10 " ..	208	189	397	..	..	..
" 10 " 11 " ..	254	223	477	..	..	..
" 11 " 12 " ..	253	212	465	..	..	..
" 12 " 13 " ..	283	213	496	..	..	..
" 13 " 14 " ..	295	244	539	1	..	1
" 14 " 15 " ..	319	273	592	5	..	5
" 15 " 16 " ..	287	221	508	20	5	25
" 16 " 17 " ..	270	194	464	41	11	52
" 17 " 18 " ..	243	186	429	36	22	58
" 18 " 19 " ..	3	100	103	3	16	19
" 19 " 20 " ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	3,938	3,381	7,319	108	69	177

TABLE IX.—DEATHS, 1928.

Length of Time under Department.	Under 12 months.	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 to 17.	17 to 18.	18 to 19.	19 to 20.	Total.
1 day	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
1 week	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
2 "	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
3 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
1 month	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
2 "	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
6 "	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
1 year	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	6
2 "	..	1	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
3 "	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
4 "	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
7 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2
11 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
14 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
15 "	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2
Total ..	14	6	2	3	..	1	..	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	..	2	1	1	..	1	42

Nine died in foster-homes, 17 in Children's Hospital, 4 in Fairfield Hospital, 2 at Depot, 1 at Daylesford Hospital, 1 at Corowa Hospital, 1 at Ballarat Hospital, 4 at Alfred Hospital, 1 at Talbot Colony, 1 at Kew Asylum, and 1 in Melbourne Hospital—Total, 42.

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1928.

Blood poisoning	..	..	..	..	..	1	Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	9
Accidentally fell	..	..	..	..	..	1	Malnutrition, thrush, and heart failure	..	..	..	..	..	1
Abscess on brain	..	..	..	..	..	1	Colitis	..	..	..	..	..	1
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	..	4	Gastro-enteritis	..	..	..	..	..	10
Thrown from horse	..	..	..	..	..	1	Septicaemia	..	..	..	..	..	1
Kidney trouble	..	..	..	..	..	1	Peritonitis	..	..	..	..	..	1
Drowned	..	..	..	..	..	2	Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	..	1
Burns	..	..	..	..	..	1	Streptococcal throat infection	..	..	..	..	..	1
Heart failure	..	..	..	..	..	4	Acute dysentery	..	..	..	..	..	1
							Total ..	..	..	..	..	..	42

During the year 1928, there were five deaths due to accidents as against four such deaths in 1927.

There were 7,496 wards under the care of the Children's Welfare Department during the year 1928, and the number of deaths from all causes was 42, so that the death rate for the year ending 31st December, 1928, was .56 per cent. as against .36 per cent. for the year 1927.

The following table gives the comparison of death rates for the past seven years:—

Year.	Number of Wards.	Number of Deaths.	Death Rate Percentage for All Wards.
1922..	6,168	56	.9 per cent.
1923..	6,360	61	.95 "
1924..	6,488	40	.6 "
1925..	6,712	35	.52 "
1926..	6,913	33	.47 "
1927..	7,161	26	.36 "
1928..	7,496	42	.56 "

CHILDREN BOARDED OUT TO THEIR MOTHERS UNDER CHILDREN'S MAINTENANCE ACT IN 1928.

During the year, 1,647 applications for assistance were made in respect of 4,101 children. Of these applications, 1,257, representing 3,251 children, were granted; 209, representing 417 children, were withdrawn; and 181, representing 433 children, were refused. Three hundred and fifty-two of the applications granted were made by widows; 346 by wives whose husbands were invalids or in hospitals or sanatoriums; 348 by deserted wives; 102 by wives whose husbands were invalid or old-age pensioners; 75 by wives whose husbands were in gaol; 28 by wives whose husbands were in mental asylums, and 6 by divorced wives.

Payments for 2,441 children ceased during the year for the following reasons :—

Children attained the age of fourteen years	950
Improvement in mother's circumstances	593
Renewal of support by fathers	475
Mothers re-married	157
Made Wards, Section 16, Children's Maintenance Act	76
Mothers left State of Victoria	54
Made Wards, Section 5, Children's Maintenance Act (death of mothers)	42
Died	40
Admitted to institutions	24
Made Wards through mother's misconduct	14
Children working before fourteen years of age (exemptions)	11
Ceased to be a cost on death of mothers	5
Total	2,441

The number of mothers who were receiving assistance on 31st December, 1928, was 4,184 with 9,904 children; and the position so far as the fathers are concerned is shown below :—

Dead	1,894
Deserted	892
Invalids (hospitals, asylums, or sanatoria)	751
Pensioners (old-age or invalid)	455
In lunatic asylums	91
In gaol	71
Divorced	30
Total	4,184

Of the 9,904 children being paid for on 31st December, 1928, 9,866 were under the age of 14 years; 36 were between 14 and 15 years; and 2 were between the ages of 15 and 16 years. The sex of the children was—males, 5,121; females, 4,783.

