

Every foster-child is visited at its home at least once a month by the Lady Visitor of the locality in which it resides. A report of each visit is sent by the local visitor to the Official Correspondent, who, after perusal, forwards it to the manager of the school to which the child belongs, for his information and remarks. It is then sent by the manager to the department, where it is perused and filed. This monthly report supplies information as to the date of the visit, the health and cleanliness of the child, the state of its clothing, and its attendance at school, together with the remarks and recommendations of the visitor. By means of these monthly visits and reports security is taken that any failure of duty on the part of the foster-parent, and anything amiss as regards the child, shall be ascertained and rectified without loss of time. With a view, however, to afford still greater security for the proper treatment of all the children, an arrangement has been made whereby all their homes shall be visited by an officer of the department, to whom reference is made in a subsequent paragraph. Up to the present time the reports both of the local visitors and the visiting officer have been, on the whole, of a very satisfactory and encouraging nature, and already seem to prove beyond a doubt that it is much better to bring up the children as members of respectable families than to crowd them together in large institutions, however well-conducted these may be. There is reason to believe that in not a few instances a strong bond of mutual attachment is being formed between foster-parent and foster-child, to an extent that may render their separation at any future time somewhat difficult of accomplishment.

It is due to the Official Correspondents and the Lady Visitors to acknowledge the great value of their services, which in the case of the latter are gratuitously given.

At the outset only children under seven years of age were boarded with foster-parents, but older children are now similarly disposed of when it can be done with advantage. The rates of payment to foster-parents for board, lodging, clothing, &c., are as follows :—

Under seven years of age	8s. per week.
Seven and under eight years	7s. per week.
Eight and under nine years	6s. per week.
Nine and under ten years	5s. per week.
Over ten years, as may be agreed upon.	

It is probably owing to their proving somewhat more useful at home that the elder children of eight, nine, and ten years or upwards are in a number of instances taken for a less rate of payment than younger ones. The following is a summary of information respecting the children boarded out on the 31st March, 1884 :—

TABLE V.—INFORMATION CONCERNING FOSTER-CHILDREN.

Schools.	Official Corre- spondents.	Local Visitors.	Number of Children.		
			In the City and Suburbs.	In Country Localities.	Total.
Auckland	1	10	37	9	46
Burnham	1	14	40	40	80
Caversham	1	17	95	29	124
Total ..	3	41	172	78	250

This return, compared with line No. 22 of Table Q, shows that during the three months following December 31, 1883, there has been an increase of 41 in the number placed with foster-parents. The aggregate present cost per week for the board of these 250 children is £98 15s., the average weekly cost per head being 7s. 10·615d.

The three public industrial schools at Auckland, Burnham, and Caversham are wholly maintained by the Government out of a vote administered by the Minister of Education. The other institutions are inspected by, and make returns to, the Education Department, but they are under local management of various kinds, and the money contributed by the Government towards their maintenance is paid out of the charitable-aid vote, which is in charge of the Colonial Secretary. The cost of all the public and some of the private institutions is reduced by the contributions paid in a number of instances by the