

parents and guardians of inmates. The following is a summary of the cost of the two classes of institutions for the financial years 1883-84 and 1882-83 :—

|                          | 1883-84. |    |    | 1882-83. |    |    | Increase. |    |    |
|--------------------------|----------|----|----|----------|----|----|-----------|----|----|
|                          | £        | s. | d. | £        | s. | d. | £         | s. | d. |
| Three Government schools | 13,848   | 16 | 11 | 10,443   | 8  | 2  | 3,405     | 8  | 9  |
| Other schools            | 6,870    | 8  | 8  | 6,424    | 18 | 5  | 445       | 10 | 3  |
| Total                    | £20,719  | 5  | 7  | £16,868  | 6  | 7  | £3,850    | 19 | 0  |

It is due to the Commissioner and the members of the police force both at head-quarters and throughout the colony to acknowledge the assistance rendered by them in various ways in connection with the administration of the Industrial Schools Act. With the sanction of the Hon. the Defence Minister, the officer in charge of every police-station is appointed a person to take all necessary proceedings in the Courts of law to recover maintenance money from the parents of committed children. When applications are made by parents or friends for the custody of children, the members of the police force in almost every case supply reliable information concerning the character of the applicants, and advise the department or the managers of the schools as to the propriety or otherwise of granting the application. When a child (not a foster-child) is placed out at service or with friends, the officer in charge of the police district in which the child is to reside is notified of the fact, with a view to his maintaining a friendly watch over such child. Thus almost all the children belonging to the industrial schools who are not in residence or boarded with foster-parents are under (not surveillance in the ordinary sense, but) the kindly and watchful eye of one or other of the members of the police force, and any circumstances of an unsatisfactory nature regarding the conduct of the children or their treatment by their employers or friends are reported as soon as possible to the master of the schools to which they severally belong. There is consequently a large amount of correspondence between the members of the two departments, as well as numerous demands upon the services of the members of the police force, who have ever shown the utmost willingness to render all the assistance in their power.

The clerks of Resident Magistrates' Courts have been appointed receivers of maintenance money owing by parents, and it is due to many of them to acknowledge the services they are rendering.

With a view to secure more concerted action between the department, the managers of the industrial schools, the clerks of Resident Magistrates' Courts, and the officers in charge of police districts, in regard to the administration of the Industrial Schools Act, and more particularly the recovery of maintenance money, an experienced officer, of approved character and ability, has been detached from the ordinary work of the Police Department, and his services placed wholly at the disposal of the Education Department. It is the duty of this officer to visit the several centres of population and other localities, to communicate personally with the managers of the schools, the clerks of Resident Magistrates' Courts, and the members of the police force, and to co-operate with them in tracing the parents of committed children, in obtaining maintenance orders against such parents whenever necessary, and in enforcing compliance with the orders when made. The result has already been not only that a larger amount of maintenance money has been recovered than formerly, but that a number of defaulting parents, finding they can no longer escape payment, are showing anxiety to obtain the release of their children from the schools. It is possible that the vigorous measures now adopted for following them up may deter parents from seeking to throw the burden of their children's maintenance upon the State to the extent that has hitherto prevailed. The visiting officer is proving himself of much service in other ways. He has undertaken the visitation of the homes of the children boarded with foster-parents. His visits are of the nature of "surprise visits," and, along with those of the local lady visitors, they are well calculated to insure the obtaining of reliable information as to the ordinary condition and treatment of the foster-children. In the course of his official rounds, he is also able to collect a variety of useful information upon matters of practical importance in connection with the administration of the Industrial Schools Act, the communication of which to the department, to the