In addition to the money we pay to mothers for the maintenance of their children, we also pay for medical attention for them and for their school books and requisites. £10,750 0s. 6d. was paid during this year for medical attention and dental requirements of the children under our care, and £3,367 2s. 7d. for their school books and requisites.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT 1915 (No. 2670).

Of the 646 children under supervision during the year, 120 were removed by their parents; 127 (boys 72, girls 55) became wards of State through arrears in maintenance; 22 were adopted as arranged for by the Department at the mothers' requests; 25 reached the age of five years, and so ceased to be under the supervision; and 15 died.

AGES OF CHILDREN IN REGISTERED HOMES ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

Weeks.					Months.												Years.			Total.
1	2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	2	3	4		
..	1	6	5	7	10	14	10	12	13	8	16	14	10	16	56	70	36	33	337	

The distribution of these children in registered homes was as follows :—There were 129 homes with only one child in each home; 37 with two children; 16 with three children; 9 with four children; 4 with five children; and 5 with six children in each home. In registered homes where there are more than four children boarded out, the registered nurses in charge of the homes have suitable assistance, and the home is specially fitted to deal with the number of children placed therein. It is not always an easy matter to secure suitable registered homes, but we carefully avoid overcrowding, and the homes are under regular and expert supervision.

There were 128 new applications for registration as nurses under this Act during the year, and of these twelve were refused.

DEATHS AMONG CHILDREN BOARDED OUT UNDER INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

	Weeks.							Months.												Years.			Total.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	2	3	4	
Length of time children were in home at time of death	1	..	..	1	2	2	..	1	1	2	1	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	15
Ages of children at death	2	..	..	4	1	1	1	..	1	1	2	1	..	1	..	..	15

Many of these infants are very delicate when first boarded out under this Act, and are at once placed in specially good registered homes so that they may get expert nursing and regular medical attention. For the year under review 646 children were boarded out in registered homes under the Infant Life Protection Act, and among these were fifteen deaths during the year. This gives a death rate in this branch of 2.3 per cent. for this year as against 3.2 per cent. for the year 1927.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Bacillary Dysentery, 1; Congenital Deformities and Heart Failure, 1; Colitis Exhaustion and Congenital Disease, 1; Cerebral Haemorrhage, 1; Gastro-Enteritis and Pneumonia, 1; Pneumonia, 1; Congenital Defect of Heart, 1; Atresia and Exhaustion, 2; Malnutrition, 1; Bronchial Pneumonia, 1; Toxemia Diphtheria, 1; Enteritis, 1; Broncho-Pneumonia and Exhaustion, 1; Malnutrition, 1.

EXEMPTIONS UNDER INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

Thirty-eight applications for exemption from the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act were made during this year, and, after full inquiries into the cases, all the applications were recommended and granted.

DE FACTO ADOPTIONS, SECTION 26, INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

We received 218 notifications of such adoptions during the year.

CHILDREN UNDER THE CARE OF PRIVATE PERSONS AND INSTITUTIONS UNDER PART VIII. ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

Name of Institution.	Number.
Melbourne Orphanage Asylum, Brighton	303
Presbyterian and Scots Church Society	264
Victorian Children's Aid Society	125
Church of England Mission	99
Methodist Homes, Cheltenham	210
Gordon Institute	60
Burwood Boys' Home	35
Methodist Boys' Home (Central Mission Training Farm)	66
Presbyterian Girls' Home, Elsternwick	36
St. Joseph's Home, Surrey Hills	127
Sutherland Homes	148
Minton Boys' Home (Ragged Boys' Home)	49
Church of England Boys' Home (Auburn and Canterbury)	51
Kilmany Park Boys' Home, Sale	52
Seaside Garden Home for Boys, Newhaven	112
Mrs. Emily Dare, 56 Francis-street, Yarraville	34
Church of England Home, Clarendon-street, East Melbourne	56
St. Agnes' Home for Girls, Glenroy	61
St. Nicholas' Home for Boys, Glenroy	61
Central Mission, 47 Lang-street, South Yarra	17
Total	1,966

GENERAL.

The work in the Children's Welfare Department is steadily increasing year by year, and its growing activities could not be successfully carried out without the assistance of many persons and agencies outside the staff of the Department.

Our debt to the Police Force grows annually. We add very much to the other duties they have to perform by our constant appeals for help in our work. Never once to my knowledge has their response failed, and we invariably find that the officers and members act with tact and discretion in inquiries entrusted to them. Frequently it happens that, from their fuller knowledge of cases, we are able to right wrongs, and deal more justly with cases that come before us. I cannot speak too highly of the courtesy and helpfulness extended to this Department by the Police.

The Superintendents and Staffs of public hospitals continue to help our children during illness and suffering. There is an ever-ready response from all hospitals, and to these and similar institutions we are grateful. The Convalescent Home at Clayton, and the After-care Home in East Melbourne have been especially kind and considerate. Church workers, Probation Officers, District Nurses, Sisters in Charge of Baby Clinics, and many others have given us much valuable help. The doctors and other officers in the Education Department continue to give us splendid help in connexion with our school wards. The Local Committees and their correspondents are still giving us very valued assistance. Only those who know the amount of fine service given by the Committees, and especially by the correspondents, can appreciate in full the sacrifices made by the members year after year. We appreciate very much all help given, and the spirit in which it is given, and on behalf of the Department I tender to all sincere and heartfelt thanks.

LEWIS THOMAS,
Secretary.

14th October, 1929.

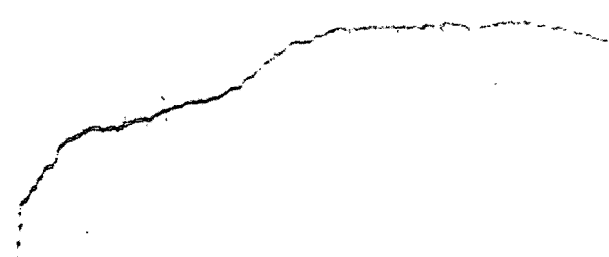


TABLE V.—TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN UNDER THE CHILDREN'S WELFARE ACT, THE CRIMES ACT, AND THE CHILDREN'S MAINTENANCE ACT DURING THE YEAR 1928

Children's Welfare Act and Children's Maintenance Act.	Average Strength.	Items of Expenditure.										
		Provisions.	Clothing and Bedding.	Fuel and Light.	Stores, Stock, and Incidentals.	Medical Attendance.	Transport and Travelling Expenses.	Telephone Service.	Salaries.	Postage and Telegrams.	Maintenance.	Total.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Boys' and Girls' Receiving Depots	257	6,310 14 1*	1,404 12 7	1,404 18 10	1,731 8 0	683 17 7	172 1 11	..	11,579 16 2	..	..	23,287 9 2
Abbotsford Industrial School	59	..	..	..	..	2 0 6	..	..	..	..	1,314 17 10	1,316 18 4
Service Children .. .. .	..	..	519 1 11	..	..	..	943 1 2†	..	..	..	..	1,462 3 1
Boarded-out Children .. .. .	..	..	2,511 12 4	..	..	10,061 2 5	1,155 19 11	..	..	..	371,306 19 6‡	385,035 14 2
Telephone Services .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	166 12 9	..	..	..	166 12 9
Total .. .. .	..	6,310 14 1	4,435 6 10	1,404 18 10	1,731 8 0	10,747 0 6	2,271 3 0	166 12 9	11,579 16 2	..	372,621 17 4	411,268 17 6
Crimes Act (Reformatory Children).												
Oakleigh (Girls)	10	..	..	..	..	3 0 0	..	..	..	..	475 1 11	478 1 11
Riddell (Girls)	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,885 2 11	1,885 2 11
Bayswater (Boys)	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,062 15 6	2,062 15 6
Service Children .. .. .	..	..	338 3 2	..	..	..	266 6 1	..	..	..	..	604 9 3
Telephone Services .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38 2 8	..	..	..	38 2 8
Total .. .. .	..	..	338 3 2	..	..	3 0 0	266 6 1	38 2 8	..	..	4,423 0 4	5,068 12 3
Head Office .. .. .	..	..	..	50 11 1	965 12 3	..	907 19 4	191 5 9	14,519 12 9	865 5 11	..	17,500 7 1
Grand Total .. .. .	..	6,310 14 1	4,773 10 0	1,455 9 11	2,697 0 3	10,750 0 6	3,445 8 5	396 1 2	26,099 8 11	865 5 11	377,044 17 8	433,837 16 10
<i>Deduct—</i>												
Amount received for Maintenance of Children, £16,209 17s. 8d. .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16,476 10 5
All other receipts, £266 12s. 9d. .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Net cost .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	417,361 6 5
Grand Total Cost for 1927 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	385,682 0 8
Net Cost for 1927 .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	368,172 19 5

* Including rations for staff at Boys' and Girls' Depots.

† £616 15s. 6d. of this expenditure was incurred under Part VIII. of the Children's Welfare Act.

‡ Including £3,367 2s. 7d. for school requisites, and £458 1s. 6d. for Visiting Committees' expenses.